

COASTAL LIVING[®]

BEACH PARTIES!

Our Easy, Breezy Guide to Seaside Entertaining

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PICNICS

HOW TO DESIGN
AN INVITING
OUTDOOR ROOM

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MENUS
THAT WOW

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APRIL 2016

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Outdoor Oasis 2016

**ALL PARTIES,
WELCOME!**

Draw up the guest list and put the drinks on ice: We'll show you how to build an alfresco entertaining area that really cooks

Weatherproof lighting by Hinkley illuminates the sitting area and highlights the coastal Carolina live oaks. The paving stones are crushed local river rock.

HAVENS (OUTDOOR OASIS)

The drink coolers were custom built to fit removable ice buckets. The Adirondack chairs were crafted locally by Seigler Woodcrafters.





A COZY, CROWD-FRIENDLY outdoor space is always a winner—bonus points if it has a first-rate cook station and dreamy views. We recently partnered with the gorgeous waterfront community of Habersham in Beaufort, South Carolina, to build just that, and scored big when we found a spot on a tiny, tree-shaded island that sees its share of brilliant sunsets. “It has a nearly 360-degree view of the water,” says Robert Turner of Habersham, who teamed up with Savannah architect Eric Brown to design the grilling and gathering area. The resulting space is super functional, with “almost every element designed to serve more than one purpose,” notes Brown. “For instance, the drink coolers are fitted with LED lighting to help illuminate the perimeter.” Here are more smart tips for creating an outdoor entertaining area that is sure to draw a crowd.

1. SEEK OUT NATURAL BORDERS. Trees make great anchors for mapping out the “walls” of an outdoor room, and help maintain an organic relationship with the existing landscape. Brown used a pair of oaks as east and west borders, and a palmetto tree on the southern end.

2. BUILD A KILLER GRILL STATION. When it comes to your pièce de résistance, go for staying power. Craft a brick grill station that doubles as a primo prep area: Here, the team flanked a simple charcoal cooking pit with a pair of sizable prep surfaces for cutting veggies and resting trays of meat.

3. GO NATIVE. “Outdoor rooms should complement the surroundings, rather than contrast them,” says Brown. Use native materials to create a harmonious palette. For example, crushed local river rock paving and Savannah brick (used for the fire pit and the grill) resemble the marsh’s earthy hues.

4. ADD AN HERB GARDEN. Growing edibles at arm’s reach is genius! Position planters on each side of the grill, and fill with the kitchen herbs you’ll use both indoors and out.

5. GIVE DRINKS A PLACE TO CHILL. The team designed a pair of corner pedestals fitted with galvanized ice buckets to keep drinks close at hand. LED downlighting on these and the planters illuminate the room’s borders.

6. LIGHT THE WAY. “Along with softly lighting the area, we wanted to cast a glow into the limbs and moss of the towering live oaks,” says Turner. LED spotlights by Hinkley Lighting also illuminate the pergola columns, with additional downlights on the dock and throughout the sitting area. “We looked for solid cast-brass finishes that would withstand the harsh salt air,” he says.

7. CREATE A PERGOLA FOR GATHERING. “Two things to make sure you have plenty of are seating and surfaces—spots for people to set drinks and snacks,” says Brown. “I liked the idea of this pergola because it has both, not to mention providing an extra ‘wall’ for the room. Another plus is that it’s a pretty easy building project. You can do it in an afternoon.” ➤



Flanking the grill with prep surfaces makes the cook station feel more like a kitchen.

HAVENS (OUTDOOR OASIS)



A smaller grilling area on the creek side offers views of Beaufort's Broad River in the distance.

8. STAND UP FOR CASUAL DINING.

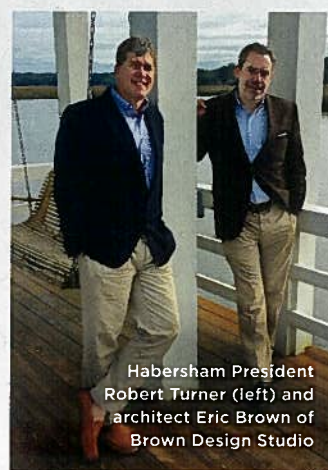
This oyster-shucking table is standing height and fitted with buckets for discarded shells. It's also lightweight enough to be moved and stored out of the way during the off-season.

9. MAKE THE FIRE PIT THE CENTER OF THE ACTION.

These are the MVPs of outdoor living. "Just as in a living room indoors, people tend to congregate around the fire," Brown says. "Building a central fire pit creates a natural gathering spot." A large cast iron grate, designed and crafted by local blacksmith Russell Browne, fits over the fire for roasting oysters; the wide 18-inch border serves as extra seating. For more information, see Sources, page 102. ■



A removable iron grate turns the fire pit into an oyster-roasting hot spot.



Habersham President Robert Turner (left) and architect Eric Brown of Brown Design Studio