

SUMMER HOME & GARDEN

Garden

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two shades of green for your exterior furniture.

If your neutral outdoor furniture cushions are still in great condition, consider just refreshing the space with some fabulous punches of color in the form of pillows made in the wonderful dark blues and citrus oranges and even fuchsia that are now readily available. Also consider adding some privacy and glamour with outdoor drapery to frame a patio area. Doing this actually extends the feeling of the size of your home.

Textiles for The Floor: And don't forget that patio floor. If you really want to blur the lines between your indoor and outdoor spaces, consider one of the fabulous area rugs being produced in fibers that are easily sustained

they'll come in contact with.

Mix It Up: Just as eclectic sensibilities bring life to an interior space, so they can in the garden. Along with natural textures such as woven wicker, consider porcelain garden stools and metal based tile tables as you come up with a combination that doesn't look like the expected matching set of outdoor furniture.

Be Playful: Lanterns whimsically hanging from trees, large "clam" shells filled with succulents, the statuesque mossy green head of a woman with wandering vines trailing down like a wild hair day.

Use It: Spring and summer will be with us for only a few delightful months. Whether its tea and a good book below a tree, or sangria with friends on the patio — I'm hoping to enjoy my garden more this year than ever.

Sasha Witte owns Sasha Witte In-Design in Long Beach.

Thinking Green When Remodeling

By WES HARDING

If you're thinking about starting a remodeling project, there's no better time than now to make energy efficiency improvements that will save you money.

Green remodeling doesn't just lower your energy bills — it can also make your home more comfortable and environmentally sustainable. Efficient appliances and lighting provide all the convenience you expect while using a lot less energy. Also, there are many rebates available for homeowners who are interested in going green.

Insulation, weatherization, and efficient heating and cooling systems reduce drafts and noise, and keep your home at an optimal temperature year-round. A new statewide program, Energy Upgrade California, is making en-

ergy efficiency more affordable than ever by offering limited-time rebates of up to \$8,000 in Long Beach in partnership with Long Beach Gas and Oil Department and Southern California Edison.

Also, consider having your home GreenPoint Rated. Los Angeles County homes are eligible for a limited-time rebate of up to \$2,000 to offset the cost of ob-

taining a GreenPoint Rated label from Build It Green. For a limited time, Energy Upgrade California in Los Angeles County is offering a 2% interest rate on eligible energy efficiency and solar projects up to \$50,000. To learn more, visit EnergyUpgradeCA.org. *Wes Harding is president of Harding Construction & Sustainable Solutions.*



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