

## THE CREATIVE-INVENTIVE USE OF COLORS IN RURAL TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGY

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### Abstract

Color, as a feature particular to all things, is an important component not only of the interiors of accommodation facilities, the countryside, and organic food but also of our emotional state. Experts argue that the Romanian saying “the greatest geniuses were born in the countryside” is not accidental, as the varied color space of the rural village, in contrast to the grey cities, provides for superior mental development. Color is particularly important in rural tourism as it decorates tourist accommodation such as villas, chalets, tourist stops, agro-tourist bungalows, campsites, holiday villages, as well as catering facilities (restaurants, bars, bistros) and clubs, summer gardens, terraces, etc. Color can perfect or, conversely, ruin an interior decoration project, therefore choosing a proper color palette may be a challenge.

**Keywords:** color, color schemes, color symbolism, accommodation facilities, rural tourism.

### Introduction

All the elements of the universe (plants, volcanoes, animals, rocks, seas, objects, people, etc.) are composed of atoms, which emit a vibration that, in turn, generates an electromagnetic field called *energy*. ***Color is pure energy and as such emits vibrations which all human beings issues perceive consciously, yet most often unconsciously, through the senses. The vibrational level of color lies between the level of the mind (the highest) and that of matter (the lowest), which is why we are able to see it with the naked eye.***

**Energy is light, light is color and color is vibration.** Vibration energy emitted by colors is particularly strong and real. Colors generate memories and leave their invisible imprints on the memory. Throughout our lives, we evolve with and among colors. It is worth recalling here the statement on the role of colors of our life by famous author Dorothee L. Mella in her book *Puissance des couleurs*, Paris, 1988: “***color is to sight as sound is to hearing, both are vibrational movements of the universe.***”

Therefore, the value of color in people's lives is great and particularly varied. All that we can see is due to color and because of color. The most significant gift of nature is a person's ability to see the world, in the “colors of the rainbow”.

*“Piercing the dusty fragmented clouds, With spears of light and fire, it rises and makes its*

*way forward. A sun - in a billion colors”*, writes poet Michael Celarinu. In fact, sun's light does not contain billions of colors, as the poet states: sunlight is a set of electromagnetic waves in several colors. When the rays of light coming from the sun pass through raindrops, a strange phenomenon occurs whereby water droplets separate light into 7 colors, separated from each other in an amazing band called the electromagnetic spectrum, thus explaining the existence of the rainbow.

Etymologically, the word “color” derives from the French language term “couleur” – meaning colored substance. The study of color from different angles is called *chromatics*. The outcomes of research on color perception are used in architecture, industry, medicine, psychology, marketing, advertising, graphic design, painting, sculpture, decorative arts, tourism, and many other areas.

***Color is a constituent of communication and expression in rural tourism, as it influences human person causing a wide array of impressions, feelings and mental states different.*** Thus, it known that white has a calming effect, red stimulates, blue is cold, while yellow stimulates brain activity. It is important to know that warm colors (yellow, orange, red) stimulate communication, while cool colors (blue, green, gray) inhibit communication. Also, while color monotony diminishes attention and communication, excessive color variety favors them.

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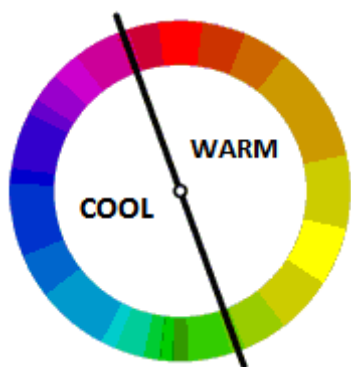


Figure 1 Goethe's color wheel

Color can raise one's spirits, attract, reject, delight, and make one cry or laugh. Since color can change the appearance of a thing, the beauty of a landscape, the atmosphere of a room or the attractiveness of a dish, owing to its energy it can help the body and the spirit to regain balance and harmony, and ultimately can change physiological processes in the body. Color can determine human personality, can treat various conditions and can recharge one's energy.

It is therefore essential to focus on the colors in the setting where we live, sleep, work, eat, relax or rest.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

The natural color overlay of our universe, to which was added that created by man in art and beyond in the rural world, has always influenced human behavior, determining a particular conduct, in conjunction with other internal and environmental factors. It is known that one has different experiences while working in an inviting color setting and in a monotone and dull environment. Being in a constant struggle with static inertia, nature has found endless solutions to overcome the uniformity of color: it has created the seasons, each period having its dominant color (due to light and vegetation).

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Color is particularly important in rural tourism as it decorates tourist accommodation such as villas, chalets, tourist stops, agro-tourist bungalows, campsites, holiday villages, as well as catering facilities (restaurants, bars, bistros) and clubs, summer gardens, terraces, etc. Color can perfect or, conversely, ruin an interior decoration project, therefore choosing a proper color palette may be a challenge. A study conducted by experts on a group gathered in a room decorated in blue found that the subjects experienced feeling cold at

+15 C. When they were transferred to another room with the same temperature, yet colored in orange, the subjects noted that they gradually began to warm up, the observed effect being a chromatic one.

Research conducted abroad and Romania has concluded that color in **direct relationship with light** represents a key factor in enhancing comfort and creating an appropriate architectural ambience in rural tourism accommodation facilities.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Through the use of color the volume of a room can be transformed visually, creating effects of height, proximity or distance of walls (e.g. too low a ceiling can be "raised" by painting it white or light blue; the harmonious use of pastel colors can compensate for rigid volumes). Thus, cool colors (blue, greenish blue, indigo blue, dark green, purple, gray) are indicated for smaller, overheated rooms, where intensive and monotonous work is performed (confectionery production areas, laundries, bakeries, warehouses, storage rooms, etc.) to create a feeling of coolness and ventilation. On the other hand, warm colors (red, yellow, brown, orange) are recommended for rest and leisure rooms and for dining rooms.

Environment or décor influences colors. A warm color appears cooler in a sober décor and vice versa. A color will be better supported in a setting that complements the color (e.g., red in a blue décor appears warmer than a red orange or purple decor). The harmonious blend of colors in the furnishings of accommodation facilities such as villas, bungalows, chalets, campsites, holiday homes, tourist stops, agritourism boarding houses, restaurant, summer gardens, etc. has important positive effects, inducing a feeling of comfort, enjoyment, relaxation, and rest. Color combinations with strong enjoyable effects and bad or doubtful are shown in Table no. 1.

Table 1  
The main color combinations and their emotional effects.

Color combinations	Enjoyable	Doubtful	Unpleasant
Red and	Navy Green	Yellow	Violet Purple
Orange and	Light blue Green Violet	Red	Yellow Greenish blue
Yellow and	Purple Blue	Red	Greenish blue Green Orange
Green and	Roșu Violet	Purpuriu Galben	Blue Orange
Violet and	Green Orange	Yellow	Red Purple Blue

In order to achieve color balance in decorating a tourist facility it is preferable to follow certain proportions: 60% dominant color, 30% spots of color or secondary color and 10%

accent color. Dominant color is usually provided by room walls. It can also come from the furniture. Based on this one can combine color hues in upholstery, curtains and drapes, carpets or decorative objects. The 30% secondary color can come from these latter elements.

Accent color or the one that highlights the refinement and elegance of the ensemble is complemented by furnishings and decorative setups. If one uses two main colors, for the purposes of color balance their hue must have the same intensity level. It is particularly important that the color black feature in the decoration of a tourist accommodation facility, as its role is to highlight other colors. Black can be used in an accessory: a vase or picture frame that is intended to give intensity to colors in the room.

Color can achieve a lot if used wisely. A unified color scheme in accommodation facilities favors changes in furniture, curtains, carpets, accessories, etc. (Table no. 2).

Table 2  
**Color scheme for an accommodation facility**

Room	Wall	Carpet	Ceiling	Furniture	Curtains
Daytime room (option I)	Light green	Smoky glass color	White	Mahogany Green upholstery	Damask Castile red
Daytime room (option II)	White	Orange red	Sky blue	Mahogany Orange upholstery	Damask White

### Color of the rural landscape

The rural landscape consists of green fields, forests, orchards, gardens in blossom, lawns, farmers' households, and agritourism boarding homes. The main feature is the quality of the natural environment, which is usually unpolluted, refreshing, with distinctive aesthetic qualities and coloring. As long as we are able to protect and to admire it, countryside serves as a vast space for color therapy, providing renewed energy, leisure, optimism, joy, balance and inner peace. (Example in Fig. 2 – the green grass color is explained by the maximum reflectance at 550 nm wavelengths).

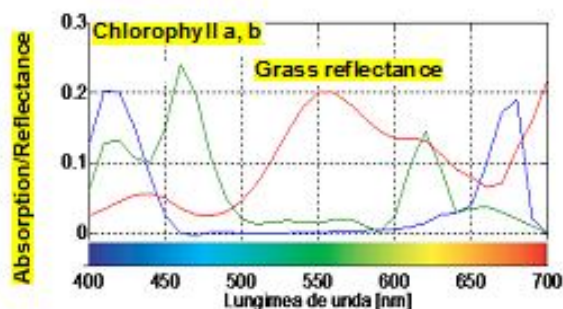


Figure no. 2. Grass reflectance curve

### The color of food in the countryside

The natural food that we use can offer us the vibration frequency of its color. Depending on the body's color needs, consumption of food of a certain color may be highly beneficial.

Related to this, a major role is played by the colors used for the spatial decoration of areas intended for the sale of products, of displays, of packages etc. used by agro-tourist pensions.

Vitamin and nutrient intake is closely related to food colors. Specialists have found that each color of fruit and vegetables is a phyto-nutrient - a component that provides health benefits as it may change the pH by stomach acid level, enzymes production, which in turn can change the body's global metabolism (e.g. the red color of cabbage is due to anthocyanin pigments - Figure no. 3).

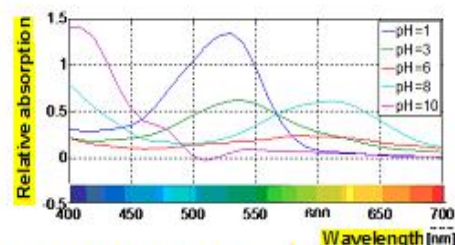


Figure no. 3. Absorption spectra of pickled red cabbage

Figure no. 3. Absorption spectra of pickled red cabbage Workplace safety colors used in rural tourism

Colors used for public health and safety signage in rural tourism should be chosen in accordance with the meaning or purpose of signage, as outlined in the table below.

Table 4

**Colors used in workplace safety**

Color	Meaning or purpose	Recommendations and specifications
Red	Ban signal	Dangerous height
	Danger alarm	Stop, halt, emergency power-off device. Evacuation
	Firefighting and prevention and materials and equipment	Identification and localization
Yellow or orange-yellow	Warning sign	Caution Checkpoint
Blue	Requirement sign	Specific behavior or action. Compulsory safety clothing.
Green	Rescue or first aid sign	Doors, exits, access paths, equipment, stations, rooms.

Source: Health and safety guidelines in the HORECA sector - 2011

Regulations on the use of certain colors or color combinations, defining for an accommodation facility in rural areas, contribute primarily to increasing discipline and are among the requirements of quality management system and workplace health and safety management.

## CONCLUSIONS

Colors in our lives (workplace, housing, home, roads, transport, leisure or holiday facilities, etc.) are largely responsible for the effects we may be aware of or not on our emotions, fitness and inner state. An environment that features cool colors and low lighting has demotivating effects and may predispose one to sadness, pessimism, isolation, distrust, withdrawal and failure to act. On the contrary, a well-lit environment with colors predominantly shifted towards red, orange, yellow has mobilizing effects, inspiring trust, the need to communicate, to express oneself, and creates joy and a high level of aspiration.

A cursory analysis shows that colors are prevalent in folk culture and reflect certain aesthetic dimensions of life, ideas and feelings.

In Romanian poetry, color symbolism features in numerous poets: Mihai Eminescu, Vasile Alecsandri, Alexandru Macedonski, Mircea Demetriade, etc. Finally, we wish to quote the lyrics of author George Bacovia's poem "Spring Notes", that achieve a combination effect of sound and color:

*"Raw green, raw green,  
White bud and pink and pure,  
A dream of blue and azure,  
I can see you, I can hear you."*

To conclude, we recall the observation made by painters who argue that *there are no ugly colors only unsuccessful color matches or combinations*.

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