

This Old House

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No outdoor kitchen is complete without a comfy place to gather. At this home in Beaufort, South Carolina, teak furniture was chosen because it stands up to the elements.



photograph by
Deborah Whitlaw Llewellyn

cook up a great

outdoor kitchen

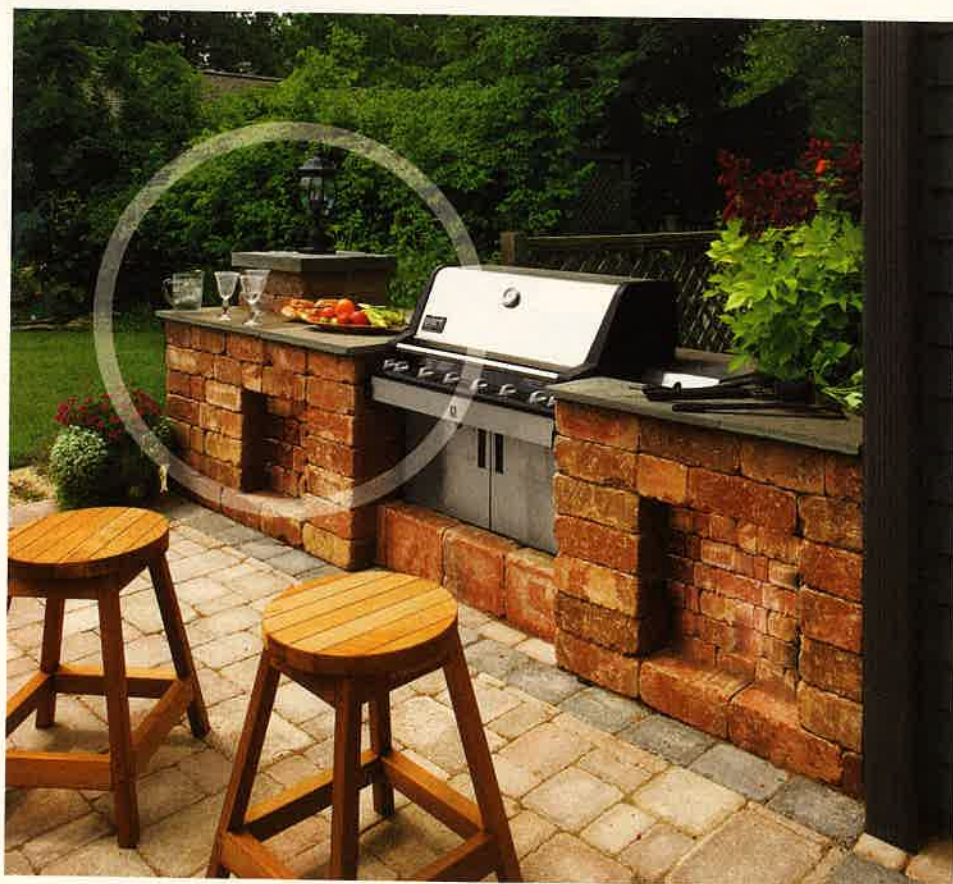
Been hankering for an open-air cooking area? Here, our guide to the ingredients it takes to make a five-star space. Incorporate as many as you like—and as your budget allows—then save the rest for summers to come **by Jessica Dodell-Feder**

1

add a countertop

Ready to upgrade a basic barbecue? Start by creating a place to slice tomatoes and plate burgers. Here, a peninsula of tumbled cast-concrete blocks and a stone counter turns a freestanding grill into a built-in. DIY this setup for about \$350 by stacking blocks on a bed of tamped drainage stone, securing each block with masonry glue. Incorporate blocks of varying sizes and recessed “panels” to make the unit look less monolithic, then top it off with bluestone stair treads for the counter.

Money-saving option: Forgo a built-in and pull up a small table, such as PolyWood's Ivy side table (\$99; homedepot.com).



2

light it up

There's nothing worse than fumbling in the dark when it's time to see if the chicken's done. Task lighting takes care of that problem and can range from a basic miner's hat to the graceful gooseneck fixtures shown here. Keep in mind that running an electrical line will cost a minimum of around \$400 to \$600, but it offers the option of outlets for conveniences like a side burner or a blender.

Money-saving option: An adjustable, battery-operated clip-on lamp, such as Maverick's GL-01, can do the trick for just \$27 (amazon.com).



3

build in storage

Along with hiding a propane tank, cabinets can provide a convenient spot for everything from grilling utensils to dinner plates. Here, the homeowners built a 20-foot concrete-block island with voids for cabinets, clad it with stone, and topped the unit with granite. Then they ordered custom cabinets and drawers made with weather-resistant Spanish cedar—at a cost of about \$6,000.

Money-saving option: Get prefab base cabinets, such as the marine-grade polymer options from Werver (from \$525; werver.com).



4

install a sink and appliances

When an outdoor kitchen is more than a few steps from the house, it may pay to install cold-water and waste lines for a sink, as well as a small fridge for cool drinks. Adding a hot-water line, too, and a dishwasher can make cleanup that much easier. Count on plumbing costs to start around \$1,500 (even more if you're adding hot water). Outdoor-rated undercounter fridges start around \$1,000, rust-resistant stainless-steel dishwashers at \$750.

Money-saving option:

Look for a sink that hooks up to a garden hose and drains into the ground, such as Ames True Temper's Garden Sync-It (\$29; amazon.com). Chill drinks in a tub elevated on an iron stand, like Pier 1's red-painted galvanized-metal option (\$70; pier1.com).



5

provide shelter

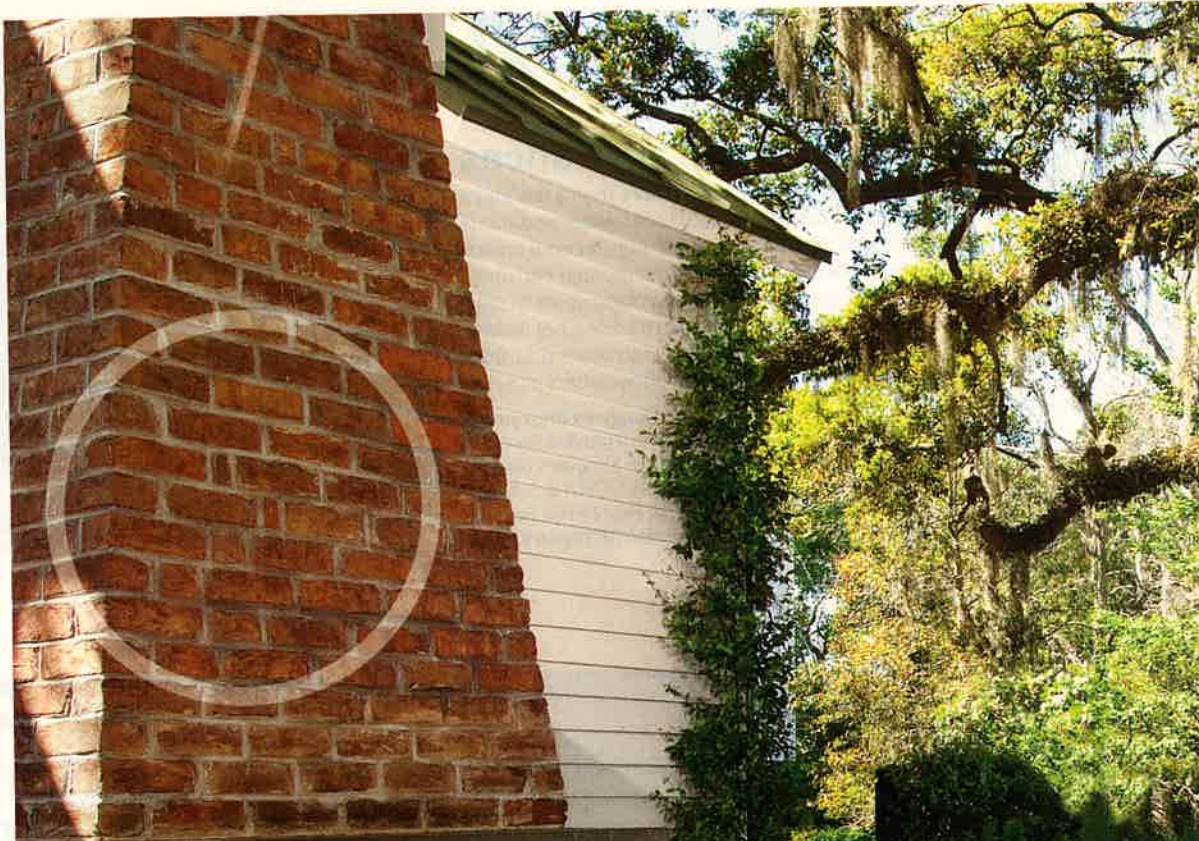
Too much sun? A pergola may be the answer. Made with treated lumber or PVC, a slatted structure can cost \$40 to \$200 per square foot and can be tied into the house framing or secured to freestanding posts. For more protection from sun and rain, add a plexiglass or metal roof, like the one shown here.

Money-saving option: A market umbrella, such as Home Decorator's 11-foot version, which comes with a stand, can provide overhead shelter (\$419; homedecorators.com), as can a shade sail made of outdoor fabric (\$40; hayneedle.com).



▶
**see how
it's done**

Follow along as a TOH pro builds a faux-stone grill-and-sink island at thisoldhouse.com/bonus



6

add a hearth

The ultimate outdoor-kitchen accessory—a fireplace—comes at a price. It can cost from \$10,000 for a basic block structure with a stucco finish to \$25,000 and more for one made with stone.

To bring down the cost of the nearly 15-foot-tall fireplace shown here, architect Jane Frederick chose less-pricey brick with bluestone trim. Raising the hearth allowed it to do double duty as a bench. Now the homeowners can enjoy the space virtually year-round.

Money-saving option: A portable fire pit, like UniFlame's tiled version (\$300; lowes.com), creates similar ambience at a fraction of the price. ■





LEFT: A 400-year-old live oak provides a natural canopy. ABOVE: A custom teak island, lit by two low-voltage lamps, holds a drop-in grill and a shelf that keeps extra plates and cooking utensils right where they're needed. BELOW: The dining table's granite surface is so tough, says Frederick, that she didn't bother to seal it. Stone is made to weather, and in an outdoor kitchen, spots just add character.

