

MADE IN THE SHADE

From umbrellas to pergolas, shade products turn outdoor rooms into casual retreats

By Geoff Thompson

For years, the design trend was to bring the outdoors in—through big windows, natural light and greenery.

But as more and more people are adopting an outdoor lifestyle—anything from the classic backyard patio set and lounge chairs to exterior kitchens to full-on alfresco living rooms—it's all about bringing the indoors out.

Of course, a prime concern outside is keeping cool and comfortable. And that

involves the ability to avoid the sun. When most people think of shade and an outdoor space, oftentimes the first thing they think of is umbrellas.

"In the umbrella industry, the major trend is in color," says Candy Chase, national sales manager for Treasure Garden. "Greys and blues are continuing to trend, and fabric usage in these colorations has soared."

Brian Sanches, VP of sales and marketing for California Umbrella, agrees that dif-



Treasure Garden's Starlux transitions from day to night with built-in lights.



A massive Tuuci cantilever provides ample shade.

ferent colors are gaining traction. "Where fabric is going, we follow," he says.

Trivantage, maker of fabrics used in canopies and awnings, is another company that sees colors and textiles as leading design. "We align closely with Sunbrella because its designers consistently anticipate both trends and design needs," says Bret Kelley, VP of sales for Trivantage. "Sunbrella creates timeless colors and patterns that enable homeowners to personalize outdoor spaces with each new shade collection."

New for 2019 for Trivantage is an expanded Sunbrella line with 10 patterns in the simplistic Pure collection, as well as two fresh patterns with Sunbrella's decorative shade fabrics.

Shade size is another trend, according to Debbie Maytidu, retail sales manager for Fiberbuilt Umbrellas. "We are noticing a number of multi-year trend(s), such as

the popularity of large-scale umbrellas," she says.

Every manufacturer seems to be offering bigger and bigger shades—both in center-pole and cantilevered design. But the issue with larger shades is that if it becomes too big, then it becomes an installation instead of a traditional umbrella that can be moved.

Another trend is the increasing collaboration between designers, manufacturers and retailers. "Designers are pushing trends with cuts and styles with embellishments like scallops, pom-poms or fringe," Sanches says. And then that designer/retailer/manufacturer triumvirate might offer exclusives through certain channels—either online or in brick-and-mortar stores.

As an example, Sanches points out that California Umbrella's Pagoda umbrella, that once might have sold several hundred

units a year, is now selling in the tens of thousands due to the cuts and embellishment trends they're seeing.

For Ryan Hughes, founder/creative director of Ryan Hughes Design Build in Tampa, Florida, shade is always a factor in his designs. "With entertaining in the outdoor as a primary experience of our projects, accommodation for shade or protection are always addressed within our consult phase," he says. "Opportunities for shade may come in the form of one grand umbrella creating a focal point for the project, or a custom pergola that covers an intimate seating area, creating a personalized outdoor room."

One recent Hughes project was designed around a Tuuci cantilever umbrella over a fire pit, within an infinity-edge pool looking out over Tampa Bay. The fire pit is exactly the same dimensions as the umbrella.

Speaking of cantilevers—while these

umbrellas had been considered a trend in years past, they've become such a part of the mainstream that it's an expected item in a company's line, almost like fettuccine Alfredo in an Italian restaurant.

Following that "going big" trend, Treasure Garden has introduced a new, large cantilevered design. The Starlux AKZ Plus is 13 feet wide and has built-in LED strip lighting. "It's everything you need to take entertaining from daytime to nighttime," says Chase. "This new umbrella is a huge hit with the dealers."

While umbrellas are certainly the most prevalent, highest volume item in shade, there are plenty of other options as well—albeit less portable.

If you're in the market for something a little more permanent or to make more of a statement, companies like Kanna and Tuuci offer ready-made cabanas in a vari-

Treasure Garden

Treasure Garden Offers One-Stop Shopping and Expanded Outdoor Living Options

Added cantilevers, rolling bases and special lights elevate outdoor ambiance

From expanding backyard shade and illuminating the evening in style, to providing the all-important cleaning and maintenance products, Treasure Garden continues its position of prominence as a one-stop resource for all things outdoor. This season the emphasis is on the expansion of the cantilever offerings, giving consumers special features such as rolling bases, improved tilt features and LED rib lights.

"The sheer breadth of our product assortment is what differentiates Treasure Garden from the competition," says Candy Chase, National Sales Manager. "We offer umbrellas, bases, protective furniture covers, outdoor rugs, umbrella lighting and outdoor care and maintenance products, all from one resource. We also have the best residential cantilevers in the marketplace and our 2019 lineup continues to build on the strength of all our products."

To start, Treasure Garden has grown its popular AKZ Plus offering to include the 11' Octagon and the exciting introduction of the 13' Starlux AKZ Plus with built-in LED rib lights. "The reaction has been incredible," says Chase. "The Plus line of product offers an infinite vertical tilt function in addition to the popular 54-degree left and right locking tilt function of the standard AKZ series of

cantilevers," she explains. Additionally, the company debuted an AKZ rolling base, so that consumers can easily move their large cantilever umbrellas around their patios and outdoor spaces to ensure maximum protection.

"The expansion of our cantilever line-up addresses the continued need for unobstructed shade in the outdoor environment," adds Chase. One featured new addition is the AG25T, available in 11.5' Octagon and 10' Square options and offering a vertical tilt in addition to the crank left and right tilt function. Positioned between the AG28 and AKZ series styles, the new AG25T is already selling very well.

Another expansion comes to the umbrella light category, highlighted by the introduction of the ultra-modern Halo clamp-on light. "This update to our traditional Vega light has really resonated with dealers, and we are pleased with the initial numbers," Chase reports. "Our umbrella lights easily clamp on to our umbrellas to add a touch of light, allowing you to enjoy your party into the evening."

As a perfect adjunct to its successful brand, Treasure Garden made a big splash last year when it introduced its TG Care line of cleaning and maintenance products for outdoor furniture, cushions and umbrellas.

Dealers embraced this as a necessary accessory category, and it made sense to buy from an established industry leader, rather than a fringe resource. "This line continues to explode in popularity and has been made more dealer-friendly with a point-of-sale counter display," Chase adds. One of its strongest selling points is that it is eco-friendly, containing no caustic chemicals.

Treasure Garden also continues to update its revolutionary Design Studio feature on its website, which gives customers that

ability to custom build their dream umbrella by selecting style, fabric, frame color, base and accessories. "Our Design Studio is a great selling tool for our customers to not only help promote our umbrella line, but to allow consumers to see the actual umbrella prior to making a purchase," Chase says.

She goes on to say that as one of its goals for 2019, Treasure Garden is committed to being more proactive across all social media platforms, ensuring the ability to connect with customers, increase awareness about its brand, and ultimately boost sales.

"After a very rough start due to weather dealers ended the 2018 season clean and ready to restock their stores. As a result, business has been very strong this year, and we anticipate a healthy remainder of 2019," Chase concludes.



Shademaker



1. Shademaker

The Polaris umbrella now comes in a new size (10 inches by 13 inches) and is available in a new Arctic White frame finish. The easy-to-operate piece was designed for both commercial and residential use. shademakerusa.com Booth 4925

Merritt and Castelle

MERRITT INTERNATIONAL

“Blue-and-white is a trend that has been popular for years, especially in the nautical category. The crisp contrast, as well as the richness of the hue, allow for an attractive combination for many design motifs.”

—Eric Damer, owner



BARCLAY BUTERA FOR CASTELLE

“Blue-and-white is just so fresh, classic and timeless. Since the beginning of my career, it has been a favorite go-to for design projects and for my product collections. It’s subtly coastal-chic but still has universal and nationwide appeal.”

—Barclay Butera, designer