

When it comes to outdoor living, it's all about you!

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Your backyard is without a doubt, your most intimate place on earth. It is the place where you feel the most comfortable, where your guard is always down. Whether you design it as an oasis of tranquility or a stage for entertaining close family and friends, your backyard needs to be unique and personal, it needs to reflect who you are.

To personalize your backyard, your starting point is with a reputable Landscape Designer. Once the ground work is completed, the next step and the more exciting one is furnishing and decorating it. However, before you run to the nearest garden furniture store, do your homework first and determine what your needs are. Then look for an outdoor living retailer, who is willing to listen to your needs and help you make your garden truly *your* garden. A garden that has “you” written all over it. When you decide on the place to purchase from, take with you a picture of your yard and show it to the person that is helping you.

The more informed your sales person is about your needs the more he or she will be able to help you make the right choices. In addition to quality, select designs that are appealing to your particular sense of style. Your furniture needs to blend fashion and comfort because a backyard is no longer just the back of the house, it is an outdoor living space sometimes

referred to as the “Outdoor Great-room”.

The lines are fading between the indoor rooms and the outdoor “room”. The outdoor room is often becoming the most beautiful place in the house, even though it is not “in” the house. The reason behind this trend is because the passion for outdoor living is universal. We were not created to live in offices, to be confined in vehicles or to stare at a computer screen all day. We are, by design, outdoor creatures. In addition to the fun of being outdoor, elegantly designed and furnished outdoor spaces add great value to a home.

As in every project, budget constraints play a major role in the decision making. Again, it pays greatly to do your homework and compare your options. You should be able to create a fine outdoor living area even with a tight budget. It would be wise to avoid the big-box stores because you will end up with low quality garden furniture that looks like everyone else's.



Other factors to consider are the size of your space and the practical aspects of your yard. If space is tight, choose folding furniture. If you prefer low maintenance, choose Aluminum furniture. If you prefer the richness and elegance of wood, then nothing surpasses Teak. However when choosing Teak furniture, being informed will ensure you are getting the best value. For example, the source of the timber should be professionally run plantations. Timber harvested from other sources is often illegal, damaging to the environment and of poor quality. Reputable manufacturers ensure the wood has been kiln-dried before construction and only use solid brass hardware. The furniture should be smooth to the touch and the wood protected by a UV resistant product to prevent it from turning grey. Avoid any finishes that are oil based as they break down under our summer sun causing un-attractive discoloration.



One of the trends that is gaining popularity is accentuating your yard with wooden furniture painted in fun yet elegant colors. These accent pieces add a great graphic impact and definitely make a statement. Choose furniture made from hardwoods suitable for the outdoors. Another trend is combining different styles of furniture. For example

Creating the ultimate outdoor setting is everyone's dream. Whether to bring peace and tranquility to your solitude or warmth and charm to your gatherings, your yard needs to be a reflection of you.

To assist in your selection, Casual Elements, located at 2419 Mercantile Drive in Rancho Cordova, offers a wide variety of beautifully designed, high quality home & garden décor at unbeatable prices. Outdoor lines are offered in Solid Teak, Iron & Teak, re-claimed Teak, Meranti, Bamboo, Aluminum and stone, in addition to an extensive selection of Interior lines. Contact them at 916-853-2210. Their furniture can also be viewed online at www.casual-elements.com.



combining an old Teak dining table with modern Teak chairs. This adds spontaneity and fun. If you want to add permanence to your yard, then choose stone. Dining table tops made from polished stone slabs on hand-forged steel bases are gorgeous.

Finally, choose a store that offers you custom-made cushions for your furniture with a wide selection of quality outdoor fabrics.

