

THEME FOR A SUMMER SPACE

Local designer **Eric Lee**



shares tips on how to inject a little seasonal splendour into your environment.



Designer Eric Lee says turquoise is currently a fashionable colour to add a summer feel to your indoor or outdoor space, such as with the Muskoka Chair (above) and Everyday Essentials Portable Kettle Charcoal Grill (left), both from PC Home. The 'T-Cup' table by Brent Comber (right) offers a timeless, organic contrast.



Spring may be the season for cleaning out winter's cobwebs, but summer is really the time to freshen up your living space. Designers on TV and in magazines press us to bring the indoors outside when the sun shines, and a few potted plants and comfortable chairs will indeed help the average urban dweller make the most of a balcony or small deck. But, according to local building and interior designer Eric Lee, the key to a truly successful summer space makeover is not only to bring the inside out, but to bring the outside in.

A self-taught success story who began investigating his passion for design with Lego

as a child, Lee designed his first house at age 18, which his family subsequently built. He then lived in that same Delta-area home while working toward a degree in Building Technology from BCIT. Upon graduating in 1997, he founded Victorize Design Group, where he specializes in multi-million-dollar luxury homes known for their boundary-pushing use of interior and exterior water features.

Lee's keen eye for high design and luxury makes him uniquely qualified to help even the most stylistically challenged "summerize" their home. Herewith, his five top tips to make the most of your entire space this summer.

TURQUOISE is the must-have colour right now. Following on the heels of the Olympics, this cool colour is one hot commodity this summer! For an extra burst of soothing, summery appeal, layer turquoise on top of white or powdery grey palettes.

WHITE ON WHITE living areas create a modern and chic aesthetic that is illuminated with energy. Since you're working with a single cool tone, however, the trick is to layer the space with texture and natural materials that will keep spaces looking inviting and warm. Complement the white-on-white look with a richly coloured area rug, a beautiful oil painting, or a simple

plant to add interest.

BOLD PATTERNS/ LARGE FLORALS are back in a big way this year, especially florals. They add an instant hit of summer, and can be used indoors on throw pillows or outdoors on patio furniture. Bonus tip: Kill two birds with one stone and look for turquoise florals and patterns on those throw pillows.

GREEN LIVING continues to be very much 'in.' Natural materials and earth tones offer up a timeless look. Sustainable and unusual materials add interest, like mango wood. See **SUMMERIZE** next page.

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bamboo, or reclaimed wood, whether it's something as simple as a refurbished wicker chair or an extravagance like a Brent Comber 'T-Cup' table.

OUTDOOR SPACES are the key to successful summer entertaining. With this economy, people are staying home and having friends over for barbecues and cocktail parties. When updating your limited outdoor space, consider a few of the following:

- Modular, stackable, and easily storable

furniture to create a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

- A simple plug-in water fountain with a recirculating pump adds a tranquil feeling to any patio. Its soothing sound also goes a long way to drowning out traffic and noisy neighbours.
- A heat lamp allows for enjoyment of your outdoor space even after the sun goes down.
- Large, decorative planters with simple grasses, ferns, or flowering annuals give instant colour, are easy to maintain, and can also provide privacy screening from neighbours.

Steven Schelling 



The 'Jackson' table-and-chairs set of outdoor furniture, from Richmond-based 604Wholesale.ca, stacks into a slim unit for easy post-summer storage.