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## Summer's the season for outdoor entertaining

By Amanda Eck



Photo provided

Designs.

### Ambient Lighting

When the sun sets, keep the party going with soft lighting. I love to use lanterns, candles and string lights. If you have a nearby outlet, you could bring out some indoor lamps to set on the table or in a seating area.

### Create a Focal Point

If you have a large blank space, either a wall or fence, add some outdoor art to create interest. I also love using mirrors outdoors to create the illusion of space and they can also lighten up a shaded corner with reflective light. Outdoor fire pits or a water feature also create nice focal points.

### Planters

Pots of different sizes and colors can be a great way to add a pop of color to your outdoor spaces. They are perfect for small yards and easy to maintain seasonally.

### Play with Color

Outside spaces are the perfect place for bright, bold colors. Have fun with different color combinations: turquoise and yellow, pink and orange, navy and magenta.

### Don't Forget the Music

No need for a live band. With technology becoming more user-friendly and accessible, it's easy to create ambiance with a iPhone and Bluetooth speaker. I have even seen clever outdoor speakers disguised as rocks.

Hope you enjoyed these ideas and use them for your next outdoor party! Until next time my friends!



Bring out your favorite pillows and throws when entertaining. Photo provided

Well, ready or not, summer is here! And with that comes lots more outdoor entertaining. Here are a few fun ideas to liven up your outdoor space.

### Bringing the Indoors Out

We've all heard the phrase bringing the outdoors in, but the reverse also holds true. Bring out your favorite pillows and throws when entertaining. Accent tables and decorative pieces can also be used for those special outdoor occasions. We used an antique dresser to display all the sweet treats for my sister's bridal shower.

### Ground the Space

Outdoor rugs are great for creating intimate seating areas and providing a punch of pattern and color. For great outdoor rugs shop FrontGate, Horchow, or Ballard



An antique dresser displays sweet treats. Photo provided



As the Owner and Principal Designer of Lamorinda-based Amanda Carol Interiors, Amanda Eck believes your home's interior should be both approachable and well- appointed. She often asserts, "Beauty is a necessity." With a distinct sense of style that mixes contemporary and classic design she fashions spaces that are both elegant and inviting. Her design aesthetic is inspired by anything visual but especially fashion, architecture and art. Visit <http://amandacarolinteriors.com> for more design ideas.

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