

SPRING INTO OUTDOOR LIVING WITH CREATIVITY & STYLE

“Vacation” In Your Very Own Yard

If you're like most of people, you're pretty excited that spring is just around the corner, and the beautiful Comox Valley summer will soon follow.

Before those long days of sunshine arrive, however, now is the perfect time to think about your “outdoor living space.”

First, decide what you want your outdoor space to do for you.

Do you just want a cozy oasis to sit and read a book near a water feature that's just calling you to relax? Or, do you want to dine and entertain outdoors--sharing your patio, gazebo, or deck with friends and family?

You may want to create a permanent shady area to protect you from sun (or a spring shower), such as a covered patio. Or, you may want a removable shelter, such as a fabric-covered gazebo that gives you flexibility to be covered or open...or a combination of open and sheltered to give you maximum flexibility and create interesting “areas” in your yard.

Incorporating outdoor “heat” is also a consideration. Do you have an outdoor fireplace or fire pit? Will the fire zone be a focal point, or do you have an outdoor water feature that will help dictate where you position your furniture?

You should also think about your proximity to neighbours and the road. If privacy is a concern, a hedge or row of potted bamboo can provide a nestled feel. Or, think about a fabric-covered “screen” that you can remove when you're using your outdoor space, or make permanent; you can also use draperies or curtains around a deck or gazebo to create a “cabana” just like



fancy resort pools.

Of course, a traditional fence can be attractive, especially with hanging planters, lighting, vines, and/or outdoor decorations on it.

Consider your seating, too. Are you going with a traditional wood picnic table, metal and glass patio furniture set, or outdoor couches and chairs that look more like a living room set?

Now, think cushions and accessories. There is a huge variety of waterproof and UV-resistant materials on the market now, so choosing your patterns for custom cushions is very easy.

If your outdoor area is mostly green, add colour to your space with your fabrics and décor. If your space has colourful landscaping already, neutral fabrics may be best. Placemats to match or complement your cushions and throw pillows also make an area

very homey.

Think also about your lighting needs. Options range from solar walk lights, to tiki torches, string lights, and candlelit lanterns.

Accessories also affect the mood and function of your space. If you have a bbq in this area, why not do a custom bbq cover to complement your cushions and colour palette? You can also create “texture” by adding an outdoor carpet or even painting or stenciling patterns on the concrete.

Ready to create a retreat in your very own yard (without breaking the bank)? Make sure your space is an extension of you...and a reflection of your unique style.

*By Donna Clairmont, Clairmont
Custom Draperies & Décor, Comox*