

# Bright spot

*Whether you're dining alfresco or lounging in the sun, lighten up your outdoor furniture with a splash of colour*



# Outdoors

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Opposite: Table and chairs from Massproductions. Below: Groovy greens from Paola Lenti, blue table setting from Muuto; circular setting from Grazia&Co



As the mellow days of autumn take over from the summer, there is still plenty of time for outdoor entertaining: backyard barbecues, poolside lounging and garden parties. And with that comes the need for all-weather furniture that can accommodate the changing conditions.

It's a relaxed time of the year for socialising and hosting, and Australians have usually leant towards outdoor furniture that is modern and neutral with monochrome shades – until now.

“As Australians we are traditionally more conservative with colour choices, but we're now seeing a shift,” says Yanni Mastrokostas, director of Zaneti, which specialises in colourful Italian furniture.

“Many people are becoming more daring – inspired in part by European trends – and are willing to incorporate brighter colours. Vibrant hues can create an uplifting vibe that affects mood and atmosphere.”

So whether it's under sparkling sunny skies or the glow of moonlight, outdoor furniture is going feel-good, with everything from soft pastels to dazzling shades, graphic stripes and playful pops of colour.

Whether it's for a balcony, deck, terrace, patio or lawn, designers are having fun outfitting the outdoors.

This season, Zaneti has adopted a palette that evokes the Mediterranean landscape, taking cues from the rich blue of the Aegean, lush greens of coastal vegetation and the warm, subdued terracotta of Italian villas.

Associate director of the Australian furniture brand Grazia&Co Emma Barnett says designing for the outdoors is all about context.

She suggests statement pieces for urban spaces or balconies with sparse plant life, and more saturated tones for clients who want their furniture to blend in seamlessly within a garden environment or dense foliage.

Barnett says that specifying colour is important when it comes to residential homes and their exteriors.



“The palette depends entirely on the space and landscape,” she says. “A large, open native garden may call for different tones compared to an urban courtyard with limited greenery.”

“There's no one-size-fit-all formula; every outdoor space needs thoughtful, case-by-case consideration.”

Whether it's the vibrant bubblegum pink of its horseshoe-shaped alfresco bench or something more muted and earthy, Grazia&Co's signature style is a more “visually light aesthetic that avoids heaviness and bulk, making them perfect pieces for outdoor areas of all sizes”.

Coveted contemporary Italian brand Paola Lenti is synonymous with bold pieces and takes

colour to the edge with lively combinations of plum purple poufs, zingy hammock seats, lime sunbeds, and a flame-hued range of side tables and chairs.

“People respond well to Paola Lenti's designs because they evoke a sense of joy and creativity, making outdoor spaces feel inviting and lively,” says Lucy Poidevin, the manager of Dedece in NSW, which stocks the brand.

While minimalist designs can create a sense of “calm and simplicity that resonates with the laid-back Australian lifestyle”, Poidevin encourages the use of colour as a way for homeowners to “express their personal style while creating beautiful, functional outdoor spaces” that are also

“energetic, cohesive and inviting”. But the spectrum needn't be overtly vivid or overwhelmingly kaleidoscopic – there are plenty of more demure options.

So for those who might feel some trepidation, lighter shades are an easy way to introduce colour and are better suited to mixing and matching.

And if furniture is too large an investment, accessories such as hardwearing market umbrellas, bar carts and waterproof cushions are great for adding a decorative refresh without too much commitment.

Whether you ham it up with vacation vibes or keep it low key with elegant accessories, enjoy it while the weather lasts.