

ESTILA

empowering through style and colour

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Inside out

OUTDOOR LIVING

words, styling and photography by Louise Ives-Wilkinson

Who can believe the longest day of the year has already been and gone? Not me, I refuse to accept this and so I'm setting myself a goal to spend more time relaxing and dining al fresco to make the most of the summer we have left.

As we all know the sunshine hours here in the UK are fairly limited so I feel it our duty to God of the Sun, Ra, to make the most of them when they are here. There has been a real focus on outdoor living this summer, with more and more of us aiming to drag our home comforts outside to enjoy in the soft glow of a great British sunset.

Sunny days allow you to go wild with colour and pattern, throwing a myriad of rainbow coloured homeware together, which in any other situation would possibly look a little too garish, but with nature as a back drop, it looks so inviting and uplifting, bringing a little tropical cheer into your life. An external space to relax and unwind is so essential for well-being and so here are my top five tips to achieve the perfect outdoor living space:

1. Create a focal point - Be it a statement piece of furniture, sculpture or water feature, give your guests something to sit and admire.
2. Add a pergola to zone a seating/dining area which you can then use to hang plants, pictures and lighting from. Style the area as you would an indoor room for special occasions.
3. Use pieces of interest to create character to your outside space. Salvage yards, junk shops and antiques fairs can be a great place to start. Think outside the box, the quirkiest the better but always try and reflect your own personality and style.
4. Layer up seating with throws, blankets and cushions to keep you warm when the sun sets.
5. Surround the garden with citronella candles, which look beautiful at night but keep the bug bites away. Better still invest in a fire pit doubling as a natural insect repellent and a place to toast marshmallows.



CHERKLEY SOFA AND DRUM, Coco Wolf (cocowolf.co.uk) | PASTEL LUSTRE OCCASIONAL TABLE, GOLD CUTLERY SET 24 PIECE, Mia Fleur (miafleur.com) | NEVIS RUG, BIG FLORRIE, CACTUS, CHARTREUSE AND PORTREE COOLIN TASSEL CUSHIONS, CANDLES, Bluebell-gray (bluebellgray.com) | CORAL THROW, Claire Gaudion (clairegaudion.com) | RICE EMBOSSED WINE GLASS AND MELAMINE BOWL, Fig 1 (fig1.co.uk)



So the homework from me is to this week is to go out, grab a patterned tablecloth and some inexpensive colourful tableware (something that makes you smile) and aim to have dinner al fresco at least twice this week. Your mind and your body will really thank you and so will Ra.

Every picture tells a story..

THE RUG AND CUSHIONS STORY

Bluebellgray was established in 2009 by Fi Douglas, a graduate of the prestigious Glasgow School of Art. The signature style was born though love of colour and all things floral combined with a desire to create unique painterly pieces. Designs include cushions, rugs and curtains in vibrant, oversized watercolour blooms and abstract pieces. You cannot help but smile when you see these cheerful designs, my favourite being the on trend cactus watercolour print.





THE OUTDOOR SOFA

Coco Wolf originated in 2013, when sisters Claudine and Rebecca were sitting in their garden, feeling that their outdoor setting was missing something. The outdoor furniture didn't reflect the aesthetic and style of their indoor living so Coco Wolf was created to design statement pieces that bring indoor living outdoors, irrespective of the season and climate. The beautiful designs are durable in all weather conditions and have to be seen to be believed as they are tougher than the beautiful designs look.

THE THROW STORY

Established in 2013, Claire Gaudion set out to encourage the rediscovery of colour. Taking inspiration from the ever-changing seascapes and coastal landscapes of the Channel Islands, their printed and woven textiles depict the islands' natural rhythms with unique colour combinations, geometric and abstract patterns. Claire Gaudion textiles are developed and sampled in Hampshire before being produced in specialist mills in the UK and all items are ethically and responsibly made. The range of patterns is very diverse so there is something for everyone.

Until next time...

Louise xx