

# Cozy Up Calgary

## Your Guide to a Winter-Ready Patio

As the temperature drops, Calgary businesses and community associations have a unique opportunity to turn the chill into charm by creating inviting winter patios. Outdoor patio spaces that stay open year-round not only provide a unique winter experience for patrons but also offer businesses and community associations an avenue to boost revenue and foster community connection during the colder months.

With the right setup – think warmth, ambiance and winter-themed activations – these patios, whether privately owned or community-driven, can transform into vibrant social hubs where people gather to enjoy Calgary’s winter atmosphere. To learn about embracing winter in Calgary, visit [calgary.ca/LoveWinter](http://calgary.ca/LoveWinter)



Photographer: Colin Way for Tourism Calgary



### CITY REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

- [Adding an outdoor patio to your business](#)
- [Bylaws related to snow and ice](#)
- [Noise bylaws](#)
- [Winter City Strategy](#)
- [Chinook Blast – Calgary’s Winter Festival](#)

## Quick Tips for Making Your Patio Winter Ready

### Design and Planning Ideas

#### Aesthetics

- Create a theme.
- Outdoor music speakers, DJs, guided craft stations, sport (i.e., shuffleboard, curling, crokicurl), tabletop games/sports (i.e., gaming clubs), immersive experiences, patio tour with passport, snowman building (even if Styrofoam), encouraging patio theming to make them a destination and passport opportunity.
- Offer family friendly programming during the day (i.e., artist workshops).
- Colour, colour, and a bit more colour – maybe some sparkles, too!

**Have you turned your patio into a winter wonderland?** Share your pictures and stories for a chance to be featured on our website! Email [wintercity@calgary.ca](mailto:wintercity@calgary.ca)

#### Capture the Sun

- Orient your patio to get as much direct sun as possible.
- Shaded? Then reflect light into your space! That can be just as warming.
- Moveable furnishings allow people to orient themselves as they need.

#### Shelter (especially from the wind and downdrafts)

- Awnings.
- Curtains.
- Decorative evergreens.
- Louvres.
- Moveable screens.
- See-through panels.
- Note: Glass panels are not recommended particularly downtown.

## Snow Removal and Storage

- Plan for what to do during and after a big snowfall.
- Can you use it or store it somewhere that people can create with it?

## Lights and Music

- Colour changing LED lights are fun and can be changed to match your aesthetic each night.
- Music lets those passing by know you are open and having fun!
- LED candles and lanterns.
- Surfaces with reflective paint.
- Garland.

## Warming the Body

- Blankets and pillows (fleecy and colourful, of course).
- Winter appropriate furniture (i.e., tables, chairs, benches, couches, waterproof coverings – if not waterproof already, baskets for blankets).
- Space warming elements (i.e., heaters, fire tables, fireplaces, fire pits).
- Patron comforts (i.e., cushions, blankets, tablecloths).

## Warming the Spirit

- Comfort foods like stews, chilis, curries, and casseroles. Don't forget the hot desserts!
- Craft hot drinks or warm cocktails.
- Prewarm dishes to help the food stay warm longer.



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## Benefits of Winter Patios

### Extended Revenue Opportunities

**Maximized Use of Space:** Winter patios allow restaurants, bars, and cafés to extend their seating capacity beyond the indoor space, accommodating more customers, even during inclement weather.

**Seasonal Appeal:** Many people enjoy the novelty of dining outdoors in winter, especially with cozy atmospheres created by heaters, string lights, and blankets.

### Improved Customer Experience

**Unique Ambiance:** A well-designed winter patio can create a memorable experience. The charm of outdoor lighting, festive decorations, and warm drinks can make an ordinary outing feel special.

**Safe Dining Option:** Winter patios provide a comfortable alternative for those adverse to dining indoors.

### Strengthened Community Engagement

**Increased Foot Traffic:** Winter patios, especially in a downtown setting, encourage people to linger and explore other nearby businesses. This can lead to a lively atmosphere that benefits the entire local economy.

**Events and Attractions:** Businesses and community associations can host seasonal events like holiday markets, live performances, or themed nights, drawing in crowds who might not otherwise visit in colder months.

### Brand Differentiation

**Stand Out from Competitors:** Offering a cozy, well-designed winter patio can differentiate a business from others that may close outdoor spaces in the colder months.

**Social Media Appeal:** Instagram-worthy setups with blankets, string lights, and hot beverages encourage patrons to share their experience online, giving businesses free marketing.

### Sustainability and Community Support

**Support for Local Economy:** Keeping outdoor spaces open in the winter can help retain jobs and ensure steady income for businesses that could otherwise struggle during slow seasons.

**Sustainable Practices:** Investing in energy-efficient heaters and eco-friendly designs for patios can appeal to environmentally conscious consumers while supporting a business's long-term sustainability goals.

Visit [calgary.ca/LoveWinter](http://calgary.ca/LoveWinter) for more information