Beyond the white ceiling

There's a reason so many people opt for a bland ceiling color: fear. "People think they are making a safe choice by painting a ceiling white. They think that will make it unnoticeable," says color consultant Jill Pilaroscia. "But if you have colored walls and a white ceiling, that's usually the first thing you see, because the eye is drawn to contrasts."

Pilaroscia encourages people to view the ceiling as a fifth wall. "If you use a color on your ceiling, you can make a room feel taller or more intimate or more interesting," she says. In her bedroom, she used Sherwin-Williams’s SW 6960 Bewitching Blue.

Look at the ceiling color in context. Lighting and wall colors help determine the effect of a ceiling hue, as the simulations at right show. To judge the impact of a color, paint just part of the ceiling first.

**Source:** Jill Pilaroscia, Colour Studio, San Francisco (www.colourstudio.com or 415/495-4760) — Mary Jo Bowling