

# a room with a VIEW

**Interior accents and fabrics shape the new family room. Part living space, part luxury resort – all your backyard**

**F**or years, the trend in outdoor living has been to integrate the interior with the exterior to get the best of both worlds. This means bringing comfy furniture and high-performance appliances outside, and developing materials and technologies to help them withstand the weather.

The recession may have dampened spending overall, but it drives the “inside-out” movement as people forgo vacations and nights on the town to make the most of their outdoor living space. Homeowners want to step into their backyards without leaving the comforts of home. That means bringing indoor practicalities like task lighting and coat racks into the great outdoors. And then there are those who want to feel as though they’re worlds away.

“The style in outdoor living this year can be summed up in two words: luxury resort,” says Elaine Williamson, owner of her self-named Frisco, Texas-based design firm. Her clients want amenities like decked-out cabanas that give the impression that an umbrella drink is soon to come. “We’re truly turning yards into places you’d visit on vacation.”

Both groups, the nesters and escapers, are fueling a “design revolution” in outdoor furniture and furnishings, says Rob Pressman, principal of TGP Inc. Landscape Architecture, Encino, Calif. “Exteriors used to be more raw in the sense we didn’t have all these sophisticated materials. Now, all the interior elements are available for the outdoors.”

Manufacturers are offering outdoor furnishings that would look right at home in a living room or even a four-

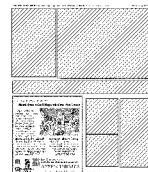
star hotel suite, including deep, comfy sofas with silky upholstery, accent pillows with elegant piping, and fringed throws. “Think tufted, rounded and luxurious, with not a bit of wrought iron,” Williamson says. “Think damask. Nautical stripes and big tropical florals on vinyl are a thing of the past.”

Companies like Patio Heaven and Kanna offer outdoor sectionals, sofas, loveseats and ottomans that seem like they would be out of their element outside, due to the richness of their materials and their detailed construction, but they’re designed to withstand full exposure to wind, rain and sun.

“You can leave them unprotected. You can spray them off with a hose,” Williamson says. “Some manufacturers are so bold as to offer them in white.”

White is “popping up everywhere,” agrees Gina Wicker, creative and design director for Glen Raven, N.C.-based fabric design firm Glen Raven Inc., which makes Sunbrella outdoor and indoor fabrics. “It makes the perfect canvas for seasonal updates with pillows, throws and rugs.” This season, “Neutrals are transitioning to cooler hues like a gray-cast taupe rather than warmer tones, and charcoal gray rather than dark, chocolate brown,” Wicker adds. “We’re seeing these cooler neutrals partnering with anything from fun yellow, orange and pink to calmer wheat, brass or vellum hues.”

Whatever the purpose of an inside-out exterior, the same interior design principles should guide the selection and placement of furnishings. “They





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