

Cover Story

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Creating Awe in the Outdoor Room

Ellen C. Wells

Balconies are more complete with baskets, patios more welcoming with planters and outdoor kitchens more entertaining with combos—and more functional if they're filled with herbs. Plantings around a house are decorative. Plants displayed in an outdoor room make it a home.

June is the ideal month to get your creative outdoor room juices flowing—both for your own garden center displays and to inspire your customers for seasonal celebrations and, really, just hanging out outside.

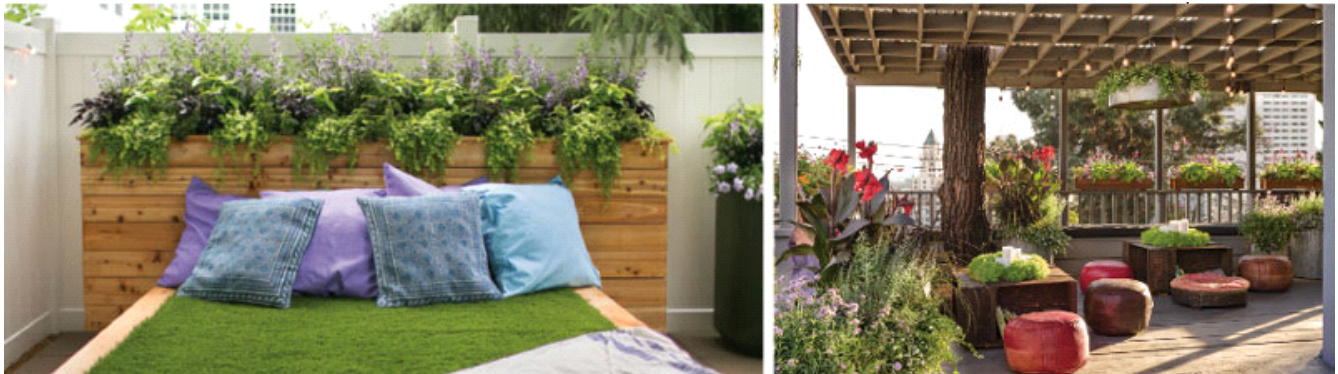


Good Near the Grill

Darwin Perennials' Herb-a-licious program offers six herb combos that not only look great but are delicious and functional, too. Use these three herb combos for an outdoor grilling and drink prep area.

- Back Patio Sips for herbal teas and mock/cocktails includes Scarlet Pineapple sage, Kasar basil, Sweet Leaf stevia, Mojito mint and Lemon thyme.
- Blue Ribbon BBQ for seasoning your favorite grilling items includes Barbecue rosemary, Italian oregano, Coccineus thyme, Berggarten sage and French tarragon.

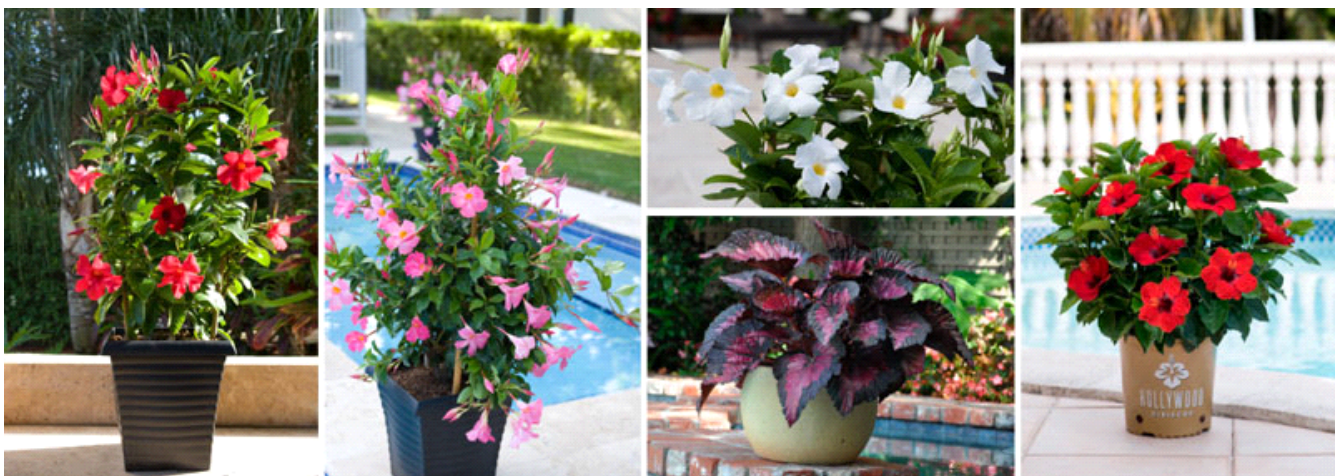
- Spice Island for your favorite Caribbean specialties includes Scarlet Pineapple sage, Kasar basil, Spice Island rosemary, orange mint and Hot and Spicy oregano.



The Urban Outlook

Urban outdoor rooms are all about creating lush abundance in what is otherwise a brick and concrete world. Here, outdoor urban spaces are turned from bleak to bountiful with the addition of Proven Winners plants artfully and whimsically arranged for maximum ooohs and aaahs.

- Angelface Wedgwood Blue Angelonia, Sweet Caroline Raven Ipomoea, Lysimachia Goldilocks, Rockin' Golden Delicious Salvia, Colorblaze Chocolate Drop Solenostemon (Coleus)
- Silver Bullet Artemisia stelleriana, Toucan Scarlet Canna, Graceful Grasses Vertigo Pennisetum, Denim 'n Lace Perovskia and Snowstorm Giant Snowflake Sutera



Plants for Poolside

Plants near a pool can soften its edges, reflect the water's motion and add verticality and color to what is otherwise a monotone, horizontal scene.

Suntory's SunParasol Mandevilla add much-needed flower color, contrast and structure to a pool and its lounging deck.

- SunParasol Giant Crimson Mandevilla
- SunParasol Pretty Pink Mandevilla
- SunParasol Giant White Mandevilla

Green Fuse Botanicals' rex begonias are a fun, foliage-forward option for a shady portion of a pool. The colorful swirls and textures of the leaves give its surrounding some drama and interest.

- Dibs Rothko Begonia Rex

J Berry Nursery's line of 21 Hollywood Hibiscus varieties gives a pool, deck or patio a tropical feel in a range of hot and dramatic colors, each flower popping against deep-green and shiny leaves.

- Hollywood Hot Shot Hibiscus



Falling for Foliage

Foliage plants are great for outdoor rooms as they provide a ton of color, texture and structure without much of the debris that one gets with flowering plants. Take this combo with Ball FloraPlant's strappy-leaved Flamethrower Salsa Verde Coleus, for example, paired with another foliage plant Croton petra, and Megawatt Red Bronze Leaf Begonia and White Delight Bidens for some floral pop.

- Flamethrower Salsa Verde Coleus.

David Bache, Sales Director for Garden Industries in Loxahatchee, Florida, uses large tropicals in pottery, terracotta or even old found objects when decorating an outdoor room. "Continuing with the current trend for large leafy houseplants, why not use *Monstera deliciosa*, *Musa* or larger philodendrons (*P. giganteum*, *Evansii* or *P. gloriosum*) to create a very tropical feel," David suggests. Underplant with cascading plants (small philodendrons, pileas, pothos or various *Tradescantia*) or mix with colorful annuals. Other tropicals David suggests for the great outdoors are palms, cordylines, crotons, small heliconia and ginger.

- *Alocasia Portodora*, *Philodendron gloriosum*, *Hibiscus acetosella*, Dallas Red Lantana, *Epidendrum ibaguense*, *Pachystachys lutea*, Congo *Codiaeum variegatum* and *Tradescantia zebrina*
- *Maurelii Ensete ventricosum*, Lemon Lime Philodendron, *Monstera adansonii*, Samba Purple Portulaca **GP**