When shopping for dining furniture, first consider the size of your space and how you’ll use it. A table that is 26 inches in diameter, like a bistro table, will seat two; a 48-inch round table will seat four to six, and a rectangular 72-inch by 36-inch table will seat eight.

But you’ll need to account for more than the table itself; also plan for three feet of space behind each chair, so it can be pulled out without hindrance. Finally, if there are steps leading up to the dining area, leave five feet of open space between the table and the steps for safety.

When a grill is in an enclosed space like this, a ventilation hood is necessary to redirect the smoke. Here, the hood gets a customized makeover with a European design and a bit of “bon appetit.”

Furnishings can be basic when another component has a bold personality. Here, the extrovert is the cobalt blue tile, which is outstanding against the pristine white of the house and the gleam of the stainless appliances.
LEFT A green stone countertop is a real eye-catcher, especially set against the stacked-stone base. It's a durable surface on which to prepare food, and is aesthetically pleasing for diners, too.

RIGHT A concrete countertop is durable and withstands heat well, but needs to be resealed occasionally. Look for a product made with recycled concrete or fly ash, both of which make it more earth-friendly.

ABOVE Throughout most of this backyard kitchen, a mosaic tile backsplash extends partially up the wall; behind the stove, however, it covers the entire surface for added protection from splatters.
storage

Outdoor cabinetry has to be more durable than its indoor counterpart; it must withstand the weather conditions of your area and protect what’s inside.

**Wood.** This material is most successful in dry climates, where it’s less likely to mildew or warp. Even so, you want to use only rot-resistant types, like teak, ipe, or cedar. For extra protection, make sure wood cabinets are treated with stain, paint, or sealant.

**Plastic.** It may be called polymer, HDPE, or high-density polyethylene, but it all means plastic. This material has a very modern aesthetic, and won’t rot, fade, or rust. (The very same substance is used on boats, so you know it’s super sturdy.) To clean it, simply spray with a hose or wipe with a damp cloth.

**Stainless steel.** Because it matches many appliances, stainless steel is a popular choice. But all stainless steel isn’t created equal. Pick a grade that is weather durable because lesser-quality steel is more likely to rust. And, for extra durability, make sure all of the components (even the hinges) are made of stainless.

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1 Wood cabinets built in just below the grill provide easy access to serving dishes, bowls, and the like, while making good use of potentially wasted space.

2 A square kitchen design keeps all of these appliances in close proximity to one another. And there’s ample stainless storage built into the concrete counters, one of the most durable surfaces you’ll find.

3 Even a kitchen with an Old World feel can get away with modern stainless steel, thanks to a mix of other materials, including a concrete countertop, stone walls and veneer, and a paver floor.
**LEFT** Low-slung lounge chairs immediately conjure a relaxed atmosphere in this outdoor setting. Stripes in wide, neutral bands look modern and smart, their large scale well-suited to the oversized seating pieces.

**ABOVE** Arched doorways allow sunlight to pour into this veranda, so the furniture's various fabrics and textures take on a decidedly rich personality.
To make the most of outdoor living, this wood-burning fireplace has an attached pizza oven. It also becomes part of the décor, as the fabric choices play up the coral-colored stone and chimneys.
Above A variety of materials—from smooth sand-colored pavers to rough-hewn stone to intricate mosaic tile—make this spa visually interesting. An extra-wide ledge adds practicality by providing additional seating.

Below The controls of this spa are conveniently located on the spa itself, so there’s no need to get out of the water to adjust the jets.