

HOME & GARDEN

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The Fine Print

Our all-in-one guide to outdoor kitchens

kitchen living

Everyone's favorite room in the house is also everyone's favorite room outdoors. "It's amazing what people are putting outside," says Charles E. Hess Jr., owner of a landscape architecture firm of the same name in Harleysville. Hess has worked on many outdoor kitchens, including the one on the following page. Read on to find out how you can go beyond grilling for an alfresco meal extraordinaire.



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRETT THOMAS; STYLING BY MARIELLEN MELKER

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

EATING OUTSIDE HAS ALWAYS been a favorite summer pastime. But let's face it—outdoor entertaining can be a hassle: the relay for condiments, charcoal that refuses to light, flyaway paper plates and, of course, cleanup. It doesn't have to be that way.

Check out this family terrace that Charles E. Hess Jr., owner of a landscape architecture firm of the same name in Harleysville, designed for a Newtown Square client to see how you can turn your ho-hum picnics into true dining experiences.

Hess used the same stone that surrounds the grill for the terrace and fireplace to keep a cohesive, roomlike feel.

For something tasty to go with that burger, boil up some New Jersey corn—made easy with these side burners.

An undermount stainless-steel sink allows for quick cleanup; no more sun-dried, hard-to-wash plates.

Ice-makers keep the party going, no matter how high the mercury rises.

A pergola gives the feeling of a ceiling, making the space cozy and comfortable. Well-placed lights softly illuminate the party after the sun goes down.



Stone elevations make unusable space usable—this family terrace was positioned into a steep, unmanageable hill that had previously been wasted space.

This brick-lined stone fireplace not only allows the homeowners to use their outdoor room well into the fall, but is also visible from every room along the back of the house—a strategic move to draw guests outside.



Use indoor elements outdoors: Hess added a tumbled limestone tile backsplash.

Hess chose granite for the countertops because it stands up to outdoor conditions year-round and fits in with the natural feel of the space.

The options for high-end grills are great. Choose one specific to your needs (see our guide on page 110).

Keep the refrigerator close to the grill so uncooked burgers don't sit out to spoil and a cold drink is only inches away.

Make sure to have easy access to all pipes and water lines—just as you winterize a shore house, water lines need to be blown out and shut off before cold temperatures hit.