

How to Design a Southwest Inspired Patio

Written by Arizona Foothills Magazine

Enjoy the beauty of the outdoors, and extend the living space of your home with the addition of a Southwest inspired patio. If you've been wondering what to do with your patio, or if your patio has become dull and boring, now is the perfect time to get inspired and create the beautiful and comfortable space you crave. Infuse the colors, textures, and décor of the southwest into your patio, then mix yourself a margarita, relax, and enjoy a beautiful sunset.



A Southwest Palette is Comforting and Warm

Most southwest inspired designs incorporate warm and comforting colors such as earth tones; sand, adobe, sepia, rust, and browns are all good options. Make sure you punch up the look with pops of sunny colors as well, so it doesn't become drab. Shots of yellow, orange, and red liven up the earth tones, and create areas of interest to draw your eye around the space. Use these brighter colors in your accessories, and make sure they are well-spaced throughout. Plants can also provide color, and be used as accessories to your space, especially [flowering cacti](#).

Choose a Blend of Teak, Wicker, and Iron Furniture

Many outdoor patios in the southwest use furniture that can withstand the dry, arid climate. Iron, wicker and teak are predominant. Although these types of materials are durable and long lasting, remember that they will still need some TLC to keep them in great shape. Wrought iron should be wiped with a damp cloth and checked for rust development; sand and repaint any rusted areas. Wicker furniture is best used on covered patios due to the fact that continuous direct sunlight can cause it to fade; also, over-exposure to moisture can cause warping. Teak furniture is beautiful and hardy, and with proper care will last many years. Wipe it down with soapy water from time to time, and apply polish as desired. The best [teak refinishing Los Angeles](#) and other cities offer will help you regain the initial glow of your furniture.

Incorporate Potted and Hanging Plants

It's best to use plants that are [native to the region](#), not only to provide an authentic feel, but also because these plants are fit for the climate and will require less care. Native plants, such as low water shrubs and flowering cacti (placed in hanging pots or planted in terracotta pots), will give your patio life and color without needing much work from you. Most southwestern patios do not have ground covering plants, and that is why many patios incorporate potted and hanging plants into the design. Use several different plants at varying levels of height to give interest.

Texturize Accessories to Bring Them To Life

Texture, color and pattern are very important to southwest style. The textures that complement this style are rough and gritty. Think about the textures of sand, terra-cotta, and adobe. This is a rough climate and the textures used reflect that. Terra Cotta pots, hanging baskets made out of hemp or rope, and adobe or clay fireplaces can be great additions to your patio. Coming back to colors: remember that you want your accessories to pop and keep the eye engaged and moving through the space. Native American and Spanish patterns are perfect accents for your patio and will provide color and texture as well. Try to use them in your rugs, throw pillows, tiles, and even wall hangings. The right accessories can tie your space together and provide a pleasing overall look.

With the right colors, furniture, plants and accessories, you'll have the beautiful southwest inspired patio of your dreams in no time at all. Then you can kick back and enjoy that sunset.