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By Megan Reynolds

## Furniture for Throwing a Party Like a Pro

We asked five (over)qualified hospitality experts tips for hosting their ideal outdoor event—and gathered everything you need to pull it off.



Courtesy of Big Shiny Balls

**Throwing an epic party outside requires more** than just some space and a cooler. If you really want to stage events to remember, then you'll have to think beyond the menu. Furniture, lighting, and even hardscaping can take backyard entertaining from just okay to amazing. If the idea of updating your patio feels overwhelming, don't give up! We asked five (over)qualified hospitality experts for tips on executing their ideal outdoor event—from a chic block party to a laid-back dinner—and we also recommend a few new products to set the scene, whether you're game for a major renovation or just sprucing things up for the season.

### **Domestic Drama**

You'd think that living somewhere akin to paradise would make entertaining a breeze; if the scenery is breathtaking and the temperature magic, then the party should come naturally. But **James Wyndham**, the managing director of [Sugar Beach](#) in Saint Lucia, understands that what makes a good party is more than just the atmosphere. "When you're hosting a party or an event, you're looking for theater," he says. "I love a live cooking station, so...you've got your ceviche, you've maybe got salads, you've got a grilled section, you've got a wok station. And I think that it brings the theater."



James Wyndham is the managing director of Sugar Beach in Saint Lucia.  
Courtesy of Sugar Beach, a Viceroy Resort

You might not have the space (or the budget) for multiple cooking stations, but there's an easy way to translate that vibe for a party at home. "I love grazing stations that are situated around," Wyndham says. "You have a loungy environment where people can move." Other essentials for an outdoor fete redolent of the tropics include warm lighting, luscious florals, and music. "You've got to have a little bit of reggae in the background," he says—a nice bit of set dressing that will transform any backyard into a theatrical paradise—if only for a night.



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