

# A red by any other name...

Armed with paint chips bearing eight variations on dusty red, we phoned paint manufacturers to ask—as we know you have—“Who comes up with these names?”

—JONATHAN VATNER

## BURNING BUSH

**Andrea Piontek,**  
senior color stylist,  
*Olympic Paints*

“I took a walk at lunch to brainstorm for ideas and saw a plant with a fiery, dark color. I picked a leaf and brought it back. The shrub was called a burning bush.”

**How I do it:** “I’m constantly thinking, *Could that be a color name? Could that be a color name?*”

## BLAZE

**Josette Buisson,**  
artistic director,  
*Pittsburgh Paints*

“It appears to radiate energy, giving the feeling of warmth and heat associated with fire.”

**How I do it:** “You have to go into the subconscious and bring up a word that carries a lot of meaning for a lot of people, without being too pedestrian.”

## CALIENTE

**Doty Horn,**  
director of color  
and design,  
*Benjamin Moore*

“It’s a hot color, with a Spanish feel to it, so we used a Spanish name.”

**How I do it:** “We sometimes ask for outside help, and we also ask our employees. Each color is assigned three names, then we pick one that isn’t already trademarked.”

## GRENADIER RED

**Peggy Van Allen,**  
color marketing and  
design specialist,  
*Pratt & Lambert Paint*

“That one was named a long time ago. It may have been inspired by the uniforms of the Grenadier Guards, who stand sentry at Buckingham Palace.”

**How I do it:** “I like to use food colors, but I pick comfort foods, desserts, and chocolate. I stay away from fish or beef.”

## INCARNADINE

**Sarah Cole,**  
marketing director,  
new product  
development,  
*Farrow & Ball*

“It’s a fabric dyer’s term for crimson. The actual color came from a 1970s London house called Barons Court, decorated by David Hicks.”

**How I do it:** “Most names come from the archives. We’re global, so we have to be sure it doesn’t mean something awful in Japanese.”

## BUSINESS TIE RED

**Donna Schroeder,**  
color marketing and  
design manager,  
*Dutch Boy*

“It’s a very conservative, trusting color that represents the Republican party.”

**How I do it:** “We keep a list of names we think of when we’re not under pressure. At first it’s fun, and you love it. But after naming thousands and thousands of colors, you need a break.”

## HEARTTHROB

**Jackie Jordan,**  
director of color  
marketing,  
*Sherwin-Williams*

“When you’ve got a crush, you’re very passionate, and red is associated with passion. Your beating heart is also associated with blood, which is a little gory, but it’s in the same vein.”

**How I do it:** “Sometimes I type random things into a search engine, which gets me thinking in a not-so-narrow line.”

## Ten shade names we’d never allow on our walls\*

1. Fish Story (teal)
2. Fatigue (drab green)
3. Cut the Mustard (sienna)
4. Swamp Fog (gray green)
5. Taffy Lips (rose)
6. Bloopers (baby blue)
7. High Strung (mustard)
8. Abyss (gray)
9. Surf ‘n Turf (blue-green)
10. Plink (pink)

\*manufacturers to remain nameless

## FABULOUS RED

**Pattie Erps,**  
director of  
color marketing,  
*Valspar*

“We laid out all the reds, and somebody said, ‘That is a fabulous red.’ Bingo.”

**How I do it:** “We look at fashion and cosmetics. Their names are too edgy, but help inspire us. The challenge is finding names that haven’t been used. I feel sorry for the guys doing this 100 years from now.”

## O did you know?

Manufacturing those freebie paint chips is the single largest expense in any paint company’s marketing budget.

## 9/12

When *New York Press* Film critic Godfrey Cheshire learned of his cousin’s plans to relocate the family home, Midway Plantation, away from the sprawl of Raleigh, North Carolina, he decided to document the process. The resulting film, **MOVING MIDWAY**, is an illuminating look at the history of the plantation and the endless secrets of the South’s gothic past. Check [movingmidway.com](http://movingmidway.com) for theaters.

## ONE SMALL WAY TO SAVE THE WORLD

### Art Smith: “Throw a charity dinner party”

“You don’t need to have barrels of money to host a fund-raiser,” says Smith, a Chicago restaurateur and Oprah’s former personal chef. Smith has raised nearly \$1 million, one meal at a time, for Common Threads, an organization he founded to teach children about proper nutrition. Here’s how it’s done: Invite friends to dinner, but ask them to skip contributions like wine or dessert and bring a check—\$20 will do—made out to your chosen charity instead. They’ll leave with a full stomach and a warm feeling in their hearts. Pay for the food yourself, and you can even claim a tax deduction for your expenses.



Art Smith in his kitchen at a fund-raiser for his charity, Common Threads.