

Features

10/30/2026

Sitting Pretty

Story & Photos by Jennifer Polanz

We haven't written as much lately about the outdoor furnishings side of garden retail, so when the folks at ANDMORE extended an invitation to visit Casual Market Atlanta in September to see the showrooms, I jumped at the chance to see what was trending. I was not disappointed.

What seems to be key to where furniture and accessories potentially fit in to your operation is fully understanding your customer base. There's a wide range of options available, but box stores often have a lock on the value side (read, less-expensive seating and dining), which means independents really need to focus on quality, durability and service (your bread and butter!). If you don't have the manpower or the customer base for it, then perhaps there are different avenues to pursue rather than full-on deep seating and dining. If you DO have the manpower and the customer base, then there are so many great options out there for top-quality seating and dining. Here's what I saw, and check out the sidebar on trends that might help you navigate opportunities for next year, too.



Seating

I saw so many options for deep seating in multiple showrooms (virtually every showroom has options here) that it's impossible to show you everything. I just pulled out a few to highlight—some were award winners from the International Casual Furnishings Association (ICFA) and others I found as I wandered the multiple floors of showrooms. Let's start with an award-winner.

Pamlico Sound by Soundstage

This is a seating set collection that should be heard, as well as seen. Taking one of the top honors from the

ICFA, this set, Laguna, provides immersive sound with proprietary technology that allows the user to link up multiple pieces of furniture via Bluetooth. Outdoor sound is one of the fastest-growing segments and with this set there are no wires or complicated setup, just great sound.

Telescope Antero Collection (Pictured)

I learned so many fun things in this showroom. For instance, did you know the fourth-generation family-owned Telescope created the famous Director's Chair? It was originally called the Deck Chair, but when it became ubiquitous with every Hollywood production it got renamed to the Director's Chair. But let's talk even more comfy seating. The Antero Collection is new and features Marine Grade Polymer (MGP) durable construction with a rustic,

natural look and unique design (notice the backs of the chairs and sofa). The collection's options include an arm chair, a swivel chair, a two-seat loveseat, a three-seat sofa and an ottoman. There are a wide variety of Sunbrella fabric options available for the cushions and multiple finish options in this collection.

Alfresco Home Founding Fathers Collection

The Founding Fathers Collection from Alfresco Home plays on the names of, well, those who started our country. I'm just going to highlight the deep seating options, but there are also some dining options. There are four styles within the deep seating: Franklin, Morris, Hancock and Livingston. They're all made in the USA from HDPE with heavy-duty aluminum supports in the frames. There are a variety of finish options and Sunbrella fabric selections.



Dining

Let's move on to eating (it's almost lunchtime). There were several table sets that could be great options in a garden center.

Portica Vienna Teak Dining (Pictured)

The Vienna Teak Dining set from Portica was another award winner from ICFA in what the organization said was a major category for consumers to invest in. The judges picked it for its unique architectural quality. The teak option was new to Portica two years ago and this table pairs the teak frame with an alabaster sintered stone top. It's pictured here with the new textured Sevensseas Portica Select Fabric.

Berlin Gardens Calla Collection

A company whose story started with an ornamental greenhouse grower in Ohio's Amish Country, Berlin Gardens has evolved to become a major player in the casual furniture market. The Calla Collection of dining tables and chairs is new and made out of HDPE, which is essentially recycled plastics. There's a square or rectangle table in the style, as well as stackable side and arm chairs and a bench option. There are multiple finish options and they can even be two-toned.



Firepits & Accessories

Plank & Hide Firepit (Pictured)

While there were many firepits in many showrooms, this one stood out because of its form and function, garnering it an award from ICFA. The Linear Functional Firepit from Plank & Hide, a Cincinnati, Ohio-based company, solves the issue of keeping table space while the firepit is in use. When the Linear firepit is open, it stretches to 74-in. long (you can see the open one in the background of the photo). According to the company, it's the only true convertible coffee table and firepit in one on the market.

Inspired Seasons Accessories

It's understandable that not all garden centers want to jump into a full category of outdoor living furniture. The Inspired Seasons showroom offered lots of accessory options to allow retailers to be "in" outdoor living

without taking up lots of sales floor space. For example, they offered multiple price points of outdoor lamps, lanterns (pictured), a set of nested tables that come in a smaller footprint box, and an assortment of decor accents like outdoor pillows and indoor/outdoor room dividers, among many other products. One additional point is if you're a dealer of any of their products, they can provide special orders for your customers so you don't have to carry a full line, just show what they offer.

Tuuci Pouffe Collection

I heard someone in the hallway describe Tuuci as the BMW of outdoor living products. They offer high-quality, unique and thoughtful designs in a variety of products, including this whimsical—and now award-winning—Pouffe Collection. These fun indoor/outdoor accessories are weighted at the bottom and swivel. There are several different styles and personalities, and they even have fun names, like Groovin' in the Grove; Check, Please! and Gatsby, Darling. They can be used as a seat, an ottoman or just as a stylish accent.



Summer Classics Ridge Coffee Table (Pictured)

Another award winner, the Ridge Coffee Table from Summer Classics is cast stone with a travertine finish and a truly unique item. The judges noted it combined visual presence with strong durability. What caught my attention is the person at Summer Classics who showed it to us (I didn't catch her name) said this and the Aspen Chair fabric design that also won an award hits on nostalgia and "feels collected rather than manufactured." I really liked that thought of feeling like it was part of a curated collection.

Telescope Wugs, Willows & Woufs

The names of these products are a portmanteau of two words, weighted rugs, weighted pillows and weighted poufs. In other words, the creator, Whitney Atkinson, has taken outdoor staples and weighted them so they don't blow away or fall over—genius! These are great additions, again, to retailers who would like to have higher-end accessories, but not dive into the full outdoor category. This line is distributed exclusively through

Telescope.

Alfresco Home Italian Pottery

Of course, no outdoor area is complete without pottery and plants, and Alfresco Home showed several different styles in their showroom. The one that really caught my eye, however, was this beautiful handcrafted Italian Terra Cotta. It's made by two potters, and features a wide variety of designs and sizes. This photo shows some of the more intricate work and also seems to me like it fits into that "collected, not manufactured" ideal. **GP**

Outdoor Furniture & Accent Trends

I sat down with Paula Eller-Cox from ANDMORE and Candy Chase from the International Casual Furnishings Association (ICFA) to hear from them what kinds of trends they're seeing in the showrooms and gain some advice for garden retailers. They provided a couple of key insights to keep in mind for 2027:

- Nostalgia is powerful and some of the colors from previous decades are coming back, like golds, avocado and olive greens, as well as subdued, but classic, patterns and colors. Storytelling also helps to create that nostalgic feeling.
- Technology is creating new opportunities in outdoor living. A great example of that is the Pamlico Sound from Soundstage immersive experience.

- Customization and individualization are becoming a greater asset to setting a brand apart.

When it comes to advice for garden centers, they said this:

- Consider the footprint available for outdoor products to curate a selection that fits properly.
- Consider your customer base and work with vendors to make sure your price points match customer spending.
- Some retailers have greater product needs or multiple locations, while others are placing small orders. Understand if you require a container of product versus a specialty order.
- A great starting point are accessories like umbrellas, pillows, lighting and end tables or bistro sets.

The market is a great place to start, but can be overwhelming. There are folks at Buyer Services who can help you find vendors that match your needs and set up a plan before you go so you can hit the ground running.