

Add glamour to your backyard



EVELYN ESHUN DESIGNING WITH STYLE

There's no denying it, Canadians fiercely enjoy their relationship with the outdoors, especially in the summer.

After hibernating most of the year indoors, with short days and cold temperatures, the value of well executed backyards is truly appreciated.

As a designer who typically works on beautifying the interior space of my clients' homes, it is a pleasure to be asked to create a living space outside.

We apply the principles of interior design and decorating to an outdoor space in much the same way as we do indoors. Designing and decorating your outdoor living space is an extension of the indoors of your home, you can express your personality with texture and colour, using fabrics, plants, and various materials.

What does seem evident is that outdoor spaces are becoming more luxurious and

glamorous at all levels of the budgetary scale.

Creating a beautiful and useable outdoor space will undeniably impact the value of your property. Including a plan for a covered area such as a pergola, a deck or stone surfaces, a fireplace, an outdoor kitchen and proper planting for privacy adds functional square footage to your home.

As a general rule, 10% of your home's value should be spent on landscaping, however, this number can very quickly be surpassed with all the fantastic products available.

Decorating your outdoor space can be quite costly, so keeping in mind a few things when planning is the key to allocating dollars where they count the most. Here are a few tips to help you begin planning your outdoor 'room';

- Know the style you are aiming for, what is the feeling you want? Are you seeking a traditional and curvy look, a charm-

ing rustic cabin look or a sleek penthouse urban look?

- Measure your space; you do not have the benefit of walls and ceilings to create boundaries. Having the size requirements of your seating or dining areas will narrow down your search for items which are appropriate.

- How will you use your space, will you be entertaining adults, children, both?

- Consider finishes and how much maintenance they require. Not all materials are meant to be left outdoors in all weather situations. Make sure you ask the supplier how to care for the items you invest in.

- Consider a lighting plan, after a long day's work you want to be able to extend the enjoyment of your space into the evening hours.

I was recently asked by Bleu Venue Events to participate as one of the six designers decorating and setting the stage for entertainment in the beautiful and luxurious backyards of a handful of chosen homes in Mississauga.

The tour is a VIP access to six stunning backyards professionally styled with a portion of the proceeds going to support local charities.

I instantly agreed knowing



The use of a fireplace or pit will help extend the enjoyment of your space into the evening hours.

that I would have fun playing 'house' with some wonderful products from local suppliers and stores.

After visiting my dream backyard, my first action was to go window shopping for items which would allow me to express a glamorous and luxurious lifestyle.

The goal is to create an environment which will inspire those who buy tickets for the opportunity to view these settings, to have them to create their own outdoor oasis at home.

What I found was a tremendous array of furnishings and accessories in materials which mimic those used indoors, but meant for hardy survival outdoors.

Blankets made with natural fibers to keep warm on a cool evening, fire pits with wood or stone inside, an array of fabrics from which to choose from and

accessories which are fun and whimsical.

My goal is to create a space which will inspire, invoke thought and make a lasting memory for those who visit the Tour.

— *Evelyn Eshun is a Toronto-based interior designer with more than 15 years experience creating custom design projects for the residential market. Visit her at www.evelyneshun.com.*

EVELYN ESHUN'S UPCOMING EVENT

Tour six spectacular backyards that have been professionally staged by local stylists and designers including Evelyn Eshun at the Mississauga Backyard Glam Tour.
Night Tour: 8 p.m - 10 p.m. Friday, July 3;
Day Tour: 10 a.m.-4 p.m Saturday, July 4.
Tickets: \$30, visit www.BleuVenue.com.



Nesting tables from Home Sense. Designing and decorating your outdoor space is an extension of the indoors of your home.



Spring chair from Home Sense. Express your personality using fabrics with different textures, colours and various materials.



Blankets made with natural fibres help you keep warm on a cool evening.

This modern club chair from Casualife evokes a glamorous and luxurious feeling.