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Feng Shui

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Spring and summer backyard gatherings are timely with large dining areas like the one at this Sunjams Foundation concert in Orinda. Photo provided

Cut back a bit of the red pillows, towels and accents in favor of cooler blues, agave green, turquoise - these will balance nicely the general living areas of your residence.

You can further balance the fire element with earth tones like yellow, orange and brown. In the Five Elements Theory fire creates earth so conversely, earth also drains fire. This summer try to include water features, but be safe and smart. While the water element is the ultimate controller of the hot fire element of summer, remember to be mindful of all conservation and safety issues to enjoy the water element fully.

You can immerse yourself in water by changing up your décor to include more blues and greens, adding wavy art pieces or photos of water, like from the Lafayette Reservoir.

Kitchen Tips

What are the primary areas of Feng Shui redesign in our homes during summer with the dominating fire element? The fire element is right at home in the kitchen and plays a major role with both indoor and outdoor stoves and grills, especially convenient and smart with the warmer summer days. All this yummy warmth is nicely countered and balanced by preparing in our kitchens cooler liquids to further balance our own personal Qi. Be sure to have fresh, cooler greens on hand. And it's no wonder why Gelato tastes best in summer.

Your kitchen should ideally be a focus for de-cluttering with color pops to be more of a gathering place. Allow the kitchen to sparkle this time of year, adorned with fresh flowers and fruit. Finish your kitchen projects in spring to fully enjoy this area in summer.

Place seating and stools so while finishing touches are placed on a meal, there is an ease to visiting, celebrating and connecting with others.

Cooling salads, fresh vegetables, and artisanal local fare allow guests to be nourished seasonally. It is great Feng Shui to mix things up a bit, so create a custom beverage as a signature gift to your guests. Kitchen counters adorned with colorful glass pitchers of mint Meyer lemon water

Summer is just around the corner, and this is the perfect time for sprucing up your outdoor living spaces. Place cushions on furniture, switch on outdoor battery candles, landscape, paint patios or upgrade your yards, and light up outdoor kitchens, all in anticipation of more outdoor fetes and welcoming summer with open arms.

Your home is a reflection of you, so take a peek in the rooms - some inside and some outdoors - so your home's spaces are ready to go this summer.

The warmer days of summer begin soon and so will the warm fire element. We must know how to effectively control the fire element of this 2016 Fire Monkey year and avoid any burn-out from too much of a great thing.

Control the Fire Element

First, summer is ruled by the fire element and with all the additional gatherings the warmer weather suggests, you should enhance your front entrance lighting to be sure guests and family can access your home with ease.

Remember that the color red represents the fire element and so cooling it down is important.

or Sun Tea sweetened with local honey are especially nice. It's easy to grow both mint and fruit in pots near your kitchen, and placing fresh flowers from a farmers' market on kitchen islands brings the season indoors.

Don't Forget Dining Areas

Next are the dining areas, indoors and out, which can also be an extension of your kitchen this time of year. Remember to create plenty of outdoor dining areas, plus grilling areas, too. Create gathering places for shared late-night conversations after sumptuous meals under the stars or outdoor string lights.

Outdoors, summer is the very best time to incorporate many clever Feng Shui elements with passion and flair, but especially a feng shui water feature will work hard to balance Fire Qi. Also, creating livable, conversationally arranged seating and social spots with outdoor solar lights twinkling on starlit evenings, and meditative areas with jasmine or orange blooms wafting in the soft summer breeze, creates great feng shui and outdoor spaces that can be fully and completely utilized by all.

Many outdoor areas also include feng shui features like flowering arbors, windchimes and bird baths. Knowing how to place and arrange pieces to produce desired results is the key to auspicious feng shui.?

For example, to activate the wood element of late spring and abundance, hang a bamboo (and not a metal) wind chime in the far left area of your yard.

Summer is also time for relaxing under a tree with a lovely book, slowing down to smell the wisteria and allowing yourself to recharge a bit. If you can make it to the beach, swim in the salty sea, which will allow you to be truly cool when the warm sun fills the summer sky - and who doesn't want more of that? If you can't make it to the beach, a backyard pool will do.

And with these tips your home will be ready to allow you to retreat and recharge properly, without getting burned by the fire element.



Hummingbirds attract positive Qi so make them feel welcome with a feeder. Photo provided

Mandala Feng Shui



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[back](#)

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