

metr HOME

Your essential daily news

Shadow 2117-30 is Benjamin Moore's Colour of the Year for 2017

Extending your patio season

CONDO TRENDS

The right pieces will help keep you outside longer

Duncan McAllister
For Metro Canada



For condo dwellers, there are only two seasons in Canada: winter and patio. As the days get shorter and summer turns to autumn, you can still enjoy your outdoor space well past Halloween. Our experts show you some tips and products to help extend your urban Canadian summer.

If you're handy with a screwdriver, you can make your own custom-built outdoor balcony furniture. It's a lot easier than you think. Last month at the Toronto Fall Home Show, homeowners learned from DIY expert Chris Palmer how to add more space to their condo terraces, patios and balconies.

"It's rewarding when you get a lot of people who didn't realize how simple it can be," says Palmer. "They can all see it and take it home and feel a little more confident the next time they try and tackle a project."

Palmer uses a new type of pressure-treated lumber called MicroPro Sienna. The Sienna product is eco-friendly and has a rich, natural finish much like cedar.

Multifunctional furniture that's practical for small space

condos is hard find in stores, says Palmer, especially to fit your particular balcony or terrace.

He offers quick DIY project plans on his Hand Crafted by Chris Palmer website that you can tailor to your space and assemble over a weekend.

"I give you the how-to instructions and you can build something like the three-in-one planter. It's actually got four uses — it's a planter, it's a bench, it's a storage box and it's a table."

Palmer can be seen on HGTV's Canada's Handyman Challenge and Global TV's The Morning Show, as their resident handyman expert where he gives viewers tips on home renos, DIY projects and the latest in new tools.

Toronto's Andrew Richard Designs creates custom outdoor living furnishings ranging from backyards and urban terraces to global hotels and high-end restaurants.

Their Adelaide Street showroom features pieces that are designed with the Canadian climate in mind, and can be left outside year-round. ARD's Daniel Cichon says that some customers have had their furniture outside for seven to eight years straight.

ARD designs and manufactures all of their collections at their own facility, and with a choice of over 300 outdoor fabrics. No stranger to large condo projects, Cichon says they get many personal requests from residents who like what they see in the outdoor common areas.



Clockwise from top: DIY expert Chris Palmer's three-in-one planter box can be made for about \$20 in materials; pieces from Andrew Richard Designs' popular Greenwich collection and Kayman Balcony Dining Set. TOP: BOB GUNDU BOTTOM PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED