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5 Pro Tips to Make Your Outdoor Space Fabulous

1. Space plan:

Just like with an indoor space, consider creating a floor plan or layout to ensure that you are using your space wisely and that everything you want to incorporate will fit. This will avoid costly mistakes and ensure that your space(s) flow easily. Things to consider: leaving enough space for walkways and pass-throughs, ensuring that the furnishings aren't too big or too small, ensuring that you have enough case pieces to set down drinks, etc.

For this project we were challenged by the placement of the columns for the pergola. On the new deck, the clients wanted a dining space and lounging space for their large family. A space plan and some creative thinking allowed us to configure not one but two seating areas within the small space.

2. Make your furnishings multi-functional:

Outdoor spaces can have many uses. They can be family hangout space one weekend and entertaining space for colleagues, family members and friends the next. When considering your layout, think about how you can incorporate furnishings that can have multiple uses depending on your needs. For example, in our outdoor project we used concrete stools, ottomans and benches for our coffee and accent tables. This allows you to have additional seating when you are entertaining large parties as well as spots for easily placing drinks and food plates.

(Continued on reverse)



BY PAOLA
MCDONALD

3. Consider comfort:

Just as with your indoor furnishings, comfort should be an important feature of your outdoor pieces as well. But comfort for outdoors isn't only about the pieces you sit on. Consider sun, wind and rain control when laying out your outdoor space. Awnings, umbrellas, solar shades, outdoor draperies and landscaping selections can all assist in creating comfortable all-weather outdoor spaces. For our project, the clients created multiple spaces with varying degrees of protection to ensure that they could be outdoors even when the weather isn't perfect.

4. Consider durability:

Of course your outdoor furnishings and fixtures are going to have to withstand the elements. But not all outdoor-rated pieces are created equal. Do your research to learn about the best quality fabrics, rustproof metals and other materials so that you can make educated selections. The better the quality, the longer they will last and the better return on your investment. For our project, we stuck to purchasing from companies with the highest reputation and latest and greatest materials to withstand the elements. All fabrics are easily cleanable and power-washable. To make them last even longer, we added mildew resistance spray.

5. Accessorize:

I am a firm believer that you should treat your outdoor spaces as you would your indoor spaces. Accessories add the personal touch and warmth to make the space feel finished. Many companies are now creating durable outdoor accessories such as wall art, sculptures and other accents to give outdoor spaces the same sophisticated elegance of your indoor spaces.



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4633 Allens Mill Boulevard Haymarket, VA 20169
Phone: 571-239-8845 Fax: 703-546-1017 inquiry@olamarinteriors.com

olamarinteriors.com

