

LIVING

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Exclusive

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Basildon-born star on family, forests walks and being fit in her 40s

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How Italian cook transformed into Essex personal chef

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Chic candlemakers from Leigh-on-Sea to Mersea Island

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Why Brentwood's Pixie Lott loved her lippie despite lockdown





GARDEN GROW-HOW!

Create your own winter wonderland inside and out with expert gardening advice from **Katrina Kieffer-Wells MSGD** of Leigh-on-Sea-based Earth Designs

A winter garden doesn't have to be dull

With a little imagination you can turn yours into a winter wonderland that will warm your heart, whatever the weather.

Plants that winter in style

Planting a few winter showstoppers will bring year-round colour and texture to your borders and beds. Like dogwood, which comes in an amazing array of red, yellow, orange and even white-stemmed varieties.

Or a Japanese quince with its beautiful orange foliage and peach or scarlet flowers. Heather, pansies, cyclamen, camellias and hellebores flower from autumn to spring in shades of white, pink and purple. And a cotoneaster brings a splendid display of red berries to the winter party.



Craving colour?

Besides planting, create a dramatic backdrop for greenery and contrasting plant pots by painting a wall or fence in a bright or dark shade. Introduce colour with big, bright planters. Or light-up versions that bring cheer even in the darkest days of winter.

Light it up

There's more to outdoor lighting these days than fairy lights. Coloured spotlights, and up-lighters, for instance. Even light-up bunting, super-stylish outdoor pendant lights and lampshades.

(Make sure you get a qualified electrician to install them.)



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Invest in an outdoor heater

From an artisan chiminea or fire pit, to an ultra-modern electric heater, there are lots of options.

So how to choose? As well as aesthetics, consider safety, cost and environmental impact before you buy. An electric or infrared heater is usually cheaper and greener than a gas, coal or wood burner.

Bring the outside in

Love your slippers too much to go outside, but miss the outdoors? Bring the garden to you. Natural decorations are fun to create, stylish and elegant. Holly, gorse, eucalyptus and spruce provide a mixture of seasonal

greenery and textures. Mix with fresh roses, dried citrus or touches of silver and gold for a touch of sparkle. Or bring in a branch, like a silver birch. They look stunning on the wall, either as they are or decorated with lights.

Earth Designs is an award-winning garden design and landscaping company. They are members of the British Association of Landscape Industries and the Association of Professional Landscapers.

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