

Summer *spruce* UP

Getting the most from your outdoor entertainment this summer

When summer arrives and the holiday season approaches, the entertaining season moves into full gear. Just like your home, the design of your backyard or outdoor entertaining area can affect how enjoyable and usable the space can be. An outdoor renovation or a simple makeover can dramatically change the style, feel and experience of your outdoor entertaining and the relaxation it deserves.

Make it your space

A makeover can be as dramatic as your imagination, however the first step should always be **to think about how you prefer to relax and entertain** in this space for:

- large parties,
- small intimate sit down dinners,
- outdoor space for the kids to play, or
- enjoying a bit of solitude with a good book.

Once you have decided on how you would like to use your outdoor area, **realistic 'make over' decisions need to be made.** If your outdoor space is limited, try not to overcrowd the area as this will make it too difficult to access and less usable. On the other hand, if you have a large outdoor space you may want to consider dividing the area to create more intimate spaces to cater for different activities.

Consider the elements

During the design phase of your makeover you will need to consider the elements. A sudden downpour in the middle of your function could put a dampener on the occasion. Equally, a scorching hot summer afternoon in a backyard without shade will not be a relaxing one. Other elements to consider are prevailing winds and noise if you are close to neighbours or a busy road.

While summer is the main focus of outdoor entertaining, the addition of heating can make your outdoor area a year round option for entertaining.

Include a 'splash of you'

With the structure of your outdoor space in place, the fun part starts - decorating! While there are lots of TV shows and home design magazines available, make sure you let your personal style shine through.

Try to consider:

- consistent colour themes,
- use of different furnishing materials to create interest,
- adequate seating including a bench style seat to accommodate larger numbers,
- comfortable cushioning to bring the indoors 'out', and
- lighting to create the mood.

The barbie

Arguably the most important element of any outdoor entertaining area is the BBQ. Make sure you consider the placement of your BBQ. It needs to be close enough to the main area to encourage your guests to jump up and give you a hand with the tongs - but far enough away to avoid clouding them in smoke.

The guests you don't want

When entertaining into the evening, remember that the mosquitoes are sure to arrive. You should consider some form of pest control in the design of your outdoor area. There are a range of options from the buzzing blue lamp through to classic citronella candles to help create an appealing atmosphere with lighting.

Sit back and relax

Once your hard work is done, remember to enjoy your space and have a relaxing holiday season.



If you need to finance your outdoor renovation call the office to see how we can help you.

