

OUTDOOR LIVING

8 HOT OUTDOOR TRENDS FOR 2026

PHOTO: STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON

FROM STATEMENT LOUNGES TO THE ULTIMATE IN RIVIERA CHIC

In this Los Angeles home, American interior designer Jamie Bush introduces next-level fantasy at the pool. Bullion-fringed umbrellas, their undersides in a palm print, complement dusty pink terrazzo paving and striped loungers. That the umbrellas stand in custom slots in the pool cleverly provides shade for those in it, and adds a touch of camp to this Hollywood Regency design. jamiebush.com

COMPILED BY | MARTIN JACOBS

Pimp your Patio

By far the most significant trend for the year ahead is patio-as-outdoor-living-room. A post-pandemic appreciation for open spaces means an outdoor lounge is now as considered, designed and decorated as its indoor equivalent. Goodbye to the matching patio set; in its place, a combination of sofas, armchairs, modular couches and tables in a palette that mirrors the entertaining areas inside.



■ "I approached this space as if it was any other room, by considering palette, personality and user friendliness," says La Grange Interiors' Sumari Krige of her starting point for this outdoor living room. "Maximising the floor area was crucial, so the built-in seating is both comfortable and space-efficient, and acts as an extension of the indoor identity. When space allows, I love to create pockets; here I was fortunate to have enough space for a high bar table with views of the ocean." lagrangeinteriors.co.za



■ In this Santa Monica Canyon home (left), designer Jamie Bush reverses the indoors-out trend by extending the outdoor material palette into the lounge. “I wanted it to feel like a wooden treehouse,” he says of the space. To this end, not only has he continued the exterior cedar cladding on both the walls and ceiling, but he’s likewise introduced the brick paving inside, demarcating the space with an oversized rug. Walls of glass that slide into concealed slots make for truly indoor-outdoor living. jamiebush.com

■ By introducing an elongated granite fireplace and chic surface materials (like vein-cut travertine walls) to the courtyard of a Venice Beach home (below left), architects Electric Bowery and landscape designers Terremoto elevate what could have been an ordinary space. While black architectural furniture continues the interior decor scheme outdoors, Terremoto’s inclusion of drooping palms softens the otherwise masculine living room. electricbowery.com | terremoto.la



■ The lagoon-facing terrace of this fisherman’s cottage (above) shouts rustic West Coast. “Given the home’s historic context, we had to comply with stringent guidelines,” says architect Jed Kritzinger of the Churchhaven renovation. In keeping with the understated vernacular, the terrace includes a built-in sofa shaded by a pergola. While the materials may be rustic, the restrained colour palette throughout introduces aesthetic sophistication. Source similar loungers from Waz Outdoor and Vetsak. kritzingerarchitects.com | wazoutdoor.com | vetsak.com

PHOTOS: YOSHIIRO MAKINO, NICOLAS MATHEÛS, COURTESY OF TERREMOTO, ADAM LETCH, LANCE GERBER, PREVIOUS SPREAD; ELSA YOUNG



■ A white powder-coated aluminium canopy makes an architectural statement above the pool and terrace of this Cape Winelands villa (above), designed by local interior architecture and design studio ARCC. “The elegant canopy folds down to provide shelter and privacy while framing views of the landscape and sky,” says project lead Michele Rhoda. This is architecture used to define and contain an outdoor space that could otherwise have felt unfocused. The sun’s movement throughout the day casts shifting light onto another of the terrace’s defining features: a pool island. arrcc.com

■ Studio AR&D Architects divided the expansive outdoors of this Palm Springs home (right) into a series of living rooms, including a cabana-style one at the far end of the pool. The rain-free climate of the desert town allowed interior designer Sam Cardella to match the sophistication of indoor furniture outdoors, knowing that pieces would be protected from harsh sunlight by a canopy. This approach to luxe in-out decorating is well-suited to South Africa’s driest regions. studio-ard.com | cardelladesign.com





■ Of the landscaping at this atypical Hamptons home, founding architect of Workshop/APD Matthew Berman says, "We worked with landscapers who planted wild flowers and grasses everywhere, including right up to the pool's edge." The result is a garden that feels unmanicured, with your eye tricked into imagining that the property merges without borders into the surrounding farmland. Low to the ground, the home feels camouflaged thanks to the plantings that abut its decking. workshopapd.com

Blurred Lines

In much the same way that the thresholds between indoor living and the outdoors have become seamless in contemporary architecture, so too are the peripheries of the home in its landscape. Plantings abut windows, run right up to doors, and engulf outdoor living spaces in a home that's at one with its surroundings.



■ The setting of this '70s-built home (left) inspired Mia Widlake, founder of Studio19 (and who modernised the property), to work closely with the landscaper to immerse the home in its surroundings. Plantings of wild iris (*Diets grandiflora*) and silver bush (*Helichrysum petiolare*) spill over onto gravel walkways. In decked corners, potted plants bridge the gap between what's at ground level and above the eyeline. Mia's choice of a tonally varied, monochromatic black palette not only connects the garden furniture to the architecture, but also "disappears" it within the garden. Source similar black and white pots from Plantr. studio19.co | plantr.co.za

■ Looking at a courtyard in this Cape Town home by Kritzing Architects (below right), you get the sense that nature is reclaiming its turf. Jed Kritzing worked with landscape designer Mark Boule on a space that would bridge the two sides of the house. Note the boulder in the foreground (architecture accommodating the existing terrain), and how Mark's planting runs right up to the glass doors. "I used creeping rosemary, star jasmine and the indigenous *Aristida junciformis* to spill into the courtyard from the rooftop garden. In the courtyard I planted ticky creeper (*Ficus pumila*) to soften the concrete walls," he says. kritzingarchitects.com | ald.land



■ The material palette architect Sean Lockyer of Studio AR&D Architects selected in this California home (left) works hard to integrate the indoors and outdoors. His choice of natural stone for the patio wall extends into the bedroom, and mirrors the tonal range of the boulders and gravel. By landscaping beneath the roof, the garden abuts the interior, and outdoor furniture in colours that match the indoors contributes to the flow. Source similar pieces from MON Exteriors. studio-ard.com | monexteriors.com

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