



# STYLISH & AFFORDABLE PATIO DESIGN

Patios are a “given” with any home design. Homeowners have long insisted their home include a space where they can retreat outdoors for some fresh air. As we have all seen with the current outdoor living trends, the patio space has gone luxury. But, if you still desire something less extravagant, a simple place to relax and unwind after a long workday, then there are some great ideas that can make your special patio a place of enjoyment.

Small patios need not be dull or uninteresting. Small patios can be the perfect space for gardening, relaxing and entertaining. Be sure to start with a plan on how you want to use your space. Do you yearn for an intimate outdoor dining space? Crave a comfortable reading nook? Or, desire a place to tend to your own bountiful garden?

## Let Me Entertain You

If you desire an intimate place for dining outdoors, then select small seating arrangements that won't overcrowd your space-saving patio. Select a bistro size table with two or four chairs, or even long, flat benches that can be used for seating or low table space. If only a couple of chairs will fit comfortably on your patio, then use small plant stands as a place to hold drinks. Don't crowd the patio with lighting or flower pots, hang planters from above or off the edges of your patio. Lights give even more special ambiance when hung in surrounding trees.



## The Tranquil Retreat

Small and inexpensive touches can transform a patio into the perfect place for relaxation. Start with a comfortable chair and/or foot stool. Obviously, you must experience comfort in order to feel relaxed. Then, fill a basket with your favorite magazines or books so you, as well as your guests, can find something to read with little effort. Remember, you want this space to be inviting! Then, place trellises with climbing plants around the patio with honeysuckle, wisteria and other fragrant plants. Not only will they be visually appealing, but your nose will enjoy the surrounding scents and instantly relax you. One final idea is to place a trickling water fountain on a nearby table. These small and inexpensive patio ideas will quickly transport you to a place of total relaxation right in your very own backyard.

## Grow a Garden

If gardening is your passion, or you want organic vegetables readily available for all your favorite recipes, then container gardening is the perfect idea for your small patio. A number of plants and vegetables can easily be grown in containers of all shapes and sizes. And, if your space is very small, it's nice to know that many different varieties of herbs can be grown in one single pot. Talk about conserving space! Also, be sure to think vertically because attaching lattice board to a wall can easily offer a place for tomato plants to thrive. By staggering the pots on plant stands of different heights, these plants and vegetables will not only be useful, but beautiful.

Looking for some ways to add overall style and personality to your patio?

Patio spaces can take on a life of their own when you add a little of your own personality to the area. If you love bold



colors, then planting vibrant flowers around the border will liven up the space with color and interest. This is an inexpensive way to add a colorful focal point.

## Outdoor Furniture

Another great option is durable outdoor furniture. These days, comfortable and durable outdoor furniture can be found just about anywhere. And, most of it is able to withstand the harsh elements a patio will encounter all throughout the year. Since most patios receive full sun and rain exposure, be sure to pick something that is able to withstand many weather changes.

## Accessories

Some stylish accessories that add little expense include wind chimes, fountains and even hammocks. Who wouldn't enjoy falling into a hammock on a perfect summer's day in a shady spot right off the patio? This may become the perfect place to relax after mowing the grass or when reading the newspaper. And, add in a trickle from a water fountain or the sweet sound of wind chimes blowing in the breeze and soon you'll transport yourself to a place of total relaxation. Adding these inexpensive items to your patio will enhance your senses and offer many opportunities for tranquility just steps from your home.

## Outdoor Lighting

Outdoor lighting has also become a staple for many homeowners and now more than ever, there is little need to worry about outdoor electricity outlets. Why not go solar? Not only is it more economical, but it provides the subtle ambiance that homeowners crave as the sun sets. Plus, it's inexpensive and can be purchased at home improvement retailers all across the country.

While many homeowners are opting for expansive luxurious patio spaces filled with every amenity, some homeowners have less space to work with and want less maintenance. But that doesn't mean their modest patio space will lack the personality and style their high-end counterparts typically exude. Use some or all of the ideas described here and soon your cozy patio oasis will be your favorite spot all throughout the year.