

## In Living Color: An Interview With David Bromstad

Interior designer David Bromstad is making a splash, and it's not just his infectious blend of energy, creativity and central-casting good looks that's got everyone excited. The first winner of HGTV's "Design Star" and host of his own series *Color Splash*, Bromstad is actually something of an "accidental designer."

After graduating from the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, the designer launched his career as an artist for Walt Disney World in Orlando. A self-taught builder, he honed his carpentry skills by creating props for various fantasy rooms at Disney. But designing kitchens, baths and great rooms? Not so much. "Who knew that learning about interior design on national television could be so fun," says Bromstad with a good-natured laugh.

During a break from shooting the fourth season of "Color Splash," Bromstad spoke to Chicagoist about his upcoming visit to the Windy City, the location for the new season (Miami), and, of course, his favorite colors for spring.

**Chicagoist:** Talk a little about the vibe and feeling of the new season of *Color Splash*.

**David Bromstad:** Well, it's official: The show has been renamed to "Color Splash: Miami." This is where I live. I lived here while I was filming in San Francisco and traveling back and forth almost every weekend—that was quite the adventure! But honestly, I wanted *Color Splash* to move to Miami because it is so inspiring with all of its international influences, especially South America—I call it the "American Rivera." Miami definitely has its own design style, which is hip, fresh and innovative, and we will feature that as well some more relatable design elements. We have a whole new crew this season, made up of Latinos and Latinas and everything that goes along with it—it's a little spicy! I miss my old team, we were a family, but I'm really excited to work with this new team.

**C:** You're going to be at [Colori](#), an eco-friendly paint boutique in Wicker Park, to discuss the latest trends in color and to answer questions from the audience. I've heard you're going with lime green as your color for spring.

**DB:** I am always favoring lime green—even though it happens to be hot at this particular moment. Lime green has always said 'spring' to me. I grew up in the Midwest, and when spring came around, we had all these fresh leaves, and everything looked new and wonderful. Lime green is hot right now, but it's also a great safe color—guys like it, girls like it. Not many colors can play to both genders, but lime green definitely can.

**C:** What other color trends are surfacing this season?

**DB:** Purple, magenta and pinks are hot, all the different shades, from the subtle to the more dramatic. Turquoise is an up and coming color for interior design. We've seen it a lot in fashion this year, and next year we'll see it in the house.

**C:** What are some of your favorite things to see and do while you're in town?

**DB:** I've been to Chicago twice, and both times I had to rush in and rush out, I'm sorry to say. I am really hoping to get out and maybe hit up Boystown this time, actually! I always stay downtown when I am there and it is so clean! It is one of the best preserved cities and very clean and safe. Miami is a little rougher around the edges, I think, which I love too.

**C:** Speaking of Boystown, I'm reminded of an interview you had with [afterelton.com](#), shortly after winning Design Star, where you admitted that you wrestled with how you might portray your sexuality, if at all, on television. You're openly gay—what advice do you have for other design professional, especially those just entering the field, who are gay and maybe unsure of how to put themselves out there, professionally speaking?

**DB:** Just be true to yourself, it's the easiest thing to do, and it's also the hardest thing to do. People have a hard time figuring out who they are, but once you do, stick to your guns—whether you are the butchiest thing

out there or the gayest thing that ever walked! Be yourself. People will see you for who you are anyway, especially on television. It's important to always be comfortable in your own skin.

**C:** Do people recognize you in public, David?

**DB:** Not when I am just walking along the beach or something, but if I'm out at Home Depot, or Ace Hardware, or IKEA or Target or any place that has anything remotely to do with the house, I am noticed. Everyone is very positive, which I love! They seem just giddy to see me, and they usually give me a hug and take a picture or something. It brings such positivity my way. If I were ever to get irritated with any of that, then it's time to hang up my TV hat and go home!

**C:** In a recent interview with [fitceleb.com](#), you mentioned that being on TV is an added motivation for you to stay fit.

**DB:** You know, if I go a week without working out it is really hard for me because 1) I am exhausted and 2) my creativity is lost. Having that feeling of being physically fit—it's not even about whether or not I look fit—it's more about confidence and feeling good about myself. I usually go the gym at least 3 times a week.

**C:** On a related note, on [www.bromstad.com](#) it says you're 32 years old. I certainly think you look 32 years old, you look fantastic, but I have to ask: Is that really your correct age?

**DB:** Thanks for saying I look 32, I appreciate that! (laughs). But no, I need to update the Web site, I'm actually 36.

**C:** We all know there aren't any quick fixes when it comes to physical fitness, unfortunately, but what is your favorite quick-fix for a room?

**DB:** Nice transition! Well, my favorite quick fix is to paint an accent wall. The accent wall is the largest wall in any particular room. It's the wall with the largest piece of furniture behind it, so in the bedroom it would obviously be the bed, and in the living room it would be the couch and so on.

**C:** What is the one color you'd probably never use in a room, David?

**DB:** There isn't a color out there that I wouldn't use in a room. I was telling my new staff the other day that there is no such thing as bad color, but there is bad design. Throw any color at me: puce, fluorescent yellow or green, whatever the most hated color is, and I can design a strong room around it—it's all in what you pair it with.

