



EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
with Tim Goom

Mulling over your wine; outdoor entertaining in winter.

Although temperatures have plummeted, there is no need to dive for cover indoors like a bear going into hibernation. Entertaining and relaxing outside in the cooler seasons can be very invigorating, and stave off dreaded cabin fever.

The key to enjoying your outdoor entertaining space during the winter is to have an appropriate heat source. Nothing beats a roaring wood fire to keep you toasty whilst also creating a cosy aesthetic visually. Gas fires, pizza ovens, electric fires, ethanol and infrared heaters are also wonderful solutions to keep the chills at bay.

Sleekly designed inconspicuous heaters (heat strips) can be attached to your home or walls, preserving precious entertaining space in your courtyard or outdoor room- no more awkward manoeuvring around a gas heater plonked in the middle of your space. Heating from below using heated pipes in concrete formed seats or outdoor flooring is possibly the most discreet form of outdoor heating available. This system of heating is also very practical for dangerous frosty areas on driveways, maintaining safe access to your home and preventing snow from settling.

Once you have chosen your heat source, containing that heat will further ensure your outdoor space remains inviting whatever the temperature. An outdoor room is the ultimate solution to create a cosy space within your garden. Alternatively louvres, roofs, and glass or perspex covered areas are great options for trapping heat in. Vertical louvres, side shelters and mesh screens will provide protection from heat robbing winds.

Soft furnishings are also important to make your outdoors appealing. A hard wooden bench will not look enticing. Cosy chairs, a well padded outdoor lounge suite, sheepskin rugs, soft cushions, beanbags, lap rugs- what better setting for curling up with a cup of tea in the winter sun.



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Spa's and sauna areas are wonderful additions to your winter relaxing, taking in the stars with a glass of red in hand from the warm embrace of your spa - perfect!

With clever design and good heating there is nothing to prevent you from enjoying entertaining comfortably outdoors throughout the winter. Take your lead from the Brazilians, pair your BBQ with a full bodied red wine for a warming winter dinner, your guests won't give a second thought to hiding inside!

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