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## Multifunctional city comfort - these are the outdoor trends of 2017/2018

Carrots in the pot or salad in the box: Trend-conscious city dwellers and even the Hollywood actor Liam Hemsworth take joy in growing their own vegetables. What in the past was only common in the country or in allotment gardens that were labelled as being square, is now conquering the metropolises. Urban gardening is the buzzword that describes tomatoes, red peppers and strawberries growing on balconies, roof terraces and in back yards. As such, a new garden culture has established itself that is becoming increasingly more popular all the time. According to a representative GfK survey carried out on behalf of "Apotheken Umschau" (pharmacy publication), in the meantime 39 percent of the consumers, who own a balcony or garden, use them for growing fruit, vegetables and herbs - with an upward trend. Hence, the summer living-room is become real living space. And the consumers want to decorate it in a modern, stylish design. The manufacturers of garden furniture and accessories are currently increasingly discovering the potential of the urban outdoor oases. Thus, under focus: The city outdoor trend with products that are both elegant as well as practical and space-saving. On top of that multifunctional furniture as well as comfort-providing and ergonomic features are also increasingly finding their way outdoors. In terms of colours, everything revolves around green and barbecuing is becoming smart using elaborate equipment - through to the complete outdoor kitchen. Around 2,000 exhibitors will demonstrate all of the trends and innovations for the outdoor season 2017/18 at the world's largest garden fair, spoga+gafa, which is being staged in Cologne from 3 to 5 September 2017. **Top trend 2017/18: City outdoors is becoming sophisticated.**

People are being drawn to cities. Instead of a small house in the suburbs, in addition to young people more and more high-income earners are opting for the pulsating city lifestyle. And they not only want to furnish their apartment upclass and stylishly, but also their balcony. That is why there is a large selection of products for the summer season 2017/18 that specifically address this target group. Here the focus is on design-oriented outdoor furniture that can be variably implemented, constantly rearranged in new constellations and stowed away in a space-saving manner. They have a light, dainty appearance and are made of stylish materials that are hardly distinguishable from the indoor versions. The sophisticated balcony world is rounded off by compact sunshades, carpets and lamps as well as plant systems and gardening equipment for urban gardening that allow small areas to be optimally utilised.



spoga+gafa Cologne  
The garden trade fair  
03.09.-05.09.2017  
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**Multifunction is the trump card**

The days when the outdoor sofa was used exclusively for sitting on are long gone. Not least due to the limited amount of space on balconies and terraces, multifunctional furniture is now increasingly conquering the summer living-room. The manufacturers are convincing with plenty of creativity and are offering true quick-change artists. In this way, at the flick of a wrist a lounge becomes a bench or a daybed becomes a sofa with a table. Rocking upholstered furniture ensures a cosy feeling. Stools can also be used as a side table, sunshades offer light and heating functions and plant pots provide additional storage space. Ganz vorn bei der Multifunktionalität sind auch die Grill-Hersteller. In the meantime their models can smoke, roast and bake as well as offering special features such as LED lamps and power bank compatibility.

**Best agers: Things are getting comfortable**

High spending power, quality-conscious and growing - this describes the target group of the best agers. According to the experts every second Euro spent in Germany is spent by someone over 50. An attractive clientele that is prepared to dip a little deeper into its pocket for its green oasis - if the products offer added value. Hence, at the moment high-quality furniture that excels with comfort-providing aspects is conquering the outdoor stage. The selection ranges from ergonomically shaped, high chair seats for back-friendly sitting and lying, to sunshades that are operated per foot switch, through to plant pots that allow easy planting. Important here: The appearance and design language of the products are chic and modern. So they don't just address the best agers, but indeed everyone, who likes it comfortable.

**Colour trend: Everything is green**

That gets everyone in the summer mood: Green is the colour of the year. Whether in the fashion, cosmetics or furnishing sectors - everything is green and blooming. Nostalgic retro plants, cacti in all variations and exotic leaves cause eye-catching effects. A harmonious, coherent overall picture is emerging in interplay with nature. The array ranges from powerful and fresh to muted and dark shades. And since green can be nicely combined with many other colours, the look can be skilfully pepped up: It shines out when combined with yellow, becomes softer with pink and blue lends it all a maritime appearance. Of course, the garden wouldn't be the same without the classic shades white, grey, brown and black.

**Grilling 2017: To the stoves**

Trends like winter barbecues prove it: People love sizzling outdoors. Since more elaborate and sophisticated options are welcomed, complete outdoor kitchens are increasingly in demand. They are available as either mobile or fixed models. Depending on the user requirements, they almost offer the same equipment as their "indoor sister": from cooking zones, to worktops and sinks through to storage room. Further optional delicacies: Brackets for spits enabling larger roasts to be conveniently cooked. In this way, a 3-course meal can easily be conjured up in the outdoor kitchen. Parallel to this the grills are becoming more and more refined and multifunctional. Food can be smoked, roasted, cooked and baked on the models. It

is noticeable that the manufacturers are in the meantime creating complete BBQ worlds. The offer ranges from sandwich inserts to carving knives, through to the cigarette lighter. And in order to continually further increase the sizzling potential, the selection of accessories is permanently being extended to include for example marshmallow grill skewers. New smart features and app connections are constantly being introduced too.

An old tradition is being rediscovered: Plank grilling. Here, fish, meat and vegetables are cooked on planks made of special woods (i.e. alder, hickory or cedar), which produces a special smoking aroma. Also available: Versions made of salt.

### **Deco & Accessories: Definitely not just supporting actors**

Stylish outdoor accessories that are becoming more and more original are the icing on the top of the cake. Garden gnomes are without doubt an eye-catcher and indispensable decorations for every area. In the new, chic neon design or dressed in a Playmobil outfit they certainly don't look square anymore. Extravagant nesting boxes that not only offer small birds a refuge, but also attract attention in trees as a sculptural item, are sure to cause lively hustle and bustle in the spring.

Furthermore, purist birdhouses and bird baths also cut a good figure in modern landscape architecture. And people, who don't own a garden or balcony, can attach small feeding areas to the window using suction cups.

In the summer everything is geared up for garden parties, here colour Chinese lanterns, but also elegant storm lights and lanterns set the mood. Beyond this, lamps add a nice atmosphere to the green living-room. Many of them are battery-operated, so they can set highlights everywhere.

Since the emphasis is on relaxing outdoors, cushions in unusual formats and with striking digital prints entice the garden-goers to while away the time. Swimming poufs are ideal for relaxing even in the pool.

### **Plants & Care: Hurrah for the city garden**

There is room to plant things even on the smallest patch. In this way, mini greenhouses not only enable basil, parsley & co. to grow, but also look great on the windowsill. The corresponding LED lamps can replace natural light here. In the meantime, even the big supermarket chains are experimenting with lighting systems in order to become less dependent on the weather and delivery conditions for their offer of vegetables. Hobby gardeners are no longer only using their balconies for pretty flowers, but also to grow tomatoes, salad or wild herbs. In order to make things easier for ambitious city gardeners, plant pots pre-filled with potting soil are offered. And there are layer systems for the raised-bed gardens that are back in fashion, which guarantee rich harvests.

The spectrum of plant pots ranges from organically shaped products in stone format, to purist terracotta models, through to shiny items in metallic look. Whether in the country garden or on the city balcony - warm earth shades such as brown, beige and

taupe are dominating the scene. These natural styles live from structures on the surfaces.

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### **Gardening equipment: high-performance and intelligent**

Garden owners love designing their green oasis themselves - it just shouldn't be too laborious. Thus, products that facilitate their work are becoming increasingly popular. These include robot lawn mowers and battery-powered devices as well as raised flowerbeds and window boxes that score plus points with their convenience features (i.e. water reservoir). Furthermore, different battery systems for smaller, medium-sized and professional gardens facilitate the wireless operation of useful appliances. Whereby, other systems rely on one battery for all tools in a resource-saving manner so that the range can be expanded item by item. Protection systems for the garden are also gaining in popularity. At the same time the manufacturers in this segment are also discovering the high-spending 50+ generation and are offering them ergonomic tools or comfort-providing aids. The digitalisation is a further mega trend. The selection of intelligent systems for the summer living-room is increasing rapidly. Whether autonomous lawn mowers, smart grilling or irrigation per app - there are hardly any limits to the possibilities for technology-loving gardeners anymore.

The spoga+gafa 2017 is open to trade visitors on 3 and 4 September from 09:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m. and on 5 September from 09:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m. Further information is available at [www.spogagafa.com](http://www.spogagafa.com) .

The Garden Day 2017 is open to end-users and trade visitors on 2 and 3 September from 09:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m. Further information is available at [www.tagdesgartens-koeln.com](http://www.tagdesgartens-koeln.com) .

### **Koelnmesse - Global Competence in Furniture, Interiors and Design:**

Koelnmesse is the world's top trade fair organiser for the areas of furnishing, living and lifestyle. At the trade fair hub of Cologne, the leading international fair imm cologne as well as the trade fair formats of LivingKitchen, ORGATEC, spoga+gafa, interzum and Kind + Jugend rank among the internationally renowned and established industry meeting places. These fairs comprehensively represent the upholstered and case furniture segment, the kitchen industry, the office furniture sector and outdoor living as well as the innovations of the furniture supply industry. Over the last few years, Koelnmesse has specifically added international fairs in the most important fast-expanding markets to its portfolio. These include the LivingKitchen China/CIKB in Shanghai, interzum guangzhou in Guangzhou and Pueri Expo in Sao Paulo. With ambista, the network of the interior decorating industry, Koelnmesse offers direct access to relevant products, contacts, competence and events.

Further information is available at: <http://www.global-competence.net/interiors/>  
Further information about ambista: <http://www.ambista.com/>

The next events:

Kind & Jugend, Cologne, Germany 14.-17.09.2017

China Kids Expo, Shanghai, China 18.-20.10.2017

CIBK, Shanghai, China 21.-23.10.2017

FSB Cologne, Germany 07.-10.11.2017

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