

## Outdoor Furniture Tips & Trends

DEBRA MAURER

### FEATURED CONTENT



Though autumn has just begun, now is a great time to start thinking about ways to update your outdoor space for spring. Many outdoor furniture manufacturers have come out with their new

collections, offering endless possibilities for adding style and comfort to your outdoor living space.

To get some outdoor design tips and learn about the new color and style trends, we spoke to Leisa Rogers McCollister, marketing & project manager of [OW Lee Co.](#), a national manufacturer of luxury outdoor furniture, fire pits, and accessories.



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**Luxury Pools: What are the top colors, patterns, and style trends in outdoor furniture? Are many of the styles included in your collection?**

**Leisa Rogers McCollister, OW Lee Co.:** We are noticing a color trend towards blues and greens, and pairing brighter colors with neutrals, and we cover all these trends in our stock fabric book.

Regarding the overall style of outdoor furniture, we have seen transitional and contemporary looks become more popular. Last year we introduced a very contemporary collection, Gios, and this year the more transitional Madison. Both are a departure from our traditional roots but are doing quite well.



**LP: Outdoor kitchens have become more and more popular over the last few years. Have you seen an increase in outdoor dining sets as a result? What types of outdoor dining sets have been the most popular? (shapes, sizes, etc.)**

**LRM:** We have actually seen the big increase in deep seating, not dining, although the popularity of outdoor kitchens has helped to increase our bar and counter stool sales. It seems a lot of families are foregoing the idea of a traditional outdoor dining set for more versatile and casual deep seating groups.

Chat height fire pits, which are a little taller than coffee tables, have been very popular in part because you can easily pull up a club chair and dine at this height.

With outdoor dining furniture, the trend seems to be the bigger the better. People are entertaining more outdoors and want room for all their guests at one table. A popular table for OW Lee is our expanding tables line. These tables go from 42 x 84 inches to 42 x 116 inches, allowing 10 place settings.



LP: How important is it to have a cohesive style throughout an outdoor space? For example, should an outdoor living room set match/complement the bar stools, or can they be quite different in style?

**LRM:** I think it depends on the consumer's personal preference and the amount of time they want to spend designing their outdoor space.

I have seen our wrought iron chairs paired beautifully with a wooden table and our fire pits used with all-weather wicker modular deep seating. But to artfully mix and match mediums can be difficult. Usually people who want to achieve this look tend to work with a professional designer.

We offer full line collections which include deep seating, lounge, and now fire pits and wall art. People, for the most part, tend to like to buy everything out of the same collection.



**LP:** Have you seen an increased interest in fire pit tables? Are more homeowners choosing them over traditional outdoor coffee tables? How can they accentuate an outdoor space?

**LRM:** Yes, fire pits are hot! OW Lee was one of the first manufacturers with portable, propane fueled fire pits on the market and we have seen growth in this category every single year for the past 11 years. It has become a very important part of our business. For every one coffee table we sell, we also sell about six fire pits.

Fire pits can really be the focal point of an outdoor room. Everyone loves to gather around a fire and chat. I believe it is an innate part of human nature that dates back to prehistoric times. I once heard a story from one of our customers that said the only time their two teenage boys would open up and actually talk to them was around the fire pit. They have a natural knack for bringing people together.



**LP:** What are a few things homeowners can do to give their existing outdoor furniture a new look? Any tips on how to incorporate some of the new trends/colors?

**LRM:** The best way to refresh existing outdoor furniture is to purchase replacement cushions. At OW Lee, we keep all of our old patterns and offer replacement cushions for most of our collections from the past 15 - 20 years. It is astonishing what a set of new cushions will do to revive a 15-year-old patio set.

A great way to stay on trend with colors in your outdoor space is with throw pillows. You can easily spice up some neutral cushions with a few vibrant throw pillows in the latest color trends and change them out as your preferences change.



**LP:** Any other outdoor style tips or trends you'd like to add?

**LRM:** One tip I would give is to look at your outdoor furniture as an investment, just like you would your indoor furniture. Quality is even more important outdoors because the furniture needs to stand up to the elements.

Buying low-quality outdoor furniture means you will be replacing it every 2 - 3 years, which, even at low price points, adds up.

Photos courtesy of [OW Lee, Co.](#)

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