



Out of Africa, or “on safari to stay”...? As much as the room on the opposite page could work without it, this zebra-inspired rug from Masland is an invaluable companion to the rest of the decor. Note, for example, how your eye is drawn in and around the room by the rug and how the textures and designs of the sofa, pillows and rug work together. Speaking of companions, Dilmaghani’s 100% wool, hand-knotted Maharaja Collection of design and color-coordinated area rugs, complement adjoining rooms without compromising overall décor.



good companions.

Think back on those special summers. Chances are good they involved a special companion or two who helped to make and share the good times and wonderful places. Area rugs are like that, too. Like good companions, they come in all shapes, sizes, colors, means of expression and the ability to remind us of special times.

What’s unique about the personalities of area rugs is that they’re so different and so easy to decorate with that they’ll fill a room with a new personality instantly and all themselves. You can take these “home companions” just about anywhere. Creative home decorators and collectors change their area rugs with season, and they’ll often have special occasion rugs which they bring out for family holidays. We heard of one designer who moves her rug collections around the house. Because the rugs were selected to work with her overall design, they can work just about everywhere in the home. Shifting them allows her to subtly refresh her home without making a major investment. >>



Area rugs can bring the outdoors in and your vacation back home. Clockwise from top left, you can have “Peonies” all year ‘round, in pure Wools from New Zealand, part of a series of timeless treasures from American Home Designs (See Page 62). Or, opt for a bright floral from the Golden Era by Liz Claiborne, head off to your garden for a “Rose Petal” Dupont Stainmaster™ rug, or head to Martha’s Vineyard (in almond) by Capel.



There's a reason rugs are called art for the floor. Sphinx draws from the geometric mind of Andy Warhol (from the Pop Collection), left, while Kathy Ireland is inspired with Poppy Red Wildflowers.



Like any good companion, an area rug can set the room's tone or bring it together. That means you either can build a room around an area rug, or you can be inspired by something new and different you've found, then accessorize around it with pillows and flowers and find yourself in a whole new space.

Rug artists and manufacturers have a history of creating rugs that are related in terms of look, say the same design in different colors, but a recent trend is the creation of rugs that keep company with one another, true companions you can use together in the same space or to carry your theme in transition from space to space.

Summertime is the time to bring the outdoors in, and area rugs lend themselves to colors and designs and SHAPES of the outdoors — say a flower or butterfly. How about images of sea and shore, the mountains or a special vacation you want to remember — and talk about!

Rugs are a great companion for your permanent flooring, including bamboo, cork, exotic hardwood, laminate, tile, stone and a very hot new trend, stained cement. For summer, area rugs can soften and lighten finished planks and tiles for an open and airy feel. You can quickly change the formal or cozy-winter feel of a room that has wall-to-wall carpet by layering with summer-inspired rugs. Come the fall and winter, change to a deeper-colored rug with the home and hearth feel.

For summer, natural fibers are always big. Look for styles and names such as coir, sisal, sea grass, marsh grass and mountain grass. There are always new natural fiber rugs coming on the market woven with various, often unusual and exotic flora from around the world. These natural fibers are light and very outdoorsy. (They are suitable mostly for indoor use, although they can add to your outdoor garden party to make it feel even more summery. Most of them don't like to get wet!) How about covering your patio or deck with these area rugs in different natural colors? (If you don't like the natural, scratchy feel or you're worried about allergies, many styles are authentically reproduced in wool and nylon.)

These wonderful grassy materials are available in natural colors of browns, beiges, pale yellows and whites, and in dyed and printed colors. For some real fun though, how about buying a natural rug and stenciling it with your favorite summer thoughts, leaves, flowers, birds, butterflies, and water? Craft magazines and stores offer lots of patterns. 🌿