

# A GARDEN FOR ALL SEASONS

Interior designer Kelly Hoppen tells **Clare Morrisroe** how to make the most of your outdoor space, whatever the weather (or time of year)

IT FEELS like summer is making a late surge but, with autumn almost here and the dark nights drawing in, how do we make the most of our outdoor spaces so we can carry on entertaining as the seasons change?

Interior designer Kelly Hoppen entertains all year round in the grounds of her fabulous converted lambing barn – a countryside pile set amid the rolling hills of rural Oxfordshire.

'We don't need to be confined indoors just because it's getting colder – that's one of the things we learned in lockdown,' says Kelly.

'We simply need to dress our gardens for winter to make them warm, cosy and inviting for our guests. Don't forget, there are some special occasions to be celebrated in autumn like Halloween and Bonfire Night, and the garden is the perfect setting for a party.'

Kelly puts the success of her own garden parties largely down to 'zoning', as she has created distinct areas for cooking, relaxing and entertaining.

And they all contribute to creating the perfect year-round alfresco party.

'The garden is an extension of your home, and should reflect your taste and style,' says Kelly.

'Decking and outdoor rugs are a great way to zone the different areas. You can get incredible rugs very cheaply now online – and they make a space feel warmer underfoot.'

'My courtyard is very much an extension of the kitchen, and the place we have the table and chairs and the barbecue.'

'There are also lots of pretty dolly pots filled with lavender, sage and all my cooking herbs. And there's an area with sofas and loungers to relax. At the back of the house, I built a sunset deck from old scaffolding planks in the middle of a field filled with wild flowers and grasses.'

'We sit in the armchairs and appreciate the beauty of the countryside.'

## CARRY ON SCREENING

Homemade screens make stylish windbreaks on a chilly night – and offer privacy if your garden is overlooked when the leaves fall, says Kelly.

'They're easy to create using clothes rails – get some inexpensive, thick calico, stretch it around the rail and staple it top and bottom.'

'You can leave the fabric plain or paint borders or stencils to suit your taste. The beauty of a screen is you can wheel it around. They also work in summer as useful shade from the sun.'

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