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Pembroke & Ives,
photographed by Stephen Kent Johnson

This winter's hottest party destination? Your garden. Turn to the season's biggest alfresco trends to up the ante on your outdoor entertainment space

WORDS BY NAOMI CHADDERTON

Studio Michael Ellison,
photographed by Nicole Franzen



BACKYARDS

Pool Party



A Dubai villa by Marie-Claire Mrad, photographed by Walid Rashid

Whether you consider yourself a domestic goddess or not, there's no denying the Middle Eastern winter days bring out the entertainer in all of us. The time of cooler temperatures, plush dinner parties and festive soirées, it's a season that's made for hosting, which means a little preparation on your part.

From the rise of the outdoor kitchen to tablescap settings that will be sure to make their way on to your guests' socials, this season's design trends will help to take away just a little of the stress. The ultimate garden indulgence, all eyes will be on the pool this winter, as adult-only pool parties get a luxurious makeover. "While conventional blues will always be on trend, today's pools are a canvas of colour and materials," Lebanese interior architect Marie Claire Mrad tells *MOJEH*. "From calming greens for a serene oasis to a muted palette for an elegant vibe, or the bold choice of black for a reflective modern feel, the options are as diverse as your imagination."

Other important aspects to consider when imagining your space is the surrounding greenery — "beyond the pool's edge, lush surrounding greenery sets the tone, casting shadows on the water when it's touched by the sun's rays," adds Marie Claire — while fountains or cascades add a dynamic and therapeutic element to the pool experience. "Picture a small fire on the poolside, creating an enchanting ambience," she continues. Just add a designer pool float and some carefully crafted cocktails and you're good to go. 🕒



Mehditash Design, photographed by Carmel Brantley



Paddleball set, Loro
Piana at Net-a-Porter



Bikini, Hunza G

Swimsuit, Versace
at Net-a-Porter



Sunglasses, Celine



Slides, Miu Miu at MATCHES

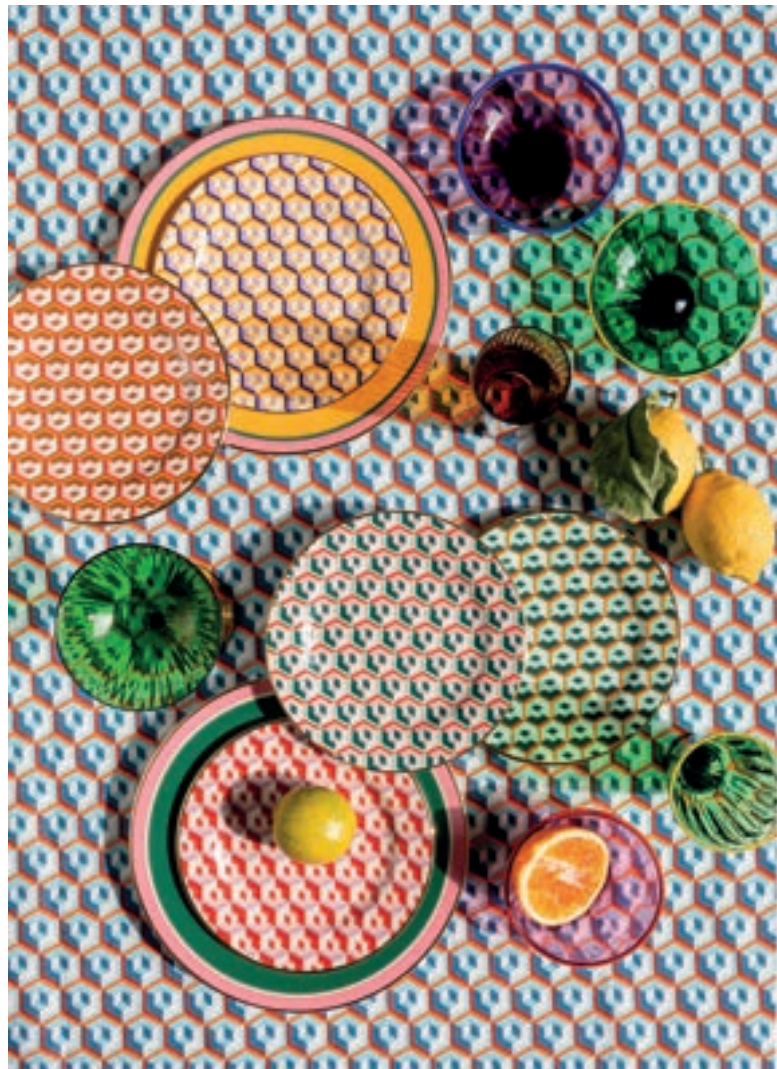


Float, Pucci at Mytheresa



Towel, Missoni
at Harvey Nichols

Welcome the return of alfresco season with the pattern-clashing styles of La DoubleJ (below), Nina Campbell (right) and Gergei Erdei (below right)



Plate, Gergei Erdei



Placemat, Gergei Erdei

When it comes to tablescaping for winter 2023, go big or home with collections that are guaranteed to turn your table into a thing of beauty. "My suggestion is to try to think outside of the box and surprise your guests. We are all busy so when we get together it should be fun and memorable," Gergei Erdei, Gucci designer turned interiors maestro, tells *MOJEH*. "Add a conversation starter piece like a decadently printed tablecloth or statement placemats with coloured artisanal glassware. The statement textiles are great investment pieces because they add something extra to the table instantly and you can easily restyle them for another occasion."

European coastal towns are perhaps the biggest inspiration right now — Gergei's Herculaneum collection, for example, is named after an ancient Italian town located near Naples, while we're also seeing lots of tableware inspired by the likes of Capri and Sicily, affectionately dubbed 'Italian nonna chic'. Look to Dolce & Gabbana for the best of the bunch.

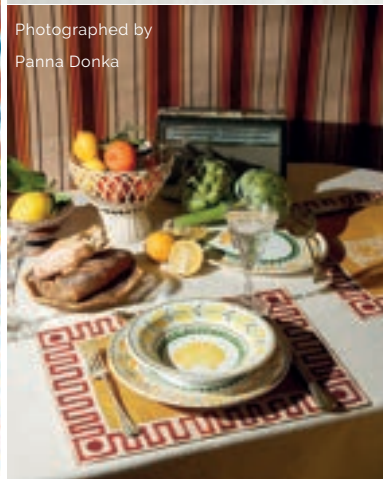
"Tables with personality are the biggest trend in tablescaping right now," agrees Aquazurra's Edgardo Osorio, whose latest collections are also alive with personality. "I'm seeing a lot of print on print."



Placemats, Cabana at MATCHES



Photographed by Panna Donka



Mehreen Baldoni Interiors



Cutlery set, CB2



Decanter, Tom Dixon at MATCHES



Crate & Barrell

Apron, H&M Home



If 2023 has shown us anything about interiors, it's that outdoor kitchens are a high growth luxury that will take your outdoor dining design to a whole new level. "An outdoor kitchen creates a complete outdoor living experience," LA-based celebrity interior designer Lonni Paul tells us. "The ability to stay outside with guests as you prepare a meal is invaluable as you can spend so much more quality time socialising with family and friends."

All about creating memories that use elements you can't easily add indoors like pizza ovens and a barbecue, but with the same level of finishes, materials, aesthetics and comfort, be sure to complement yours with a suitably stylish outdoor dining space for long lunches and dinners this winter. "Colourful appliances are really trendy right now, and you can tie the hues in through things like throw pillows on the outdoor furniture," adds Lonni. "The outside kitchen and gathering space really give you the opportunity to incorporate colour and have some fun since it's a place for entertaining and taking in nature."

As for her top tip? "Make sure you have a water line so you can have ice outside — this is something often overlooked and it's always nice to have a constant flow of cold drinks by the pool or in the garden, particularly when entertaining." ☺



Salad utensils, L'Objet at MATCHES



Salt and pepper shakers, H&M Home



Jug, Cabana at Net-a-Porter



Serving utensils, Nina Campbell



Liz Lipkin Interiors, photographed by Ryan McDonald



Chair, CB2



Pouffe, Missoni at Mytheresa



Marie-Claire Mrad, photographed by Walid Rashid



Besty Brown, photographed by Shade Degges

Take A Seat

It's always important to look the part when entertaining at home — and that refers to your outdoor sitting area just as much as it does your outfit. This season is all about dressing your garden to create a thoughtful and layered area, finding that perfect balance between style and comfort. "One of the biggest trends right now is a minimalistic modern design characterised by its clean lines and uncluttered aesthetics," says Mohamad Ahli, interior designer at The Design Desk, Crate & Barrel UAE. "There is a growing appreciation for the beauty of natural elements, and we are seeing a rise in the incorporation of teak wood, planters and natural textures in upholstery and cushions."

If you're after something a little more adventurous, be bold with textiles and print, particularly when it comes to cushions, pillows, and outdoor rugs. "Inject some colour to create a burst of new energy in the space, or introduce diverse textures, shapes and materials to create a dynamic outdoor setting," adds Mohamad. Finally try introducing a statement piece such as an accent lounge chair or a striking side table, and don't forget about lighting. "String lights, lanterns, and candles cast a warm and inviting glow, enhancing the winter atmosphere and adding to the overall charm of an evening garden get-together," he says. (M)



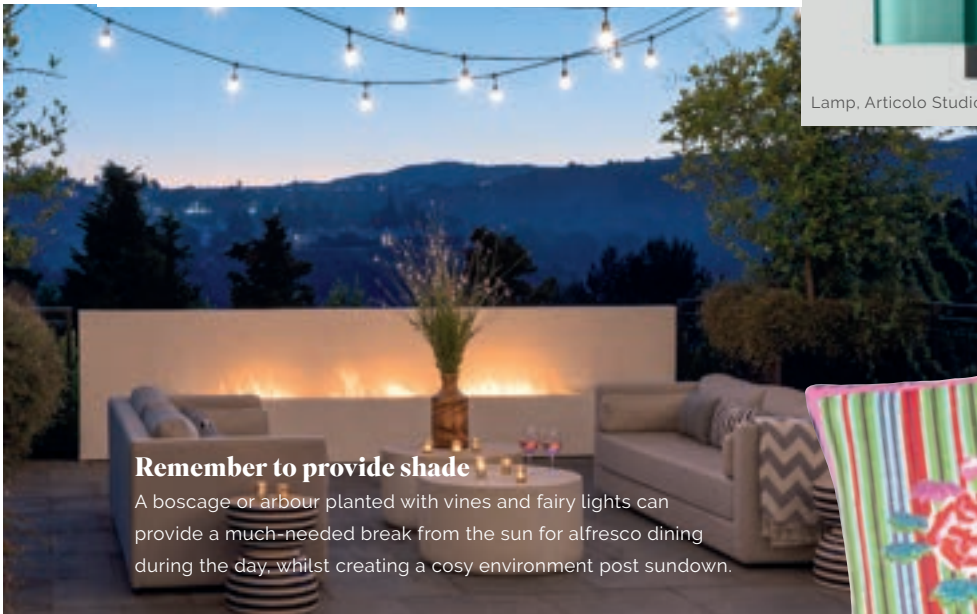
Pouffe, CB2



A Dubai villa by Marie-Claire Mrad

Bring your bar to life

The bar should be the centre of your outdoor entertaining space and the most accessible element of your garden. I love a beautiful white polished bar with gorgeous wooden rattan high stools, for example, while you can also accessorise with colourful tall vases for a pop of colour along with modern and sleek pendant lights.



Lonni Paul, photographed by Lisa Romerein

Remember to provide shade

A boscage or arbour planted with vines and fairy lights can provide a much-needed break from the sun for alfresco dining during the day, whilst creating a cosy environment post sundown.



Planter, Dantone Home

Marry both style and comfort

Leaning towards a muted colour palette for exteriors can serve as a backdrop for furniture which can then be accentuated with pops of colour to add personality to the surroundings. Textured blankets, patterned rugs and big soft cushions for the floor and sofa will help provide the space with plenty of comfy seating where your guests can linger until the early hours of the morning.



Lamp, Articolo Studios

Luxe lighting

Outdoor lighting is a must, whether it's hanging lanterns, the dancing silhouettes of flames from an outdoor fire pit, dimly lit candles or a fully integrated lighting plan.



Above: Lantern, Crate & Barrell
Left: Pillow, Lisa Corti at Mytheresa



Blanket, Gabriela Hearst at Net-a-Porter