

by Michelle Troxell

BACKYARD REDESIGN

ELEGANT, YET FUNCTIONAL AND FAMILY FRIENDLY



Hanamint patio furniture with a Lazy Susan makes dining comfortable and relaxing to enjoy summer meals.

Photo credits
Kipp Burgoyne Photography

*Interior Design: Michelle Troxell,
Grace Thomas Designs
gracethomasdesigns.com*

Furnishings sources:

- *Aria*
- *Hanamint*
- *Majestic Home Goods*
- *Pottery Barn*
- *Surya*
- *Treasure Garden*
- *Safavieh*
- *Old South Accents*

CHILDREN GROW UP WAY TOO QUICKLY AND THIS

northern Virginia homeowner wanted to create a beautiful yet casual backyard environment that would attract her children's friends to their home.

The original covered verandah was spacious, but undecorated, with steps leading down to a short but steep slope that flowed from the back of the house to a large multi-acre

flat lawn. The backyard space was generally uninviting, and between the hot Virginia summers and snowy winters, very little time was spent outside for six months out of the year.

The objective was to create a pretty, inviting and functional outdoor living space that could be used nearly year-round. We set out to provide designated areas for outdoor cooking and dining, swimming, entertain-

ing and relaxing.

Taking advantage of the existing slope of the yard, we created a three-tiered space that incorporated the existing verandah whose steps now ended on one side to a new outdoor kitchen and patio. Natural stone steps lead down to the third tier where we installed a pool with ample decking connecting to a round fire pit. The entire pool/hard-



Vesta Tagine open fire pits add color and evening light to welcome kids over to the outdoor fire pit to roast marshmallows. Poufs from Majestic Home Goods add extra seating.



The family's rescue dog, Payton, relaxes on Pottery Barn Torrey collection all-weather wicker furniture. The furniture is grounded by an outdoor Surya rug, Old South Accents planters and garden stools by Safavieh.



Lounge chairs by Aria with custom pillows carry the colors from the verandah décor to the pool area. Pool design by NV Blu.



A navy umbrella by Treasure Garden shades those who want to sit on the tanning ledge.

scape project is accentuated by colorful landscaping that features popular local plantings including crepe myrtles, day lilies, hydrangeas and roses. The emphasis was on providing a wide variety of colors to accent the natural earth colors of the stone hardscape.

The covered verandah provides comfort and a respite from the searing northern Virginia heat along with a relaxing environment for late night entertaining, after-swim resting or early morning coffee and relaxing with the couple's two children and dogs.

New all-weather, versatile outdoor sofa and chairs along with durable yet soft, easy care rugs that are outdoor safe and colorful, fun accents combine the ambiance of a living room with the fresh air and unobstructed views of being outside.

The outdoor kitchen features

a natural stone façade with a built-in grill and side burners, refrigerator and large stone countertops. The adjacent dining area is highlighted by a round dining set featuring a built-in Lazy Susan and a neutral umbrella, providing an elegant and stylish outdoor eating area central to the pool and outdoor kitchen.

The pool is a classically elegant rectangular shape featuring a tanning ledge and a railing-free design. To keep the teenagers at home after swimming is done, an adjacent fire pit provides a comfortable place to dry off, stay warm and roast a few marshmallows. The fire pit also serves as a focal point for fall and early winter gatherings. This chic northern Virginia oasis is proof positive that an outdoor space can definitely be both elegant and family friendly. 



The same Surya rug from the verandah is carried down to the first level where this family spends a lot of time cooking in their outdoor kitchen and hosting many gatherings.