



DESIGN
THE

Outdoors!

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY

PG. NO.
152

QTY.
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MO. / YR.
APRIL '11



A MAN'S
GUIDE
TO LIVING
LARGE IN
HIS OWN
BACKYARD

No 25

ENTERTAINING

No hot tubs. Because they're all ugly, even the expensive ones. Because of *Jersey Shore*. Because it's hard to so much as walk by one without thinking "herpes." Or at least "cheeseball."

No 26 | On the other hand: When you're sitting in one and it's twenty-four degrees out and you've got a cocktail and a date, you may be thinking "herpes" but not "cheeseball."

No 27 | Serious bocce requires a team of landscape professionals, \$30,000 for court installation, and a grader. Croquet, which no one takes seriously, requires nothing more than a good teak set. Small inclines, ruts, and dandelions are all inbounds.

No 28 | If you're going to build anything, make it modest—say, a horseshoe pit. You'll find how-to schematics on the Web (try horseshoepitching.com). One more tip: Fill the pit with the finest mason sand you can buy; it'll stay put better than coarser sand and prevent horseshoes from bouncing out.

No 29 | No klieg lights.

No 30 | But that doesn't mean no lights. Try uplighting a single tree with a low-voltage bulb. It'll become the centerpiece of your yard.

No 31 | "Every party needs a nucleus. So arrange seating in a circle or semicircle around a fire pit or table. There's no better way to spark conversation."

—ROB MCKINLEY | surfer, designer, hotelier

No 32 | Use candles. Lots of them. In all sorts of containers. Try high-walled glass hurricanes like the Ikea Rönås (\$2.49). For a longer burn, the Brasa Slender Fire Lamp (\$165) uses clean-burning alcohol.



27

Teak Croquet Set

dwr.com | \$488

Listen, you usually play this either when you're drunk or with your kids. You're going to leave it out in the rain. This set will last forever.



28

Thoroughbred Bandit Horseshoes

horseshoesonline.com

\$59 for two pairs

Perfectly balanced and cleaned. Your best bet to stop sucking at horseshoes.

No 33 | Mark out paths with a few well-placed candles or solar lamps, like the Luceplan Solar Bud (\$185). They'll help people figure out where they can spread out to—and how to locate the bathroom.

No 34 | Light an open-pit fire, but remember, your backyard shouldn't look like Burning Man. Keep it contained and understated.

No 35 | Use the same dinnerware you use inside. And don't worry whether it matches. In fact, the more mismatched the better. If you need a mess of dishware for a big party, Ikea's Lugn plates and bowls are a bewildering seventy-nine cents each.

No 36 | Have a signature party. If you're short on ideas, try a pig roast (see box on opposite page).

No 37 | Don't install speakers—unless you like rusty old boxes hanging from dangerous wires, which is what they'll turn into.

No 38 | Raise the speakers, not the volume. Put your stereo on the ground and you're providing

MY

WILDER-

NESS

THE ARGUMENT FOR A HANDS-OFF APPROACH

EXP Ours is a lawn of the little people, for the little people. Living in a modest seaside city, packed into a neighborhood of Victorians, ours is kinda small—maybe fifty feet by twenty—surrounded by a holey fence and six hovering oak trees—nothing like the manicured suburban field of my upbringing. No fire pits or Emu Heaven chairs here.

please. Since when did a lawn need to be fussy and designer labeled, especially with a house full of rampaging kids? We willingly gave up long ago. Besides the old grill, we like to think of ours as an urban wild, a truly virtual lawn, which means it's virtually anything you imagine it to be in all its grubby, hands-off glory. In the spring, it's Fenway when the kids take the

field for Wiffle-ball games; at the height of summer, after ever more numerous futile attempts to grow and keep grass, it turns into a dust bowl as we, its laborers, shrivel in the heat; in fall, the trees unload their tonnage of leaves to create a golden carpet, enough cushioning for the flying bodies and feigned pratfalls of a Manchester United-Chelsea soccer match;

and finally winter brings a mountain pile of snow from the plowing operation that clears our driveway, a Himalayan highland, perfect for flying snowballs and assaults from deranged yetis. Sometimes, when I gaze upon our little lawn, trying so hard to push up tulips at the edges, sprouting patches of green tendrils destroyed by our puppy digging huge trenches, I believe that

I'm a settler looking out across the vast prairie. Or that Andrew Jackson is giving a speech from our porch about how much he loves this lawn, how America was built on lawns such as this, in all of its populist hillbilly grandeur. My heart swells with liberty and justice for all. Then a football whistles past my head and breaks another window.
—MICHAEL PERMINTI

