

LIVING

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LONDON CALLING

The city's never been hotter

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GARDEN GROW-HOW

Katrina Kieffer-Wells, from Leigh-on-Sea-based Earth Designs, explains how to turn up the heat and stay cool in the garden this summer

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANNA OMIOTEK-TOTT PHOTOGRAPHY

Let's face it, here in the UK, we need to make the most of being outside while we can. Summer has been slow to arrive and we don't know how long the sunshine will stick around. So here is how to bring some summer style to your garden and enjoy your outside space to the full while the good weather lasts.

Be colourful

Colour is big this year and a great way to make your garden feel summery. We often paint fences and woodwork in darker shades, but we also love a bold splash of colour. Bright blues and pinks, oranges and greens look amazing on brickwork, timber and render. And adding a touch of colour to your walls and raised beds with paint or tiles will bring tropical feels to your space.

But if that sounds a bit scary, get a boutique hotel vibe with brightly-coloured furniture and accessories, or by block planting, with sizzling reds and hot pinks, or lime greens and citrus yellows, in your beds and borders.

Be cool

When the sunshine does appear, it can be fierce, which means you'll need some shady spots to escape to. A pergola, pleached trees or parasol trees all add shade and create a



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gorgeous green canopy overhead. But if you don't have much space, get yourself an arbour chair, a funky umbrella, or even a shade sail, so you have somewhere cool to hide.

Be fun

Add fun touches to your entertaining space to make it cosy and enticing. Lighting and soft furnishings can help here, in interesting colours and patterns. But we've also been known to use neon signs, mirrors and even outdoor paintings in our designs.

Decorative screens are hot right now and make great exotic backdrops to your entertaining space.

Be brave

Bring your own style and personality to your garden. Go for interesting planting choices that bring a touch of the tropics to your outdoor space. Experiment with colour, texture and pattern, whether that's in the hard landscaping on walls and floors, or in your soft furnishings. You can always update elements over time to match the latest trends.

Award-winning Earth Designs are members of the British Association of Landscape Industries and the Association of Professional Landscapers.

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