



HOW TO

# Plan an Outdoor Kitchen

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WHY

# Buy an Outdoor Kitchen?

Outdoor kitchens have long been an integral part of life in warmer climates, with residents in countries such as Australia and the US enjoying regular alfresco cooking. More recently, outdoor kitchens have emerged as a popular choice in the UK and Northern Europe too, despite our occasionally unreliable weather. So why are outdoor kitchens growing in popularity, what do they offer that the humble BBQ doesn't and why should you think about buying one?

An outdoor kitchen allows you to fully enjoy the experience of cooking in the open air with your friends and family. There's no need to keep running inside to prepare the food, grab something from the fridge or hide in the kitchen to use the hob.

AN OUTDOOR KITCHEN IS ABOUT SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST ENJOYMENT OF YOUR TIME OUTDOORS; IT'S ABOUT QUALITY OF LIFE, SIMPLIFYING THE PROCESS AND BEING SPONTANEOUS...

Without the constraints of walls an outdoor kitchen can be whatever you want it to be. From a simple affair with a grill mounted in a worktop and space to assemble and serve simple food, or a wall-mounted structure with myriad useful fixtures and fittings, the only limit is your imagination.

Here's how to plan an outdoor kitchen that you'll love and use for many years to come.





# Location, Location, Location

## FIRST UP

You need to decide where you want to build your outdoor kitchen. If you're creating a new outdoor living area, you'll either remodel an existing spot, or start somewhere new.

Obviously, if you choose to remodel then your decision is made for you! If you start from scratch, then we encourage you to spend some time thinking about where the very best spot might be. Here are some points to consider...

### Where do people congregate in your garden?

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Cast your mind back to the last time you used your garden for entertaining and think about where people tended to gather. Is there an area that people naturally migrate towards? Or is it all down to where the food is?

### Where are the sunny or exposed spots in your outdoor space?

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Consider your garden's aspect and think about when you're most likely to spend time. If you want to sit in the evening sun, choose the best spot in the garden for that. Or, you might live on a hillside and are keen to avoid the prevailing wind!

### Is there a sweet spot to save you money?

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If you're operating on a shoestring, then choosing an area where there is already water, power and drainage can really help to lower project costs and ensure you can channel that budget into high-quality materials, fixtures and fittings.

### Have you got a favourite area of the garden?

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Is there a view that you love or perhaps an area of mature planting that you're rightly proud of? If it's possible to include these areas in your plan, then you'll ensure you want to use your outdoor kitchen as much as possible, and it will become the heart of your garden.



SELECTING

# The Right Layout For You and Your Cooking Style!

The eventual layout of your kitchen will largely depend on the cooking elements that you wish to include but there are other things to consider. One of the downsides of a BBQ is often that it's parked facing away from guests, so that chef has his or her back to the party. An island configuration means that you're facing your family and friends as you cook, not the wall!



The chance to be creative with the layout is often the wasted opportunity in outdoor kitchen design. Without the constraints of walls, you can create something much more fun than you can indoors! Think about the features you want to introduce that you might not have space for inside – a bottle fridge, sear plates or an icemaker! Consider how the different elements will work ergonomically, for example a wood-fired oven should be raised above standard counter height so that you can see inside whilst cooking.

## SELECTING

# The Build Materials

When you start weighing up the different materials on offer, ask yourself what will best complement your property not just now, but after a few years exposed to British weather. Timber creates a beautiful initial appearance but will need maintaining to keep its fresh look. High-gloss finishes can look stunning when regularly cleaned but will show smears and marks more easily. Brick is commonplace in traditional outdoor kitchen builds, but it really limits your choices with both features and appearance.

There is an amazing array of materials to choose from that many designers or installers are simply unaware of, so make sure you do your homework before agreeing to a design. For example, you could explore composites, ceramics, granites, sintered materials, powder-coated metal and many more. At CENA Outdoor we've just started working with Hi-Macs and Dekton, two brilliant modern composite materials available in a range of finishes and colours.

The list below is just a guide, there are so many exciting possibilities!

- Timber – cedar, meranti, oak
- Brick
- Glass-reinforced concrete
- Powder-coated metal such as aluminium
- Ceramics
- Natural stone such as granite
- Sintered materials
- Hi-Macs
- Dekton







## EXPLORING Cooking Elements

If it's a simple 4-burner gas grill you're after, then you'll have ample room for food preparation and plating up on a relatively short straight run. If you're keen to add any combination of other cooking elements in there, such as a side burner, sear plate, induction hob, kamado grill (Green Egg) or wood-fired oven then you may need to go bigger, longer or add a return. Plus, there are other features to consider - we'll get onto that in a moment.

Adding more cooking elements, such as a side burner, allows you to be really creative with your outdoor cooking. You could slow-cook a leg of lamb on the grill whilst sautéing vegetables or boiling potatoes on the side burner. A wood-fired oven means you can create authentic Italian-style pizzas in your own garden - and who doesn't love pizza?

### Some cooking elements to inspire you...

- Gas grill
- Infrared heating
- Side burner
- Induction hob
- Rotisserie
- Wood-fired oven
- Sear plates
- Range tops
- Kamado grill



## OTHER

# Useful Kitchen Features

These are the things that we feel set an outdoor kitchen apart from a BBQ - even if it is a very high-spec gas grill - and take your alfresco cooking to another level!



**A hot and cold water sink** means that you can wash salad and vegetables before cooking, have plenty of water on hand to boil side dishes, wash your hands after handling raw meat and at the end of the meal, wash up dirty pots, pans and plates to keep flies away.

**Refrigeration** - This might include a food fridge and a bottle fridge. That means you safely store food, especially delicate goods that spoil quickly in the heat of the day, such as seafood, salad and meat. A supply of cold drinks ice and more will keep guests happy.

**Storage** - Keep a supply of plates, bowls, proper cutlery, glasses, bottle opener, chopping boards, knives and perhaps even pots and pans outside and ready for action at a moment's notice. No more plastic forks and paper plates or staggering out the house with heavy tableware!





TO

# Shelter or Not to Shelter?

A shelter means that you can carry on enjoying your outdoor kitchen regardless of what the weather does. It's not only rain that can be a nuisance – the midday sun in summer can be far too warm for some people to comfortably sit out in without shade. Some people prefer not to have any permanent or semi-permanent structure in place, using sun-shades and parasols when they need to, whereas want something more robust.

There are a lot of options out there to choose from including:

- Gazebos
- Garden rooms
- Arbours with moveable panels
- Retractable roller shades and awnings
- Sail-style sun-shades.

There are several things to consider if you do decide to include a shelter of some kind in your project – if your home is listed then it's worth contacting English Heritage to get their sign off. A permanent gazebo or garden room may also mean you need to contact your local planning authority, so make sure you know the rules and regs before you get building!







THOSE

## Luxury Extras...

There are some special finishing touches you can add to your outdoor kitchen. After all, you will want to continue to enjoy your outdoor living space long after the food is finished!

A garden room or fully-covered gazebo is the perfect place to hook up lighting, IR heaters, speakers and perhaps even TV screens. Imagine being able to take in your favourite film whilst gathering around a chiminea after a tasty meal? Or gathering friends to watch a big sporting fixture whilst your favourite snacks are cooking nearby!

You can also add water features, sculptures or even a hot tubs or pool to the area, creating a truly exceptional outdoor living space. The only limit is your imagination!





CENA comprises a talented team of outdoor kitchen experts with a wealth of knowledge and broad expertise. Our passion for managing outdoor kitchens from conception to delivery ensures our customers, whilst having an active role in shaping their kitchen, are carefully guided when choosing the location, services, materials and configurations.

We offer a completely free design consultation to help you learn more, so if you would like to find out more about the CENA approach, why not get in touch?

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