



Home Connection

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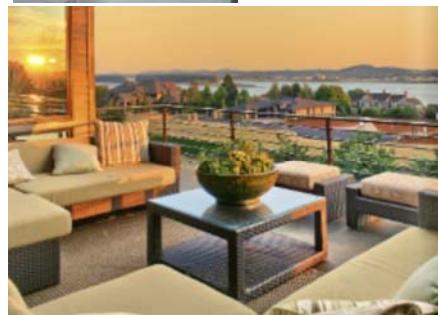
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Five ways to maximize your indoor and outdoor space

This year's massive trend towards greater indoor and outdoor flow has led to a host of inspired ideas for the home, yard, garden and beyond. Ready to give your space an indoor/outdoor upgrade? Start with these five tips!

Add an Outdoor Extension

More and more, homeowners have begun to think of their yards and other outdoor spaces as extensions of living space - extensions that just happen to be outside. Flush decks topped with pergolas or other overhangs make your outdoor living space feel central to all the action since there's no abrupt change in flow or scenery. With the doors open, guests and family members feel free to roam inside, outside and back again, naturally extending your entertaining and overall living space.

Container Gardens

Perfect for the urbanites or other small space dwellers, container gardens are great additions to the inside, outside or anywhere in between. As the name would suggest, these "gardens" are planted in containers - usually unique, eye-catching containers made from natural materials or something equally inspired. Depending on the type of plants you're growing, container gardens can live inside or on an apartment balcony, for example, or can expand to fill your deck, outdoor walkway or entertaining space. Consider bringing in containers of different sizes and colours with diverse types of plants to add some dimension to your space.

Outdoor Living Rooms

The latest trend towards outdoor living rooms is one of the simplest, most cost-effective and easiest to integrate into your space. Durable all weather sofas, ottomans and chairs - all reminiscent of a chic, stylish living room - become a comfortable spot to kick back, relax and enjoy the great outdoors. To make yours all-season, layer in a firepit or outdoor fireplace and you'll be able to use your outdoor living room even after the temperature drops. Some intrepid homeowners have even added in features like stereo/speaker systems, lighting and other decidedly indoor details.

Let The Sunshine In!

Natural Touches

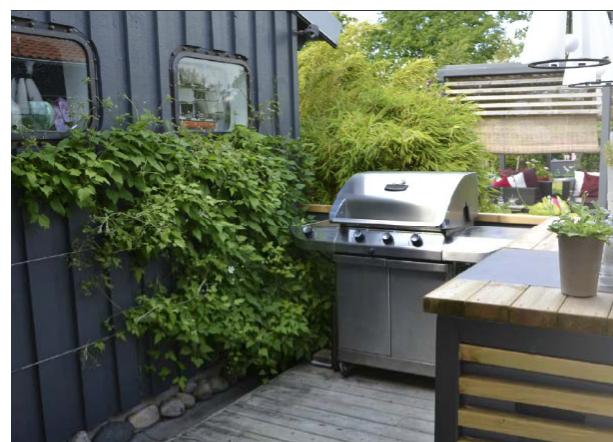
Rattan, hemp and even wicker are back in a big way - and with good reason! These lush natural materials are perfect for the great indoors while still nodding to the beauty and wonder that surrounds. Even bold botanical graphics and patterns have become increasingly popular recently, especially in wall-papers and fabrics. Consider brightening up a darker room or space with some of these rich accents, or using them as part of a transition room that separates the indoors from outdoors.

Belly Up to the Bar

Bars, prep-stations, built-in refrigerators, dishwashers and stoves are all kitchen essentials that can make the move outdoors. Perfect for extending activities into another part of the home, now your big get-together can have two food epicentres. These unexpected add-ons are becoming increasingly popular, especially amongst millennial homeowners who crave bigger, better outdoor spaces.

No matter the home, the time of year or the size you've got to work with, mixing indoor/outdoor is a great way to elevate both spaces and provide greater flow. Not only will you benefit from the added livable space, but you'll add a fresh touch to your home that's as easy to maintain as it is rich and inviting.

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July Home Sales Finish Strong

990 homes exchanged hands in July 2016, making last month the best July ever with the exception of July 2007, which set the all-time record for July with 1,009 sales. "These kinds of numbers, month after month after month, speak to the vibrancy of our current market," explains the President of the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR). 807 detached homes sold last month along with 183 condos. Year-to-Date sales are up 8.2%. Listings, on the other hand, were down 22.6% this month and Active Listings End of Period - or inventory - was down 28.2%. "It's no exaggeration to say that supply is extremely tight right now," says the President of LSTAR. "This makes this an incredibly good time to list."

August 2, 2016 - London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®.



2015 Average Prices (YTD)

Type	Average Price	Increase from 2015
Detached	\$295,769	4.3%
Condo	\$200,292	4.8%
Total Residential	\$277,660	4.4%

Type	Units Sold	Average Price
2 Storey	240	\$391,057
Bungalow	178	\$209,404
Ranch	127	\$351,411
Townhouse Condo	82	\$188,745
High Rise Apt. Condo	39	\$153,923

St. Thomas also had its best July since 2007, when record-keeping on London's Sister City began. 97 homes sold last month, up 3.2% over last year. The average price for a home in St. Thomas Year-to-Date stands at \$226,717, up 4.6%.

Summer Events & Activities

Movie Nights In The Park -

Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens - Wednesday, August 10th - Victoria Park

http://www.lyac.ca/movienights_16

Mamma Mia! August 11th to September 3rd

Huron Country Playhouse II

<http://bit.ly/2a1SIQB>

Aladdin: The Panto - August 11th to September 3rd

Huron Country Playhouse II

<http://bit.ly/2a1Sr9e>

Ice Age On Ice - August 20th to 21st

Budweiser Gardens

<http://www.budweisergardens.com/events/2699>

Pawlooza - August 20th 10 am to 6 pm

The Plunkett Estate

<http://www.londontourism.ca/Events/Kids-and-Family/Pawlooza>

Movie Nights In The Park - Toy Story 3 - August 23rd

Victoria Park

http://www.lyac.ca/movienights_16

April Wine - August 26th

London Music Hall

<http://www.londonmusichall.com/event/1234729-april-wine-london/>

London Bluesfest - August 26th to 28th

Victoria Park

<http://www.londonbluesfest.com/>



Looking to up your home's "smart" factor? The proliferation of smart home technology has made many of these seemingly futuristic add-ons real possibilities for virtually any home.

Enhanced security, green features and money savers are just a few of the unique integrations available. Today's smart features are as sophisticated as they are fun and family-friendly. If you're angling for something a little smarter, start here!

Smart TVs

While Roku and Apple TV have been kicking around for a while, the latest generation of smart TVs leave nothing to be desired. The latest line of 4K TVs from brands like Samsung, Panasonic and Sony offer ultra-high definition pictures in an oversized package - usually 55" or more - a perfect fit for family movie night or game day. Access everything with a quick click, including cable and premium channels, on-demand movies, YouTube, Facebook, Netflix, Pandora and a host of other apps.

Get Smart: The Latest in Smart Home Technology

Thermostats

Possibly the most widely-utilized smart home feature, integrated thermostats are becoming the norm in new construction and are equally easy to layer into existing homes. At just \$249, Nest is the clear leader in the space, though innovative up-and-comer Tado is generating tremendous buzz. Currently available in Europe, Tado uses a smart phone's precise location to determine when a homeowner is near, then preemptively sets the temperature accordingly. The end result? You walk into a perfectly toasty - or perfectly cool - home every single time.

Refrigerator

The smart fridge list seems never ending. Features can include TV screens and touch technology enabling users to browse recipes and even make and order off of grocery lists with a quick click. Sub-Zero's latest IT-36CIID has a built-in air purifier that burrows from NASA technology and, even, scrubs the interior of mould and bacteria three times per hour, keeping your food and your family safer and healthier.

For full article go to:

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