



2021

# Top Backyard Trends



## Yelp Announces the Top Backyard Trends for Summer with Famed Interior Designer Jeremiah Brent

As warm weather approaches and summer kicks into full swing, outdoor activities are top of mind for many Americans. Last year, [Yelp saw mentions of interior designers increase 372%](#) as people spent more time in their kitchens, converted spare rooms to offices, and completed projects around the home amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This year is all about the backyard: Searches for terms like “outdoor deck”, “patio heaters” and “outdoor lighting” have skyrocketed (jumping **373%**, **263%**, and **88%** respectively) as homeowners are looking for more ways to spruce up their outdoor spaces for al fresco entertaining, rest and relaxation and fun with the family.

To forecast these backyard trends, our data science team surfaced the terms experiencing a meteoric rise in interest among consumers. They looked at the words used in searches and review mentions to pinpoint the terms experiencing the largest increase in 2021, compared to 2020. Additionally, they identified trends on the rise in the last several months. Terms experiencing a large spike already in 2021, coupled with those rising year-over-year, helped us determine the backyard trends that are poised to take off this summer. Finally, we tapped one of our favorite Yelp fans, and star of HGTV’s “Rock the Block”, [interior designer Jeremiah Brent](#), to offer expert insights and tips for each trend.





“To put it simply: we’ve never been more ready for summer. Over this past year, our outdoor spaces have truly become our haven. Through a little bit of intentionality and connections to the right resources, there are so many beautiful ways to transform your backyard into a timeless escape for your family,” says Brent.

As you consider how to maximize your outdoor space this summer, Yelp can help you find and hire highly-rated, trusted professionals for these backyard upgrades. Millions of people come to Yelp each month to connect with trusted home services pros using the [Request a Quote](#) feature.

# The Trends

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# Elevated Al Fresco Entertaining

Outdoor dining has evolved since the onset of COVID-19, sparking a renaissance for al fresco dining at restaurants across the country, as well as in our own backyards. Though people are returning to restaurants, on Yelp we're seeing trends that indicate a desire to make simple upgrades to improve the experience of at-home dining, and elevate what it means to entertain.

Searches for outdoor pizza ovens increased **193%** in March of this year, compared to March 2020, and searches for "BBQ island" increased **90%** during the same time period; two additions that add a social and interactive element to outdoor entertaining, and create a new space to enjoy family meals. Highly-rated businesses like [LA Custom Grill Islands](#) specialize in adding these coveted kitchen island features to backyards.

Searches for outdoor lighting upgrades were up **88%** during the same time period, as people look to transform their backyards and add more entertaining-friendly ambiance to their outdoor spaces. Installing light paths, hanging lighting fixtures, or adding lighting underneath the stairs or railing of a deck can make a backyard look brand new.



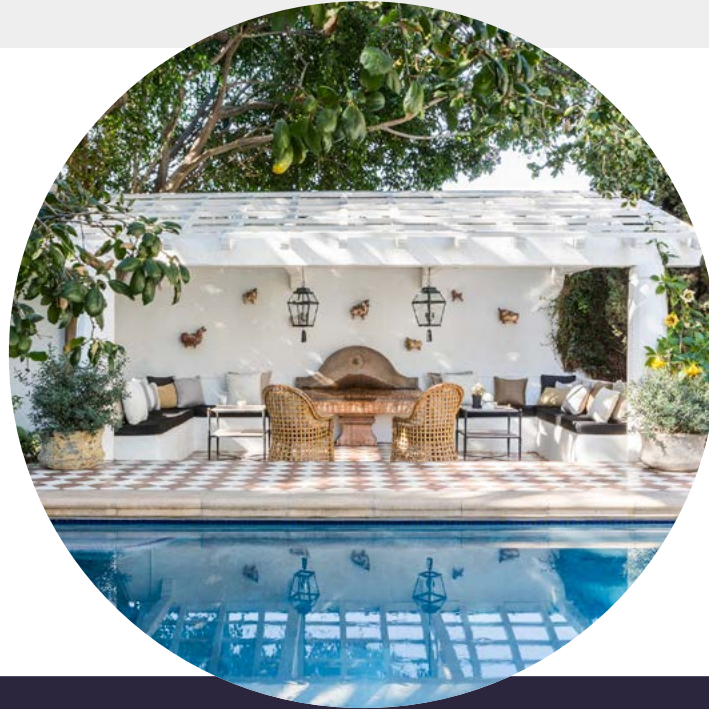
## Jeremiah's Tip: Create an indoor/outdoor space

We've watched how outdoor dining has evolved in such a drastic yet endearing way near our home in New York City, due to COVID-19. The charm of bistro lighting, outdoor table linens and umbrellas have brought such an elegant feel to al fresco dining—and those simple touches can be used to create the same ambiance in your own backyard, whether it's for a small family gathering or a larger celebration.

If you're looking for a bigger change, in addition to an outdoor kitchen island, another great way to upgrade your outdoor dining and entertaining experience is through adding iron and glass doors. In everything I design—in my own home and for clients, I strive to use materials that will stand the test of time, regardless of trends and heavy use. Iron and glass doors add such a timeless and luxe element to a home. They create a seamless flow of indoor/outdoor living without anything feeling too polished or too precious. An evening dinner party with the adults seated inside while looking out on the kids playing outside through iron and glass doors...perfection.

# Outdoor Living Rooms

As we bring indoor decor outside, having a cohesive, serene aesthetic between the two spaces is more important than ever. Searches for fire tables, [like this one](#) from Infantry Landscaping in Atlanta, GA, have increased **76%** in searches in the last year\*. A more modern and sleek version of fire pits, adding this backyard feature creates an instant feel of luxury. Searches for patio heaters increased **263%** during the same time period, indicating that the desire to have an outdoor living space that can be used year-round isn't going anywhere. In addition to a patio heater, consider adding soft throw pillows that complement the decor of the space.



## Jeremiah's Tip: Utilize checkered flooring, jute and iron

I'm a huge advocate of bringing the outdoors in and the indoors out. To create the feeling of a true outdoor living room, try carrying your indoor flooring out to your patio. Antique checkered flooring is our classic approach. We love to source tiles from around the world and have them installed by local contractors through Yelp. To achieve the reverse—bringing the outdoors in—I'm constantly outside foraging; cutting branches from the backyard and arranging them inside whether it's in my own home or a client's home on install day. Through flooring continuity, branches, and utilizing materials like jute and iron that can last both indoors and outdoors, your outdoor patio will feel like your family's outdoor living room.

# Deck and Patio Additions

Yelp data indicates searches for outdoor decks were up **373%** this year\*, and increased **64%** between February and March. It's clear that deck and patio additions will be one of the hottest home trends of the summer, as searches for these features are continuing to rise each month. With four stars and 85 reviews, [LA Decks](#) in Los Angeles, CA is a great source of inspiration for a brand new deck or porch. Decks come in so many shapes and sizes, that there's an option for almost every home, whether it's a patio, screened-in porch, or elevated deck.



## Jeremiah's Tip: Build a screened-in porch

Our backyard in Montauk has always been one of my family's favorite places to be. When we were filming Rock the Block in Georgia last summer, we created a screened in porch (Yelp recently saw a **236%** increase in searches for "screened porch"\*) and ended up loving it so much we decided to add one to our home in Montauk. Summer living without the bugs. I was able to find a local vendor in Montauk through Yelp to create the aesthetic I had been dreaming up. Finding the right professional to bring my designs to life is critical; I'm constantly reading reviews, viewing photos of past projects, and using Yelp's Request-A-Quote feature to find the perfect partner to work with. Plus, getting quotes back from multiple local businesses means I'm always able to find someone within my budget. We now use the screened in porch everyday—it's the perfect setting for early morning coffees and a craft area for the kids.

# Water Features



Searches for pool installation were up **449%** in March 2021 from March 2020 and up **680%** from the same month in 2019. Adding a water feature like a pool or fountain is a great way to upgrade a backyard, and there are thousands of home pros on Yelp, like [Custom Pools Miami](#), who specialize in pool installation. Homeowners who like to try a backyard project before committing may be interested in stock tank pools (searches for the term increased **407%** in March 2021 compared to February) like [these](#) from Cowboy Pools in Austin, TX, which provide a temporary solution to warm days without the heavy spend. This March, searches for water features on Yelp were up **46%** from March 2020 and up **62%** from March 2019.



## Jeremiah's Tip: Add an antique fountain for tranquility

When designing, all of the senses should be addressed. Texture, aroma, visuals, sound—these all play a critical role in creating a well curated space. We could all use some peace and tranquility after the past year, and there's no better way to create that in your homethan by adding an antique fountain to your backyard or courtyard. Fountains are a small investment that can translate in a big way—this layer adds such serenity to a space. You can live in the heart of New York City and still have the steady sound of water surrounding you.



# Easy, Rustic Landscaping

Plants provide decor, fresh air, and a pop of color to any space, including our backyards. For those who may have developed a green thumb with houseplants this year, greenhouses (up **11%** in searches in March\*\*) add a unique element to any outdoor space. Searches for planter beds have increased **47%** this year\*, and [drip irrigation systems](#) increased **103%** during the same time period, indicating that our obsession with all things plants isn't going anywhere. Summer 2021 is all about landscaping with ease: Planter beds are an easy solution for those with small spaces, and greenhouses protect against critters who may enjoy your plants as a midnight snack.



## Jeremiah's Tip: Try "organic" landscaping

This year, I'm seeing a shift from tightly packed planted flowers to landscaping that looks more organic, like wild hydrangeas and lavender. Olive trees in a backyard immediately transport me to the Spanish countryside, and installing an irrigation system can make sure they're getting the correct amount of water. For larger landscaping projects, call in a [highly-rated professional](#) to ensure you're setting your garden up for long term success.



# Backyard Oasis

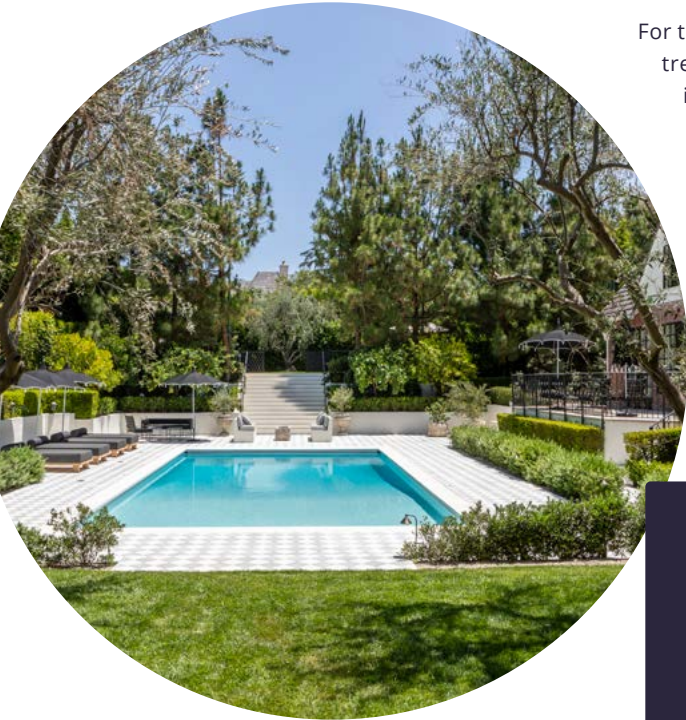
With the ability to instantly create the feel of a private retreat, it's no surprise that searches for hedges (up **317%** in March\*\*) have increased. This landscaping addition is a great way to incorporate greenery and solitude into the backyard without an expensive—or obtrusive—fence. Adding in hedges is not typically a DIY project, and by using [Yelp's Request-a-Quote feature](#), you can easily find local home service professionals in your area with the skills to complete any outdoor project on your timeline. Simply select one or more businesses you prefer, answer a few questions about your project, and Yelp will send your responses and messages to the businesses to provide a quote directly to you.



## Jeremiah's Tip: Make the most of your shed

Tiny home, anyone? One of my favorite ways that we updated our yard in Montauk was through a simple shed that we utilized as a guest house. With the help of local contractors, we mimicked the finish and shape of the exterior of our main house, filled in concrete floors, and created a versatile space to expand our home. Whether it serves as increased storage, a special place for the kids, a pottery studio, etc.—building or updating a shed can provide multiple uses that can evolve with time as your family's needs change.

# Reducing and Reusing



For those who like a low maintenance backyard, artificial turf is becoming a popular landscaping trend with searches up **75%** in the last year\*. Bonus: It's typically cheaper than grass and is especially good for dry climates. Artificial turf is an easy solution for backyards to look bright and healthy, but not require constant watering or treatment, which is easy on the homeowner and environment. Additionally, we're seeing an increased demand for antique furniture (up **30%** this spring from March 2020 and up **34%** from March 2019), perhaps influenced by more intentionality when it comes to upcycling clothing, furniture and materials.



## **Jeremiah's Tip: Plant an herb garden and use vintage outdoor furniture**

Making environmental design selections is incredibly important to my design firm and my family. Herb gardens will be trending this summer and beyond. As more and more people are aiming to reduce food waste and plastic use, what better way than with a beautiful garden in your backyard? Utilizing vintage furniture is another massive action point towards sustainability. There can be so much consumerism in this field of work—there's an art to reimagining vintage and antique furniture in a modern way. Not only do I love the look and feel of vintage outdoor furniture, there's nothing I enjoy more than sifting through my favorite antique stores in Long Island.

# Methodology

## Search Text Volume

To gather an understanding of trending topics related to backyard home services on Yelp, the data science team identified trends within review text by measuring the frequency of the phrase mentioned in reviews per million words since 2019 as well as further curation of list with the expertise of Jeremiah Brent, a top designer based in New York and California, to finalize the trends.

We compare the frequency of phrases related to the trends to all home services category searches for each month since 2019. To understand how this search volume changed over time, we then compared search volumes in recent periods to previous periods to evaluate month to month changes as well as year over year changes. Both searches where consumers directly type a search into the search bar and where consumers click on a suggested term or phrase are included.

\*These stats are year-over-year March 2021 compared to March 2020 and year-over-year March 2020 compared to March 2019.

\*\*This statistic is month over month changes compared to March of this year and are referring to a rise in March 2021 up from February 2021.

Yelp selected March to capture the essence of prepping for summer backyard projects, which typically begins in March as frozen ground thaws and there is enough time to plan longer term projects for summer 2021.



**Let us know which 2021 home trend you'll be trying out  
in the coming year on Twitter and Instagram [@Yelp](#).**

