



Bringing the Indoors Outside

Today's outdoor living spaces become bolder & self-sufficient

THE SECRET TO A GREAT MEAL is not just the ingredients but also the experience – particularly when it comes to being outside. This might be because of nostalgic memories of barbecues, the arguably better quality of the air or the benefits of being in nature, but either way having an outdoor kitchen is a steadily growing demand. No matter the climate, homeowners want these types of spaces to play a part in everyday entertaining, family time and relaxing.

“The heart of the outdoor area is definitely the outdoor kitchen,” said Russ Faulk, chief designer, head of product at Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet. “People tend to linger and relax more when they are outdoors. In our fast-paced, connected world, outdoor spaces become an at-home getaway to be with family and friends.”

FUNCTION & FUN

Outdoor kitchens are no longer only an extension of the indoor kitchen but are meant to function as their own comfortable, self-sufficient spaces.

“Consumers expect outdoor living areas to function independently from the rest of the home,” said Mitch Slater, CEO and founder of Brown Jordan Outdoor Kitchens and Danver Stainless Outdoor Kitchens. “Cold beverages, food and entertaining staples must be in close proximity and at the ready. As a result, the demand for outdoor-rated sleek storage solutions, elevated fabrics and furnishings and outdoor appliances has never been greater.”

Functionality must be at the top of the list when building an outdoor kitchen, according to designer Julianne Hendrickson of Tampa, Fla.-based Hendrickson Interiors. If an outdoor kitchen is inconveniently placed and the homeowner has to continue going inside for ingredients or tools, the experience will feel less peaceful and immersive.

“Designers should ensure that the location of the outdoor space in respect to their clients’ home makes sense and improves the flow of the space as a whole,” said Hendrickson. “They also want to be able to host guests, so comfortable seating and a bar area are important.”

ABOVE The Bloc Fire Bowl from **ELDORADO STONE** provides a surprising amount of warmth from its 20-in. by 20-in. form. The patent-pending burner system comes complete with a 65,000 BTU burner, all-brass fittings, a heavy-duty, stainless-steel platform and a 10-year limited warranty. A honed, smooth surface or travertine are available options.

RIGHT FUTURE AUTOMATION's new IP-SHU Outdoor Screen Hinge Mechanism uses servo-based technology to hinge a large-format screen from flat in the floor through 90 degrees for viewing in under 10 seconds. Fully outdoor suitable, the IP-SHU system can be customized to suit screens up to almost any screen size, including 100-in. or larger video walls. It also features an automated floor fill panel that raises up to hide the floor void when the mechanism is open, making the entire system suitable to walk on when open or closed.

By **ERINN LOUCKS**

It's not all about functionality though – outdoor kitchens are also a chance to install a bolder design and unusual appliances. According to Faulk, it is becoming more commonplace to have multiple specialty products like a smoker or an outdoor pizza oven, in addition to a traditional gas grill. This gives homeowners the versatility to experiment and have fun with different cooking methods and types of fuel.

“Cooking outdoors imparts a certain charm and flavor and elevates the overall experience,” said Ramsay Hawfield, vice president of marketing and product development at Eldorado Stone. “Consumers are looking for new, creative ways to enjoy their homes and yards in just about any climate.”

NO MATTER THE WEATHER

Improvements in material durability have allowed customers in more intense climates to enjoy outdoor kitchens, from homes that endure long winters with below-freezing temperatures to oceanfront houses that face wind and saltwater.

“We continue to see growing interest in outdoor kitchens from all regions – regardless of climate,” said Slater. “Using durable materials like stainless steel and powder coating allows for flexibility when designing for the outdoors.”

Powder coating allows for a range of aesthetics – from bold or neutral hues to realistic wood-grain imitations and industrial-inspired finishes – while still boasting lasting durability. Stainless steel is another resilient choice for any climate; in particular marine-grade 316 stainless steel offers even higher resistance to corrosion in coastal regions.

“There is starting to be more effort in creating items specifically designed for outdoor use,” said Shaun Lin, product development manager at THOR Kitchen, adding that stainless steel is a popular choice for their customers as it can withstand water, wind, insects or rot. ↓

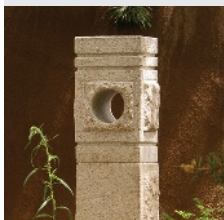




The Faceted Fireplace by **HEARTH CABINET VENTLESS FIREPLACES** was created in collaboration with award-winning furniture company, Cliff Young, and showcases a contemporary classic installation. Created as part of a larger furniture line, the fireplace features mixed metal materials inspired by images of modern skyscrapers and the play of reflected light.



Developed on the principles of kamado-style cooking, the Shokunin Grill from **KALAMAZOO OUTDOOR GOURMET** adds to the company's collection. The Shokunin features an adjustable fire grate system that allows for fires to be built in three different positions, depending on the cooking style. In addition, both charcoal and wood can be used independently or in combination.



Carved from blocks of black-and-white or beige granite, the Yosemite Lantern from **STONE FOREST** is a contemporary take on traditional Japanese guidepost lanterns. The lantern consists of the bottom post and separate "light box" pieces and is drilled for lighting with a light diffuser.



LEFT Set in an RTA G8 Grill Island Series with a refreshment bar island and a built-in kamado stand, this kitchen features a 36-in. S-Series Grill, Asado Cooker, refreshment center, refrigerator and pull-out trash and recycle, all from **COYOTE OUTDOOR LIVING**. Using the RTA Flexbuild System – like in this project – designers can lay out and customize an outdoor kitchen to fit almost any space, budget or features desired.

It's not just about durability when it comes to the weather. Hendrickson also looks at how to keep a space comfortable, including whether the area might need a shade structure or motorized screens and whether the client is willing to bring in cushions when it rains or if they need furniture covers. Placing the kitchen components in regard to the weather – like the shade and sun patterns, as well as wind – is also key to a comfortable experience.

"You don't want to place the grill in an area where the wind is constantly blowing smoke toward your dining area or into the house," said Faulk. "You may also need to consider adding ceiling fans or heat lamps into the design or partially enclosing the space to help protect it and the homeowner from the elements."

SEAMLESS DESIGN

Even though the outdoor kitchen might have special components that can only be used outside – like a firepit or a smoker – and it needs to function independently from the indoor kitchen, it also needs to complement the home's interior.

"As manufacturing for all products improves, we will see softer lines, materials and colors that we are more used to seeing indoors," said Erika Egeden-Nissen, Walker Zanger director of marketing.

The same considerations used in an indoor kitchen design need to be taken into account – like space, scale, texture and a color scheme – to complement both the indoor kitchen and the surrounding landscape. This adds an extra challenge to the project, as a designer needs to also ensure the outdoor kitchen works well with the client's exterior property, whether that includes a view, trees, stone walls or just a lawn.

"Interior designers have become more focused on connecting the interior to the landscape," said Jim Ginocchi, president of Coyote Outdoor Living. "When designing an outdoor space, the natural sight lines, weather and orientation of the patio are all considered."



ABOVE Designed in collaboration with architect and designer Daniel Germani, **TECNO** from **BROWN JORDAN OUTDOOR KITCHENS** offers an alternative to the traditional outdoor kitchen aesthetic with its European-inspired form. Ultra-durable, weather-resistant materials like powder-coated stainless steel and compact Dekton by Cosentino countertops ensure the **TECNO** kitchen will endure exposure to the elements. In addition, the cabinet doors include integrated pulls and soft-close drawers.

Designer Tama Bell of Sebastopol, Calif.-based Tama Bell Design has seen a continued use of black and white in these spaces for a classic, comfortable elegance that typically complements most indoor palettes. Naturally inspired textures like wicker, metal, concrete and stone then help to connect the design to the outdoors.

"I also see the addition of earth tones like clay, terra cotta, copper, blush and soft yellow being used in fabrics, upholstery or planters," said Bell. "These are all beautiful neutrals and play off the abundance of green we see here in our garden landscapes."

TECHNOLOGY & THE FUTURE OF OUTDOOR SPACES

As smart home tech has infiltrated many kitchens today, it can only be expected that it will be used in outdoor spaces as well. Like for indoor kitchens, homeowners want the tech being used outside to enhance the overall experience but not feel obtrusive.

"Technology plays a part in outdoor trends with its ability to provide the creature



Created with outdoor sanctuaries in mind, the Landscape Collection from **WALKER ZANGER** consists of stone-effect, large-format porcelain tiles with the technical characteristics required for the outdoors. The collection includes a variety of widely differing styles – from the minimal, sophisticated look of Modica (shown here) to Carrara, Lagos Sand, Reverso Grigio, Brit Stone Ocean and Namur Nero.



The **VINOTEMP** Designer Series Outdoor Automatic Ice Maker produces and stores up to 44 pounds of ice per day, which is stored in a removable storage bin to fill entertaining needs. Front vented for built-in installation, the stainless-steel ice maker features automatic overflow protection and a reversible door to make pairing the unit with surrounding appliances simple.



INOX's new Rainbeaux palette for CeraMax allows designers to choose practically any color their clients desire for their exterior door hardware. The ceramic coating is durable, corrosion resistant and provides a high level of hardness and adhesion. This finish also helps prevent deterioration from harsh environments, including salt spray, oxidation, humidity and ultraviolet light, and it is resistant to most solvents and chemicals.



LEFT THOR KITCHEN's Outdoor Kitchen Suite offers homeowners the flexibility to put eight appliances within the suite in any arrangement, such as an L- or U-shape. Homeowners can mix and match the appliances into various layouts, and the modular nature of the suite eliminates the need for costly supporting infrastructure. All products are ETL rated for outdoor use and feature 304 stainless steel to resist rust and ensure longevity.

comforts of the indoors, in an outdoor setting,” said Hawfield. “With technology, movie nights can happen under the stars, music while sitting around the fire bowl can be played and changed without having to get up, and Wi-Fi makes staying connected possible inside or out.”

Good technology in an outdoor setting includes lighting – an all-important safety component in a space that often is used for night entertaining. Adding lighting to masonry features like steps and walls can help evade trips and falls, and landscape spotlighting can create a backdrop to the kitchen at night. Proper lighting around outdoor dining spaces – which today often include fire components – makes an outside living space comfortable for hosting guests.

“Outdoor kitchens are entertaining spaces, so it’s more and more common to see these spaces include high-definition televisions, sound systems and Wi-Fi connectivity,” said Faulk, adding that he saw a large TV that could fold into an outdoor deck – created by Future Automation – at CEDIA Expo. “It’s

more than just setting a timer to have your lights go on or off at night, it’s about setting a mood that suits how you plan to use the space.”

All these technological components will need to blend into the outdoor design, whether that’s with a light disguised in a paver or a speaker that looks like a stone. The overall goal will be to give homeowners all the great parts about the indoors but in the rejuvenating setting of nature.

“I believe that consumers are keen for simple things,” said Marcelo Alves Inácio, CEO and president of GlammFire. “People are wanting to benefit from an outdoor kitchen that provides a place for freedom and experiencing life together with family and friends.” ●



LEFT La Bohème from **GLAMMIFIRE** allows cooking for all kinds of outdoor meals and offers a bold, artistic look when not in use. Along with a charcoal or gas grill, it has a functional sink with a retractable tap and side storage area that can be converted into a mini-bar fridge. La Bohème is available brushed and lacquered in stainless steel, as well as black carbon stainless steel or copper-coated stainless steel.