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SUMMER 2018

Country Decorating Ideas® #211

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elements of the classic outdoor room

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Traditional features never go out of style, but remember that less is more when Mother Nature is the star.



1 Kitchens

Cooking outdoors has a long history; separate summer kitchen buildings were once a staple. Today, a popular setup sees a grill situated in a cabinet base with a counter and stools so guests can sit and chat with the grill master. But more elaborate designs include features like food storage, prep, cooking and cleanup spaces. By using the home's brick facade for walls, this cooking center, *left*, has the coziness of a traditional indoor room. Built-ins eliminate the need for repeated treks to the kitchen. The matching eating counter plus a vent to remove smoky flare-ups make dining pleasant as well. A pergola-style structure lets light in but can be closed with awning strips if it rains.

2 Dining »

Most homeowners make a beeline to dine alfresco when weather warms, and this table for two, *opposite*, shows how the smallest space can become a chic spot for a tête-à-tête when dressed up with tablecloth, china and centerpiece (the blue-and-yellow scheme was inspired by Monet's Giverny kitchen and garden). Chairs have arms and cushions for comfort. Whatever size table your yard allows, one with resealable wood or a shatterproof glass top will stand up to weather. Just be sure to anchor the grouping over a solid floor for comfort and stability.

PHOTOS: (1) COURTESY, ATLANTIS OUTDOOR CABINERY, OUTDOORKITCHENBYATLANTIS.COM; (2) LANDSCAPE DESIGN BY GRACE DESIGN ASSOCIATES, PHOTO BY LEPERE STUDIO



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3 « Fire

Outdoor fireplaces remain in vogue because they provide warmth, extend seasonal use and encourage gathering. Amid a walnut orchard, landscape designer Michael Glassman, coauthor of *The Garden Bible*, designed this nine-foot-high tiered fireplace, left, to fit the large site. He used favorite native and natural materials, including concrete block, firebrick, natural ledge stones and rough-cut flagstone. Crape myrtles planted behind add softness; a travertine flagstone patio welcomes family and friends to enjoy the flickering show.

PHOTOS: (3) DESIGN BY MICHAEL GLASSMAN, MICHAEL GLASSMAN & ASSOCIATES; (4) DESIGN BY EVENS ARCHITECTS, PHOTO BY MANOLO LANGIS

4 Lighting »

Technological advancements have upgraded systems throughout the most traditional homes and are now altering how their exteriors and landscapes look too. Detailing, from doors to windows, terraces, pathways, steps and trees, is in sharper—and safer—focus when well illuminated. Today, that's a breeze with low-voltage, energy-efficient lighting. Evens Architects, in collaboration with KGM Architectural Lighting, showcased a sprawling Spanish-style California estate, right, with lights placed discreetly so that sources aren't seen, but greenery, mosaic tiles and sparkling blue water are on beautiful display when the sun goes down.



5 Lounging ⤴

Enjoying a front-row seat to take in the majesty of a garden in bloom or savor a fresh breeze requires the right furnishings—and the right setting. In this tucked-away “living room,” above, Evens Architects designed a roofed area that sets this scene, evoking *Casablanca* romance with a coffered ceiling, terra-cotta pavers and mosaic-tiled wall. But what truly fosters the kick-back-and-relax mode is teak furniture with plush upholstered cushions and pillows and a sturdy table for drinks—or feet. Gauzy curtains lend drama, provide a hint of privacy and screen out UV rays. When outfitting your own area, look to furnishings with frames crafted from sustainable wood sources, sturdy aluminum made to resemble iron and all-weather rattan for easy care. (Antique wicker belongs indoors or on a protected porch.)

6 Water »

Don't think you have to have a large pool, pond or stream to bring this naturally alluring—to people and wildlife—component to your yard. Though a grand fountain with tiers and towering shoots of water (think Versailles) is a definite draw, even a small trickling one can provide a pleasant sound and sight for those nearby and will invite birds and their sweet songs. First spotted in an antiques shop, this stone version, below, was attached to a wall and festooned with sweet pink climbing roses for a delightful pairing. An electrical outlet nearby provides the juice for a pump to recirculate the water and keep the reservoir filled—and discourage mosquitoes.



PHOTOS: (5) DESIGN BY EVENS ARCHITECTS, PHOTO BY ERHARD PEIFFER; (6) PHOTO BY MARK LOHMAN, STYLING BY SUNDAY HENDRICKSON

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7 Structures

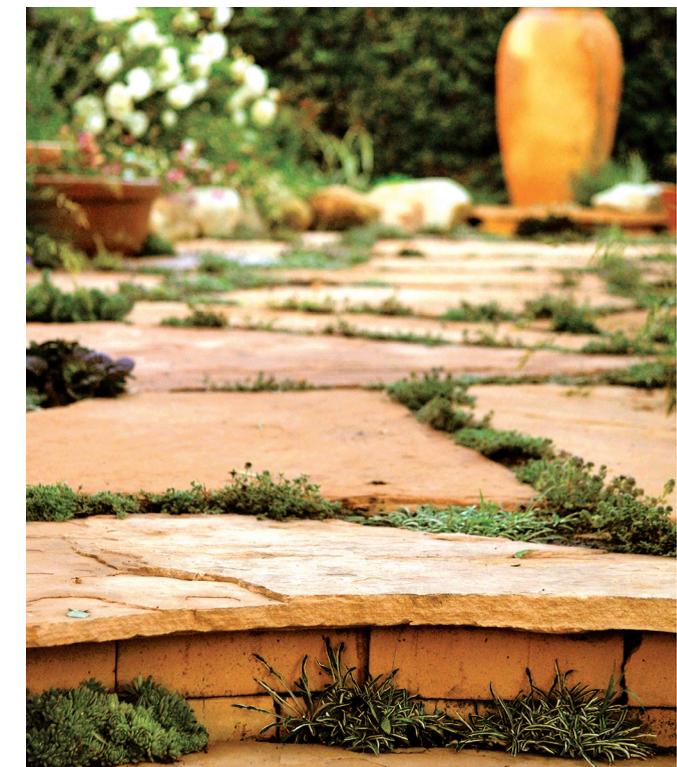
Fences, gates, archways and trellises are key to defining an area's borders and create vertical surfaces that act as or insinuate walls, which is helpful when developing outdoor rooms. Pergolas add the appeal of a roof and typically provide shaded cover, often planted with vines, over a walkway or sitting/dining area. With a concrete floor beneath and lattice sides for shelter, privacy and a vertical surface for flowers to latch on to, this one, *above*, creates a sanctuary that will become all the more secluded as climbing roses and camellias grow. The sturdy construction made it possible to add a fan overhead to keep bugs at bay.



PHOTOS: (7) PHOTO BY MONA DWORKIN; (8) DESIGN BY EVENS ARCHITECTS, PHOTO BY MANOLO LANGIS; (9, 10) LANDSCAPE DESIGN BY GRACE DESIGN AND ASSOCIATES, PHOTOS BY LEPERE STUDIO

9 Potted Edibles

Former first lady Michelle Obama was famously passionate about growing food at the White House. Most of us make do on a smaller scale, which is why pots offer a win-win. Choose a pretty container and plant it with fragrant oranges, below, or dwarf apple trees, sun-loving tomatoes or fast-growing, cut-and-come-again lettuces.



10 Patios & Paths

Paths provide a practical way to get from here to there, but what they're constructed of can make the journey more delightful, safer, even surprisingly scent filled. Go with a hardscape that will hold up—from brick and concrete pavers to granite, bluestone, fieldstone, cobblestone or a mix—and suit your home's style. Fringe large, irregularly shaped stone slabs with thyme or rosemary, above, which will release tiny bursts of an herbal bouquet when stepped on, and accent spots with pots, rocks, flowering shrubs or tall grasses that will rustle when it's breezy.

8 Plants

Greenery comes in all forms to make a landscape beguiling—masses of hedges for privacy, lush lawns for a soft carpet and potted plants with big leaves for texture or vivid blossoms for instant color. Incorporate it into your outdoor living plan to soften a hardscape, like on this French limestone-paved terrace, *left*, define a zone, beautify your surrounding view and add a fragrant note that may have the fringe benefit of repelling pests. For easy care, look to native plants that are adapted to your area.