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spoga+gafa 2014, 31 August to 2 September

Outdoor Trends 2014/2015: Picnic de Luxe with Technical Treats

One thing is certain: the 'green living room' continues to be all the rage – and the Germans are willing to dig a bit deeper in their pockets for it. An so, between 2006 und 2013, the market volume of the garden living segment rose by a hefty 47 percent*. And by 2020, market growth of up to 3.1 billion Euros for end consumer prices may well be possible. Not least, because the customers increasingly choose high-quality products. The per-capita spending for garden living products in 2014 was around 34.27 Euro – an increase of 31.5 percent compared to 2005. From 31 August to 2 September, the spoga+gafa garden fair will take place in Cologne, with around 2,000 suppliers from over 50 countries exhibiting everything to do with open-air lifestyle.

The trend towards higher quality is most clearly shown in the furniture industry's 'picnic' sector. While we used to sit on a simple blanket and use an upside-down beer crate as a table, now outdoor dining in a noble way is hot. An increasing number of manufacturers have introduced furniture and accessories to their line-up that turn a sociable get-together in the country into a deluxe picnic. These include casual pouffees and cushions, stylish stools and chairs with a backrest as well as small tables with a handle that makes transporting them totally uncomplicated. An so as to make the dinner on the terrace likewise comfortable, many suppliers are currently focussing on table systems. Using practical extending furniture and modular concepts you are equipped for every challenge: for a romantic dinner for two, as well as for huge barbecues with friends and family.



spoga+gafa Cologne
The garden trade fair

Cologne 2014
31 August to 2 September

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Also gaining ground are “directors chairs”. The manufacturers provide exactly the right equipment for all those who simply would like to take control themselves. In very design-oriented, high-class versions. The casual cool models with a purist structure are often made out of a combination between wood - often teak wood - and fibres like Batyline and they are available in a variety of colours. Especially practical: Most of these directors chairs have a foldable frame for hassle-free transport.

Journey back in time: the retro wave rolls on

The current retro wave currently seen in the fashion, cinema and music industries is now spilling over to the outside world – in their outdoor space many people wish to have a hint of the past, after all. The current retro style doesn't simply entail copying designs, but indeed combining them with a modern look. The joy in nostalgia is the central focus here. And so the trend is towards outdoor furniture that quite charmingly casts a look back into the past. The spectrum ranges from kidney-shaped tables and rocking chairs, to modern versions of the classic wrought iron models, through to furniture in pastel shades or in the vibrant colours of the 1970s.

In terms of colours, also in the coming season, white and natural, muted shades such as brown, beige and sand will set the tone. This is currently reflected particularly clearly by the new weave colours, which come across as brighter and lighter. Another colour is also livening up the summer living room: purple. Since the pantone experts voted “Radiant Orchid”, a mixture of fuchsia, violet and pink, as the trend colour of 2014, it has also entered the garden – in numerous nuances, in fact: at times warm and gentle, other times nobly mysterious.

Refined barbecuing: technical treats

The more that barbecuing is becoming a sophisticated lifestyle choice, the more sophisticated the range becomes. For instance, it is now possible to grill on several levels. Whilst the steak is doing nicely on the bottom grill, the

vegetables cook in the middle and the bread is kept warm on the top grill. Particularly practical: now the first models are available which can be controlled via app. Also the optics leave nothing to be desired: whether in a cool, chrome look, elegant black matt surface or peppy eye-catchers in purple, green and chilli – the items need to be a feast for the eyes, too. And whoever wants to offer family and friends something really special, should purchase the swinging barbecue house. This allows you to cosily rock forwards and backwards while the meat is sizzling in the middle.

Also in demand are portable barbecues which – in keeping with the picnic trend – are not only compact and quickly ready for use, but also stylish and chic. And there is another real eye-catcher: a small suitcase which in a flash transforms into a barbecue. The trade fair trends also include mini barbecues which deliver fantastic barbecues on your table, and “go anywhere” variants of gas models.

The developments in the barbecue segment are really exciting. Thanks to the huge success in recent years, the world is becoming more and more sophisticated. The variety ranges from a pizza oven which can be placed over standard-size gas barbecues, via smoking woods which pass on the real flavour of red wine or whiskey to the food being grilled, through to peppy grill tongs and chic aprons which turn the sizzling on the hot grill into a stylish all-round experience.

Deco & accessories: original garden fashion

However, it is the accessories and the deco that give the finishing touches to the garden world. That is why stylish supplementary products for outside use are now increasingly placed into the limelight. No longer must any outdoor living room be without cushions, elegant stools, as well as modern vases and lanterns that match the furniture. And even products which up until now were above all meant to be practical, now have a stylish look – for example garden shovels, trays or bird houses. Attention is increasingly focusing also on outdoor carpets. They are available in both loud shades and natural colours.

Gardening equipment: high-performance and convenient

Comfort products, such as mowing robots – now even available with remote control – as well as cordless equipment continue to be money-spinners within the lawn and garden care sector. They convince the consumers with a combination between high performance and user-friendliness. The electrically-driven wheelbarrow is a practical addition for everybody who likes to potter about in the garden, without always having to haul heavy loads around. The engine and drivetrain are located in the axle, and the operator controls are in the handgrip. Resource saving is a further important theme. Here, the primary focus is energy-saving models and the reduction of CO² emissions.

As more and more young people enjoy gardening, spades, saws and buckets are being transformed into trendy eye-catchers. With bright colours, playful designs or imprinted slogans, they attract plenty of attention to themselves. Even wellington boots, aprons and co. are created to meet the exact needs of the target group.

Plants and care: for the discerning amateur gardener

The products related to plant care are becoming increasingly more sophisticated. Next to substituting classic soils with compressed substrates your own greenery can now, for example, be treated with a special tea which is designed to provide them with an organic energy kick. Then again, there are mini greenhouses with all sorts of professional equipment, such as digitally-controlled thermostats equipped with timers and temperature sensors. In combination with heating pads and plant lighting they enable the discerning amateur gardener to precisely control temperature and lighting.

Moreover, the “digital gardening” provides the industry with fresh arguments. Thanks to the new technical possibilities, for example sensors in the flowerbeds recognise automatically what the plants need and pass on the data to the smartphone. At the same time, garden apps give out helpful tips all about

planting and harvesting, or explain which animals are beneficial and which are pests.

Trade visitors will experience the latest trends relating to outdoor furniture and accessories as well as gardening equipment and garden maintenance at the spoga+gafa 2014. The trade fair is open from 31 August to 2 September – on Sunday and Monday from 09:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m. and on Tuesday from 09:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m.

* Study, "Market: Monitor Garden-Living 2014" by BBE Handelsberatung and Marketmedia24

The spoga+gafa 2014 is open to trade visitors on 31 August and 1 September from 09:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m. and on 2 September from 09:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m. Further information is available at www.spogagafa.com.

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