

# Take It Outside

'Tis the season for alfresco entertaining, be it a garden party or backyard barbecue. These six recipes will make it a breeze.

by LYDIA BROOKS

**patio seating:** Designer Mary Beth Wagner hosts casual but elevated outdoor affairs at her Sea Island, Georgia, home away from home. "I love mixing pieces to create a unique experience for my guests," she says.

**H**osting friends for an alfresco event is arguably one of the best things about spring. But there's an art to outdoor entertaining that separates the seasoned hosts from the rookies. Designer Mary Beth Wagner of Mary Beth Wagner Interiors—whose second home in Sea Island, Georgia, is pictured—doesn't believe in skimping on decor just because you're in the elements. "The key to creating the perfect outdoor entertaining space is setting the mood," says Wagner, who looks to curated table settings and layered lighting to create the right vibe.

The most important element to get right is, no surprise, the food—leaning on dishes that are light, bright, and can be easily enjoyed in a relaxed setting. Need help determining your menu? Six of our Best Designers share their tried-and-true alfresco recipes.

