



EMILY HENDERSON'S TILED TERRACE FROM ABOVE



INSPIRE

ELEVATED HALO GARDEN AT RHS HAMPTON COURT 2018 BY ROSEMARY COLDSTREAM



PAOLA LENTI

GARDENS FOR LIVING IN A CHANGED WORLD



AS LOCKDOWN HAS MADE OUTDOOR SPACES EVEN MORE VALUABLE, ANJI CONNELL TELLS US HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THEM, BY BRINGING THE INSIDE OUT.

As we adapt to a new way of living that encourages social distancing, our outdoor spaces have become invaluable settings as places to connect and to benefit our mental health. If there is one lesson to be learned at the moment, when the future feels so uncertain, it's that we must surrender to the here and now and design a life we love. There is no better time to reflect, take action, and truly live in the present. As Marcel Proust summed up: "The



CIRCULAR TIMBER SEATING AREA WITH CENTRAL FIRE PIT

real voyage of discovery consists, not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." It's time to experience everyday things as if for the first time, and take nothing for granted.

We're all feeling the need for more space at the moment, mentally and physically, and moving outside is a great solution. Garden designer Judy Kameon transformed an under-utilised 1930s courtyard into a 'front room', using outdoor encaustic tiles as a 'rug' to anchor an extra-wide Plain Air (her own brand) daybed and coffee table. Adding a water feature to muffle street noise, she created a magical spot that also relates to the architecture of the house.

Kameon's Elysian Landscape headquarters is also a great example of outdoor living. Housed in a once derelict space, it has been transformed into a lush oasis with terraced areas for guests and staff to gather. Similarly, sunken seating around a fire pit makes a pleasant place to be and is suited to our UK weather, lying low in the ground, avoiding winds. Adding an overhead cover to a space like this will keep heat in and help keep the worst of the weather out. Fire pits are also useful in all seasons. A raised platform facing a view or over water looks fantastic and is an excellent way of borrowing space.

Privacy, or lack of privacy, is another issue we have had to deal with over the past months. Tiles can be used not only to update areas but also to



THE LONDON GARDEN OF INTERIOR DESIGNER EMMA SIMS-HILDITCH

define spaces. With the addition of screens and partitions, backdropped with vertical green walls or feature walls and wall cladding, fabulous private outdoor spaces can be created – from working areas to intimate dining spots. Softening them with abundantly over-spilling planters (Atelier Vierkant pots are a great option) helps further in creating cosy, private spaces.

Adding a water element creates atmosphere and cuts down on noise pollution. Wall claddings help with sound issues, and are perfect for ▶

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THE LG GARDEN AT RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW USED HANGING HERBS MAKING AN EXTREMELY USEFUL AND EASY GREEN WALL



SUNKEN TIRED GARDEN BY JUDY KAMEON



PAOLA LENTI, WITH SOFT ROMANTIC PLANTING

maximising vertical surfaces in tight city gardens. Make it dynamic by adding splashes of fun and playful colours. Painting and cladding walls, with stones, marble, metals, organic materials with naturalistic patterns, add interest, depth, and colour. Mirrors and polished metal cladding will add depth and interest by reflection. Add planting to them for movement or woven fibre fencing and screens, like those available from Forest Avenue. You could also dazzle with neon.

Planning outdoor soirees and lingering lunches will help us get through this current pandemic. Take inspiration from South African garden designer and landscaper Tone Alexander, who says: "I wanted a summerhouse in the garden which started out as a greenhouse and evolved into the happiest little gin palace for family and friends to gather safely outdoors." His gin bar is made from recycled doors and windows.

Interestingly, Google Trends has seen a massive 192% increase in outdoor bar searches while outdoor kitchen searches saw a 106% increase over the past six months. Kitchens are experiencing a lot of wear and tear, so it makes sense to take some of the action outside.



HOME ESSENTIALS

Arclinea's Artusi outdoor kitchen is a fabulous choice. Made of materials which have technical features that are highly resistant to humidity with a good degree of thermal insulation, it's made entirely of AISI 316 stainless steel. It is internally



JUTE HOME: HILLSBOROUGH MEDITERRANEAN SAN FRANCISCO HOUSE

insulated and has a magnetic seal to protect the interiors from leakage and insects, and a Fulgor Barbecue element with four gas burners topped with a lid and a Miele induction hob. There's even a pull-out base located beneath the single-basin with a thermal container for food and beverages.

A new awareness, or perhaps an enforced awareness, highlights how important gardens and outdoor spaces are. We are beginning to realise just how nurturing and restorative they are. Cold minimalism is going out of favour as the need and urge to actually 'use' our gardens overrides the need for mere decorative additions – not to mention their lack of contribution to local wildlife. We are all feeling the need to reconnect with nature by growing more productive gardens and more sustainable wildlife-friendly spaces.

It's important to use lighting to extend our usage time – they also help create views and extend the space visually. This works from inside too, as it's much more beautiful to look out at a view than dark. Light up sculptural works of art, trees, tables, seating areas, and hang lights from trees and eaves to light up your life literally and visually. Take a look at Wever & Ducré for inspiration.

Creating outdoor play areas for families is a high priority, too. Integrate outdoor play areas incorporating whiteboards and blackboards for home schooling, sandpits, hammocks, balance beams and climbing frames. You can blend these spaces into the garden using native hedging which will also help local wildlife.

Be prepared – they say more pandemics are on their way!

ABOUT ANJI CONNELL

Internationally recognised interior architect and landscape designer, Anji Connell, is a detail-obsessed Inchbald graduate, and has been collaborating with artisans and craftsmen to create bespoke and unique interiors for a discerning clientele since 1986. Anji is a stylist, feature writer and lover of all things art and design.

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