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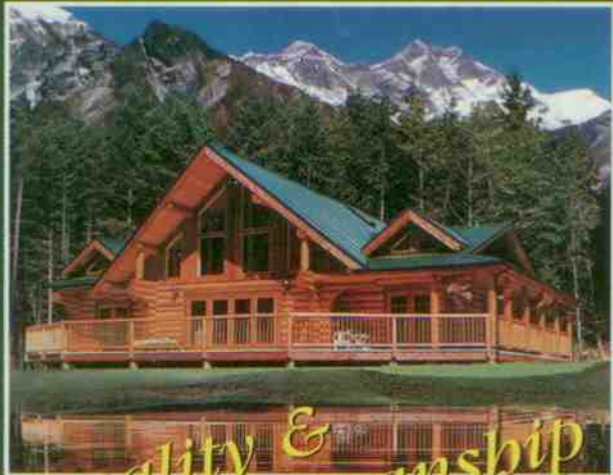
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Lundal Cedar Homes of Seattle photo

Design Recipe

THE FIRST STEP TO A SIZZLING OUTDOOR KITCHEN is to decide where to put it. Some homeowners plan kitchens on porches, patios or decks to be near electricity, gas and water sources. Others set up shop under gazebos, near pool houses or in gardens and then hire electricians to install wiring. Easy access to your indoor kitchen will be helpful if you'll be using essentials like plates, flatware, and pots and pans in both areas. And make sure you orient your outdoor kitchen to capture the magnificent views from your property.

So what's the basic layout for any dinner party-worthy outdoor kitchen?

Follow the lead of your primary kitchen: You'll want a cooking area, a dining space and a "room" dedicated to socializing, such as a bar or just a couple lounge chairs. When designing your cooking and prep areas, try placing

Taste Test

Some meals are just meant to be made outside. "You can barbecue meat slowly below 200 degrees," author Deborah Krasner explains, "cook in excess of 600 degrees in wood-burning masonry oven."

your work spaces so they're in a logical order. Start with the sink, place a prep station next to it, then finish with the cooking zone to make dinner preparations easier. Also, be sure there's separation between the grilling area and where you'll be mixing cocktails: You don't want to charbroil guests who are refreshing their drinks.

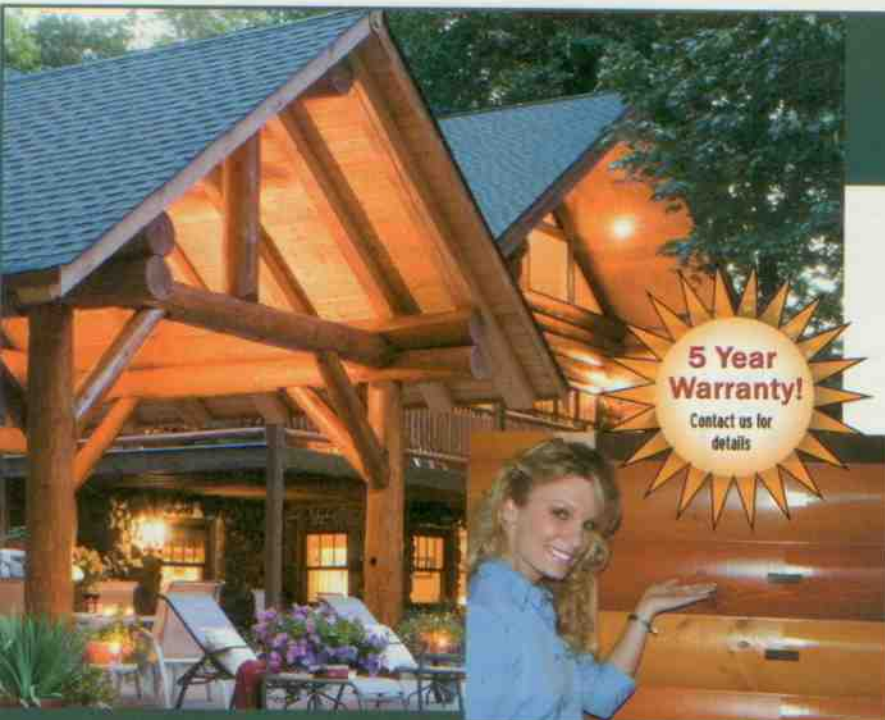
A roof overhead isn't necessary, but it does do wonders to make the area feel like it's a distinct room. It also can prolong the time you're able to spend outside if it shields you from the elements. To soften the lines of the roof and supporting posts, train climbing plants, such as trumpet vine or wisteria, to grow up the posts or plant evergreen shrubbery to create living walls that will enclose the space and add privacy.

Ample lighting is essential for post-sunset soirees. "You'll want task lighting in the prep area and by the grill," says Mark. Deborah suggests choosing hooded fixtures that shine light downward; they'll brighten your work zone but keep the night sky dark so you can stargaze. To illuminate your seating area, use landscape lighting that shines on foliage, Mark says. Or, if you have an overhead structure, try a ceiling-fan fixture for both air circulation and light.



Firestone photo

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