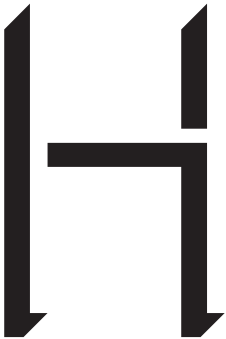


*sunny garden*  
SANCTUARY

*To celebrate the arrival of spring and give a warm welcome to the balmy weather, here's how to make sure our home's outdoor areas are sun-ready*

WORDS LAUREN ENDRODY



Hello, spring! The time of year that, with its crisp air, mild weather that's neither freezing nor sweltering, blossoming flowers and new leaves sprouting all around us, somehow injects us with a new zest for life. There's no better time to use that new-found vigour to bring life back into our gardens or outdoor areas at home, before the heat of summer hits and we become lethargic again. But where to start? Below are a few basics to help you make the most of spring in the seclusion of your garden.

**SPREAD SOME COLOUR**

Since spring marks the end of winter's grey dullness and the return of vibrant colours to our landscapes, it's only fitting that you stick to that theme when decorating your

outdoor areas. Bright scatter cushions for your benches and outdoor sofas, as well as matching outdoor rugs, are always a win. The mild evenings in spring are also perfect for having dinners and entertaining guests outside. You can create a beautiful ambience with paper lanterns, which come in various colours, or alternatively, use romantic lighting options such as bulb string lights or tea-light lanterns and set your garden table with cutlery and place mats in a colour scheme of your choice.

**ENSURE SHADE**

The South African sun in summer is no joke and you're going to want to make sure that, when spending more time outside in your garden, you have enough protection from those ruthless UV rays. There are many ways to create cool shade with items that also add a decorative element, such as a cantilever patio umbrella, or a garden pavilion (or gazebo) over your seating area or on your lawn. For a more permanent option, you can construct a wooden lattice canopy, install a shade sail over your patio or plant one or two fast-growing trees, such as *Liquidambar*. If your patio is already covered, you can add more sun protection around it with outdoor blinds that can be retracted/rolled up when necessary.

**SEATING ARRANGEMENTS**

There's not much better than spreading out in the sun with a book and a cold drink at arm's reach in summer. If you've already sorted the books and beverages, then all you need is a comfortable garden- or deck chair or a hammock to create an alcove of bliss. Just make sure that whatever chairs you use have cushions to ensure ultimate comfort and support for hours of pleasant reading – or snoozing. Also, remember to place them close enough to a shaded area of the garden for that occasional, and necessary, relief from the sun.

BENEFIT  
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*Details on page 62.*

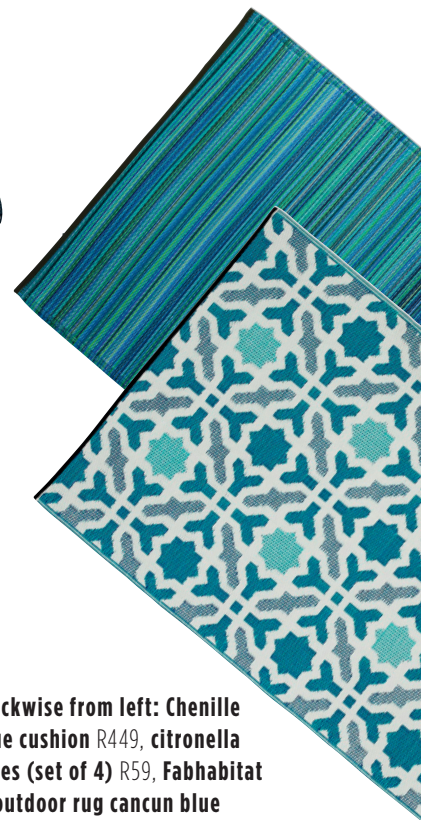






## Fairy lights

ADD SOFT LIGHTING ACCENTS  
TO OUTDOOR SPACES



Clockwise from left: Chenille  
blue cushion R449, citronella  
candles (set of 4) R59, Fab Habitat  
outdoor rug Cancun blue  
180 x 275 cm R1 299, Fab Habitat  
outdoor rug Seville blue  
180 x 275 cm R1 299 and pillar  
candle R99, all @home

## TRANQUIL WATERS

Water features, birdbaths, splash pools – these are all key to creating a summer oasis. It has been proven that the sound of running water has a calming effect on us – so why not bring a water feature into your garden? It doesn't even need to be an elaborate one – most nurseries sell small, simple water features and, bonus, most of them recycle water so you won't need to worry about any wastage. Birdbaths add a different type of charm to your garden, and it's almost equally soothing watching the little birdies splashing away in a pool of water that you placed there for them. Finally, who said you can't have a bit of

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fun too? Get your own splash pool for dipping your toes in or cooling off after lying in the sun all day.

## LIGHT THE BRAAI

Your garden doesn't need to be enjoyed by only you and the birds during spring and summer, especially since this is the prime time of year for having friends over for a good old braai. All South Africans should have a proper braai in their garden. If you don't have a built-in one, you can pick yourself up a Weber, a free-standing charcoal braai, or even a gas grill. These are all easy to move around and clean and most importantly, make for boss braais.

The sooner you begin transforming your garden into a haven that meets all your summer needs, the more time you'll have to sit back, relax and soak up the sun.