

# Discovering the colours that bring you alive

**W**HEN I open the door, Louise Morley and I give each other the once-over. We're not necessarily judgmental: but she's a colour expert and I'm about to be her subject. Impressions are important.

Louise is wearing three cousins of purple – plum, indigo, raspberry – that I never would put together. I would be too scared. I would remember articles in women's magazines. I would stick to a safe choice.

But this snappy dresser from Newquay knows enough to break all the rules – and she looks vibrant and interesting.

"I always think, why not?" she smiles, clattering her silver bracelets.

Louise dresses up, even when there's no particular occasion.

"A lot of women think: there's no point in dressing up because no-one else does. It's a mindset.

"The fact is: if you look great, you feel great. I'm a big believer in positive thinking. Positive thinking, positive action: positive attracts."

A big part of looking great, says this veteran of the beauty and clothing industry, is wearing the right clothes.

"I see large ladies wearing bigger clothes which make them look bigger, or short ladies wearing long clothes that make them look shorter – it's the kiss of death.

"You have to wear clothes that suit your shape, and you have to wear the right colours."

Which brings us to the point of her visit: Louise has come to my house to

*Dressing in the right hues will make you feel and look great – but family and friends might not be the best advisers. Find an expert, says Gillian Molesworth*

give me a colour consultation. "I'll come to you," she had said over the phone. "That way you'll be more comfortable and can see them in your own environment."

We carried three big storage boxes upstairs, full of colour swatches and makeup. My bathroom was transformed into a mini-studio, with racks of material and a chair planted in front of the mirror.

Louise bustled around, selecting two related colours at a time – one bright and one muted, or one dark and one light – and draping them over either shoulder.

"What do you think?" she kept asking me, before swapping shoulders.

"That one makes me a bit washed out," I ventured. She nodded emphatically.

"What about this one?" she said, replacing it with a bright coral.

"A bit bright?" I asked.

"When I look at that, I see the colour, not you," she affirmed. "You're not wearing the colour, it's wearing you."

Burgundy was next on the list: a regal maroon.



**Colour analyst Louise Morley tries out swatches to find what suits Gillian – and what doesn't**

"I like this colour," I said.

"It doesn't do anything for you," she replied, and held up a crimson one. "This one's better, can you see?"

Objectivity, according to Louise, is key: this is her tenet during colour consultations, body mapping sessions (in which she tells you how to dress to your shape), and a personal shopping service, during which she will trot you around the boutiques of Truro and Wadebridge to build a capsule wardrobe.

"Women often go shopping with their friends – it's a bad idea," she said.

"They get stuck in a rut. What happens is, if they do try something new, the friend says 'you don't usually wear that kind of thing'. So they never try anything different. Spouses can be the same, or they can be very negative – you'd be surprised."

As we talk she is building a little pile of swatches of "my colours". These help her to determine my colour "season", based on skin, hair and eye colour, but also on personality.

We soon determine that I am a



"spring" category, and should steer for bright clear colours, avoiding taupes, "earth tones", pale greys and pastels.

I wish someone had done this for me as a teenager – just think how much money I could have saved.

Later I show her a few objects in my wardrobe that weren't quite right. "Wear a light scarf with that one," she advises about a dark green jumper. Viewing a rather drab shirt, she says, "chunky beads".

Priced at £75 for about 90 minutes, this is a good service for women in a

"transition" period: going back to work after having children, or reinventing themselves after a life-changing event. For an extra £25 you can have a suede-bound swatch book to take shopping, with your colours marked.

"There are lots of ladies wanting a different look. They just need a nudge. If you look good you feel good: if you feel good, the whole world around you is sparkly," Louise said.

● For more information call 01637 871457 or visit [www.louisemorley.co.uk](http://www.louisemorley.co.uk).

## Westcountry home is where the heart is for TV's Jennie

BEST known in her previous role as the BBC royal correspondent, Jennie Bond this year plans to spend a quiet Christmas at home in South Devon. She shares with Woman readers her holiday schedule – which may not include watching the Queen's speech...

### What have you been working on this year?

I'm filming another series of Cash In The Attic and Celebrity Cash In The Attic as well as a brand new consumer programme called Rip Off Britain with Gloria Hunniford and Angela Rippon. I'm 60 next year but am busier than ever!

### What has been the highlight of 2009 for you?

Seeing my daughter off to travel the world full of confidence and enthusiasm. She's 19 and really living life to the full – and that's just how it should be.

### How will you be spending Christmas this year?

At home in South Devon. Our extended family has got so big now that there's not room for everyone around one table so it'll be me, my husband Jim, and Emma, our daughter, this year – probably with some good friends. We like to go for a walk along the coastal path to the village pub while lunch cooks and then spend a lazy afternoon at home.

### Do you do the cooking at home?

Christmas lunch is always a team effort. I'm not a particularly good cook – and my puddings are quite dreadful – but Christmas lunch is basically quite simple; a traditional roast turkey and all the trimmings. And you have to be a really lousy cook to make a mess of that.

### Do you listen to the Queen's speech?

Not any more! After so many years as the BBC's royal correspondent, when I had to report on the speech, I can now just let it drift by without worrying!

### What sort of presents do you like giving at Christmas?

As you get older you accumulate an awful lot of "stuff", so I try to give people presents that won't last very long and can be enjoyed as treats. Something like a bottle of champagne always goes down well, as does a really luxurious bath oil or a hamper of delicious food.

It's important to me to buy presents from charity catalogues too. The RNLI is a particular favourite of mine as I live so close to the sea and regularly see the lifeboat heading out on a rescue mission.

The bravery of its volunteer crew is something I very much admire. The charity depends entirely on

donations so the cards and gifts it sells are a vital part of its income.

### What is on your Christmas wish list?

Every year I ask my husband for the same thing – six facials or massages. It may sound boring – but it means he can never go wrong – and I get to enjoy them through the year. I'd also be very happy if someone bought me a copy of Mamma Mia! on DVD, a ride in a hot air balloon or one of those fast car experiences.

I got the chance to get behind the wheel of a Ferrari when I was filming Stars In Fast Cars a few years ago but didn't get past first gear – largely because I was towing a bath full of water and rubber ducks.

### What sort of gift would you hate to receive?

Anything practical. I'd feel like bursting into tears if someone gave me a vacuum cleaner or a food mixer.

■ The RNLI provides a 24-hour lifesaving service around the UK and Republic of Ireland. Last year RNLI lifeboats rescued almost 8,000 people, an average of 21 people a day. RNLI Christmas cards and gifts can be ordered on 0870 013 3999 or online at [www.rnlishop.org.uk](http://www.rnlishop.org.uk). All profits go directly towards helping the charity save lives at sea.



**Former BBC royal correspondent Jennie Bond**