

Color Splash

Bright summer hues define this backyard entertainment oasis

BY MARY ARMSTRONG

PHOTOS BY TODD BUCHANAN
STYLED BY GRANT WHITTAKER

You can't miss the rainbow in the backyard of this St. Paul rambler. It's not in the sky—it's all around you. From the Popsicle-hued chaise lounge cushions by the in-ground pool, to the azure walls of the cabana, bright happy colors define this entertainment oasis.

After the Highland Park home was renovated in 2008, Lisa Peck, the owner and principal at LiLu Interiors in Minneapolis, began furnishing and decorating portions of the interior as well as the pool/patio space. Inspired by the fun aqua blues on the walls of the pool house, Peck and her co-designer, Emily Anderson, chose design elements that played off the vibrant palette. It seemed only natural, considering that the focal point of the backyard is the swimming pool. Since the homeowner also loves red, the color was used as a foil.

The white-and-tangerine koi print by Ralph Lauren used to cover several large pillows—Peck describes it as a “fun, outdoor fabric with a lot of personality”—is one of the design's many highlights. The colors in the material are echoed in other elements of the décor, such as the accent cushions and the seat coverings.



A bright color palette helps summer last longer in this Highland Park backyard.

OUTDOORS



An eclectic mix of styles defines the backyard design. Cozy chairs next to the outdoor fireplace sport a preppy orange stripe. The red daybed, which was designed by LiLu Interiors and then custom built, has a sleek, minimalist appeal. The love seat in the cabana was purchased by the designers on consignment and reupholstered in a sassy outdoor floral fabric from DelGreco Textiles. The artwork depicting swimmers has a vintage feel, but the pieces are actually contemporary works purchased from HI Gallery in Minneapolis. A 1960s Organic Baroque chair by Tony Duquette for Baker manages to appear both medieval and modern—its elegant wire form suggests a spider web in which one might be comfortably trapped.

The project's biggest challenge was creating different seating arrangements and figuring out how to configure each micro-zone to accommodate a variety of groups and purposes. Peck and Anderson wanted to make the space flexible enough to host an intimate dinner or a big bash.

To that end, some clever tricks were used. The teak dining table by Giati is actually three tables, each seating four people, which can be separated and used for smaller gatherings. The designers chose dining chairs from Thomas Baker, also in teak and weathered to a shade similar to the table.

The versatile daybed can be a couch for a crowd or an intimate place to relax with an e-reader on a lazy afternoon. The bottle-green ceramic garden stools nearby can be used as end tables or extra seating. The cabana, with its three-quarter bathroom, refreshment bar, and sitting area, is a spot for changing into swimwear or reclining on the cozy love seat to cool off in the shade.

Stylist Grant Whittaker created a tableau to complement LiLu's design as a sort of red-carpet premiere for the space. Setting the table with a formal dinner party in mind, he employed a mix of upscale accessories, such as the yellow chargers by Villeroy & Boch and striped salad plates and cutlery by Diane von Furstenberg, with place mats from Blooming-

THIS PAGE Peck and Anderson furnished the poolside cabana with a reupholstered love seat, retro-style artwork, and a beguiling Tony Duquette chair.

LEFT Near the fireplace, the red daybed—which offers space for one person to stretch out, or seating for a crowd—was designed by LiLu Interiors and custom built.



dale's and inexpensive glassware from TJ Maxx HomeGoods. He then added accents—yellow napkins, orange candles—and completed the scene with arrangements of lilies, roses, and juniper berries from Roger Beck Florist in rich tones that play off those in the design.

Whittaker recommends that party hosts invest in an eclectic set of dishes that can be combined in varying ways according to the event. For this particular arrangement, he wanted to maintain a breezy, outdoor vibe, yet make the setting feel polished.

Homeowners daydreaming of hosting summer cocktail soirees on a redesigned patio should start planning early, Peck says, as a project like this one typically takes several months. The result may look effortless, but it requires far more energy to create a lovely poolscape than it does to enjoy one. **MH**

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MORE INFORMATION ON FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SUPPLIERS, SEE PAGE 146.



TIPS FOR STYLING OUTDOOR PARTIES

① **Invest** in dishes and glassware versatile enough to be used in different combinations. Don't hesitate to mix higher and lower priced items.

② **Find** inspiration in the space itself. Colors in fabric or plants can be picked up in the table settings and accessories.

③ **Choose** dishware in neutral, muted tones and then add pops of color with flowers, candles, and place mats to spice it up.