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Volume 24, Issue 4



CLC Landscape Design

Creating beautiful, award-winning pools *page 11*

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Emmons Remodeling

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Swim-Mor Pools & Spas

Custom designs that help elevate your backyard *page 31*

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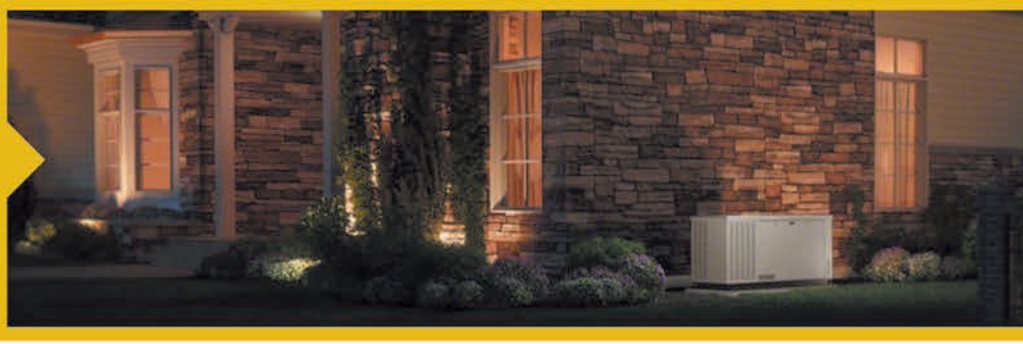
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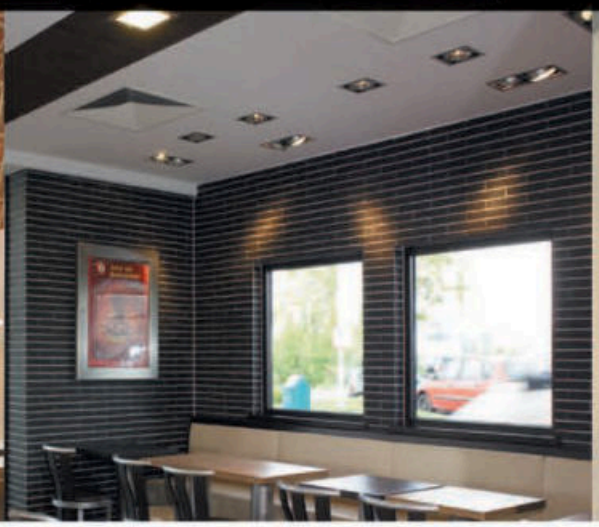
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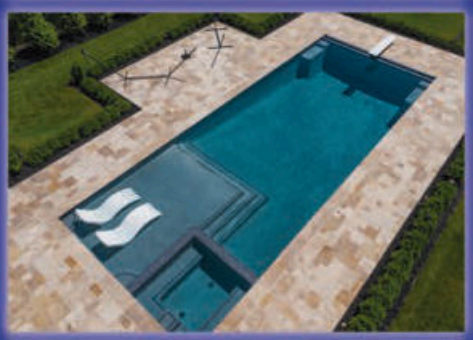
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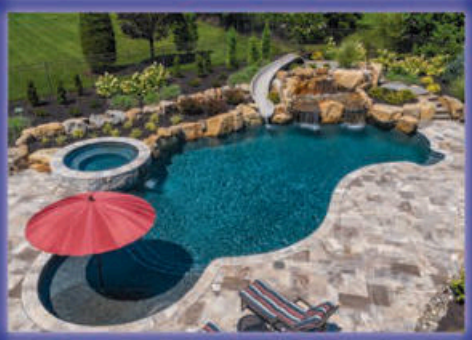
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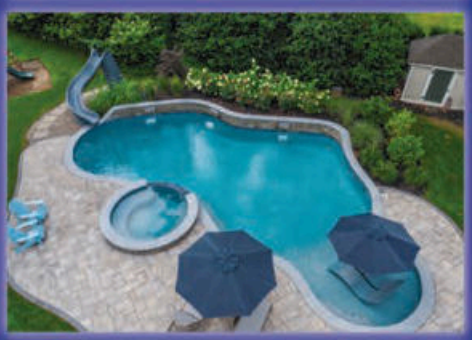


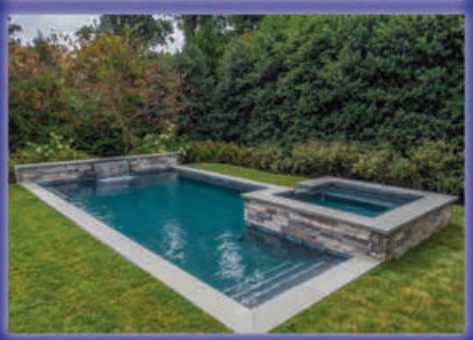


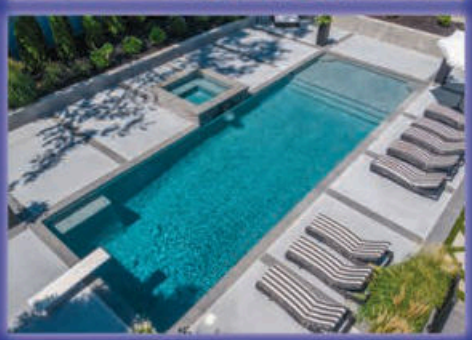


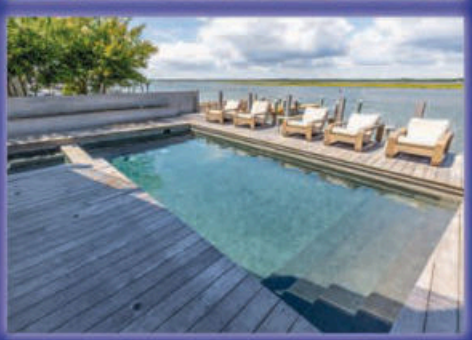












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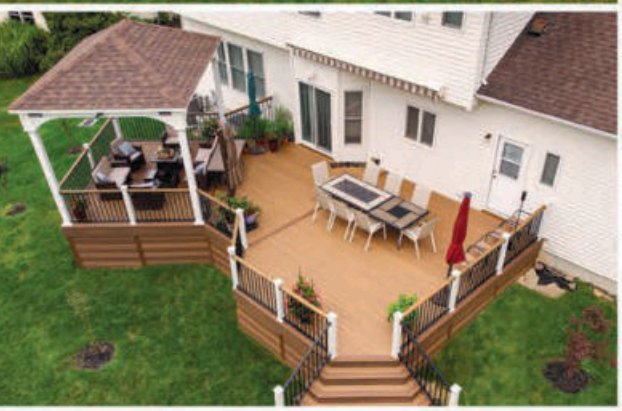
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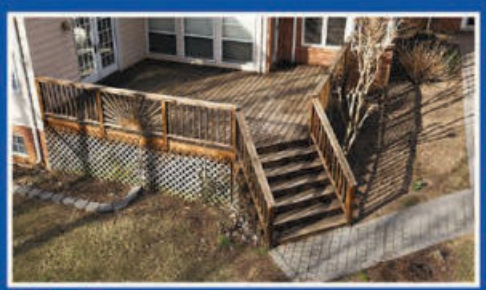




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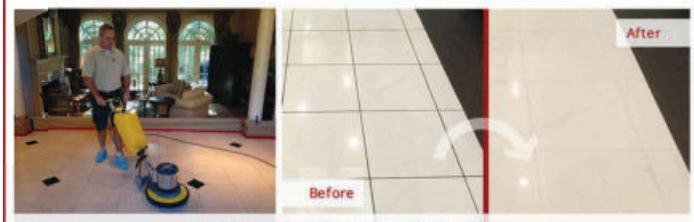
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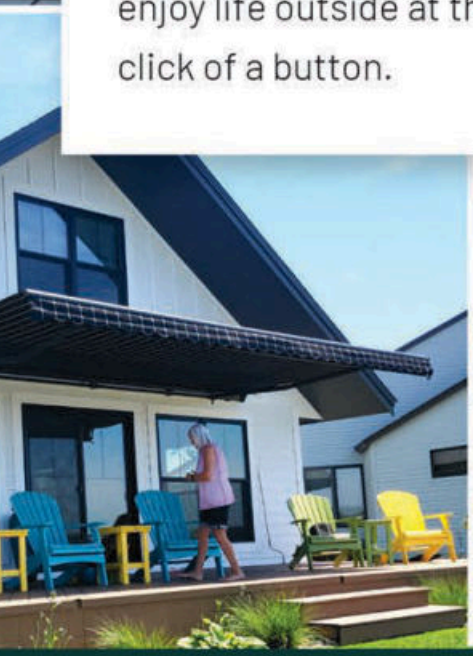
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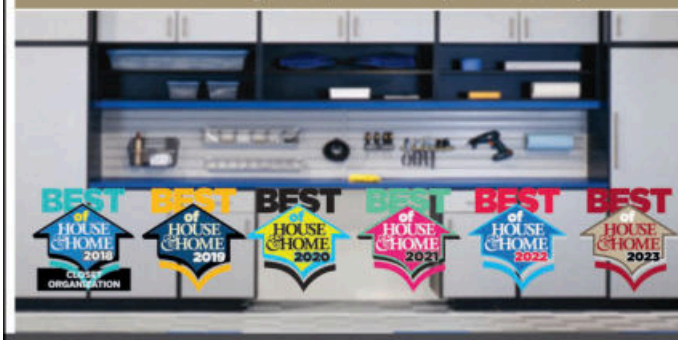
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The client's aspiration was to craft a versatile backyard retreat and accommodate year-round enjoyment. The Montville Makeover features a freeform pool and expansive patio, artfully landscaped surroundings, a series of rockeries and framing garden beds, fire pits and the soothing presence of bubbling fountains to enhance the overall ambiance.



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This client came to us wanting to enhance the curb appeal of her home, by creating new garden beds. The outcome was a front yard that not only captivates the eye but also imbues a sense of pride in the homeowners, ensuring that every return home is met with a gratifying smile of contentment.

Award-Winning DESIGN

CLC Landscape Design continues to raise the bar with stunning projects that both clients and industry professionals recognize as the cream of the crop.

CLC Landscape Design has helped homeowners in New Jersey and New York design their dream outdoor living spaces for over 50 years. 2023 was a year to remember for CLC, as they came away from this winter with nine landscaping awards (six New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association awards, along with three New Jersey Nursey and Landscape Association awards).

CLC is a leader in the landscape design/build field, designing endless jaw-dropping landscapes, of all sizes. Here, we spotlight some of the company's 2023 award-winning projects. **H&H**

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After originally creating this homeowner's design years ago, our fine gardening team comes every two weeks to maintain the gardens and to keep this customer's property looking lush and colorful. This client's love of color throughout the summer months is enhanced with the use of large growing coleus, cleomes and other tall annuals.



THE WOODCLIFF LAKE ESCAPE

This ambitious project encompassed a comprehensive array of elements to ensure year-round enjoyment: a pool for summer days, a hot tub to provide warmth and comfort during the chilly evenings, multiple fire features for the cozy ambiance, an outdoor kitchen for grilling season, a pavilion for shade and entertainment purposes, and a thoughtfully designed deck.

Elevated Exteriors

Exploring the plethora of effective decking options takes an outdoor living space—and the entire home—to new heights.

BY CARLY MURRAY

A stylish and functional deck can be the centerpiece of a memorable summer, and the modern, multifaceted approach to decking allows for an expansion of the home. Traditionally a place of outdoor observation, gathering and relaxation, decks in 2024 often include the additional features of outdoor kitchens, pergolas, gazebos, screens, fireplaces and more. The consistently growing trend of creative customization is no longer limited to interior design or landscaping, enhancing both a space and residents' quality of life.



Deck Aesthetics

Home renovation projects have the best results when they are coordinated with each element of the home, culminating in a harmonious structure with every detail taken into account. When it comes to decking, one should be mindful of the adjacent interior space, the outdoor living space surrounding it and the exterior elements of a home. A property can be like a blank canvas, completely restructured for optimal personalization, but it can also act as a starting point to inspire a deck's look and utility

"Two factors dictate what your new deck should look like—it must be in proportion with the house and property, and it must be built large enough to accommodate the people using the deck," says Jerry Jerminski of Get Decked.

Colonial-style houses are characteristic of the Delaware Valley region, and that built-in historical charm allows for a guideline to help match a deck to the exterior. This is not to say that the preferred aesthetics are exclusively vintage, but rather timeless. When renovating or remodeling a deck, experts and homeowners strive to fuse contemporary and classic elements.

"A few years back, a lot of what we saw were modern looks. It seems that it has changed a little bit more to traditional, classic looks with a modern touch. [For] example, sleek rails, black railings—but still the classic wood look on the deck. So, it seems like the style is slowly moving toward a modern-classical look," says Ephraim Stoltzfus, designer at Deck Craft Plus.

Bold and bright colors aren't very common, so the general process is to opt for a complementary neutral color for the base and to style it with finishes or other parts of the accompanying outdoor living space. With all of the options available, one can pick the exact shade variation with undertones that are congruent with the rest of the space.

"They've developed a few colors that can fit in with the older architectural stone, and then the beige will come out. A gray will come out if you want to hit that modern farmhouse with a gray. They have colors that will satisfy both at the same time—pretty ingenious," explains Bill Wilson, co-owner of Amazing Decks.

Gray seems to be the top choice, according to decking experts in the region. It is the perfect amalgamation of sleek and futuristic tones with an evergreen and adaptable quality. Warmer and cooler colored accessory pieces further influence the look of the deck as a whole.

"I think gray decking is very popular right now. AZEK has about three or four different gray colors, and it seems like we sell a ton of those. Powder-coated aluminum railing mimicking the old, wrought-iron railing style is [also] super popular right now," adds Ray Ebersol, marketing manager of Decks R Us.

Similar to a primary gray color, black adornments are versatile enough to work well with a multitude of colors and styles. The neutral color also gives more freedom to play around with designs without appearing over the top.

"Our most popular railing color now is the bold, black-on-black design—black cross rails and black Deckorators balusters," affirms Jerminski



Elevated Exteriors


DECKS R US

As every piece is essential to the fully finished project, the base of the deck may influence railing and step options, and steps and railing can impact the inclusion of lighting. Aesthetics can encompass visual and tactile appeal with materials, patterns and colors, but to take it up a notch, consider creating movement. Illuminate chosen visuals by intertwining lighting and guiding the eye to a designated focal point.

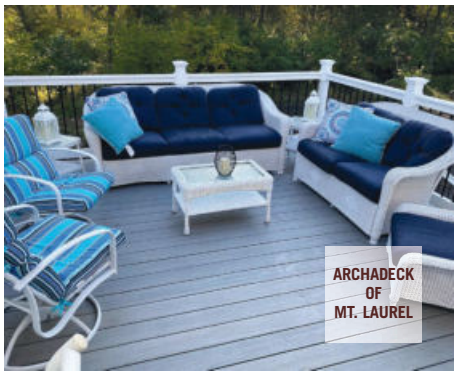
Deck Lighting

Lighting beautifies decking to a new level, and can range from practical to whimsical. Robert Lascelle, owner of My Deck, explains that colored lighting is called RGB lights, and they are increasingly gaining popularity with newer projects. However, practical lighting can still create an ethereal effect with the variety of options and cognizance of placement.

"Our viewpoint on lighting for a high-quality job…Your eyes should not focus on light fixtures, you're looking at the light the fixtures put out and that's what makes quality light jobs," says Lascelle. "Recessed under-rail lights [and] recessed under-stair riser lights are two examples "

Of course, any type of lighting will always require some sort of electrical accommodation. As with any home improvement project, careful planning is not just encouraged—it's a prerequisite. Jarrod Coburn, co-owner and production manager of Archadeck Outdoor Living of Mount Laurel, explains that the most common deck lighting—stair riser lights and rail post cap lights—does not require an electrician to install, but rather utilizes landscape wiring and a transformer with a solar sensor.

"When doing a new deck project or a complete demo and new deck replacement, it's best to decide on your lighting and under deck/skirting options before you start," Coburn says. "Running low voltage wiring to your stair risers and/or rail caps is much easier and cleaner if done before the decking is installed."


ARCHADECK OF MT. LAUREL

Add-Ons

The decision to make a deck an extension of the home demands cohesiveness, but that forethought in the design process is well worth the effort. Expanding the space also expands the realm of lifestyle possibilities. Personalizing a deck for each unique household's lifestyle guarantees that it will be where cherished memories are made.

"Imagine a perfect place for prom or wedding pictures. The multi-level decks cascade around the house towards their backyard with a gorgeous lake view," says Coburn, as he describes one of his most memorable projects.

Whether it is designing a platform ideal for family photographs above a stunning backyard oasis or considering architectural durability for a household with small children, the lifestyle needs of a home's residents are at the forefront. Many of these decisions equate to the idea of accessibility: making sure getting into the house via the deck does not require excessive effort with steep hills or unaligned entrances and adding features that are functional.

Exterior kitchens have made major traction in recent years, as they are highly customizable and add efficiency to the cooking process. When entertaining, a deck can give guests a maximized place to hang out without getting in the way of the food's preparation, and it can also allow for multitasking if cooking multiple dishes.

"You could have 150 people at your house, but they'll all hang out in the kitchen area. We call it the heart of the house. … It's very important that we make our deck an extension of that heart of the house," says Wilson.

Full outdoor kitchens contain almost everything one would expect in an indoor kitchen: sinks, pull-out garbage, refrigerators, drawers and cabinets. Lascelle explains that the main focus is usually a standard grill, but he has witnessed the emergence of outdoor pizza ovens and hibachi-style grills.

"We're doing a ton of exterior kitchens, they're a really big feature that we put on a lot of decks now that people really enjoy," he says. "You can have a full kitchen outside


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equipped with almost every feature an interior gourmet kitchen may have."

Taking in nature and fresh air is paradisiacal—with the exception of a few factors. Gazebos, pergolas and screens are other common deck embellishments that provide a picturesque quality as well as factors to ensure an optimal outdoor experience. This includes staying shaded, warm or cool in varied weather, and protection from bugs.

"Gazebos are a great way to screen in an area, to spend more time outdoors. Obviously, if it's bug free, this will enhance the experience ... [and] makes it more pleasant on hot days to sit inside of the gazebo rather than out in the open, in the sun," says Ebersol.

Regardless of any potential qualms about an outdoor living space, there is typically an inventive solution that can be built into a deck. For example, gazebos can have outlets, fans and tinted windows installed. Additionally, working with the railing and underside of a deck can best maximize the area. Stoltzfus exemplifies this problem-solving approach while discussing a unique project that he worked on last summer: a second-story deck with a fully custom outdoor kitchen and bar underneath.

"We put a dry space underneath, outfitted with lights of course and some ceiling fans. We put stone columns from the ground to railing height, and we put screens in around the bottom of that deck. ... The face screens were all electrical screens, and we put a double-sided fireplace under the deck as well," he recounts.

A desired vision is a major first step toward the deck of one's dreams, and previously inconceivable attributes are more accessible than ever. Consulting an expert can traverse imaginative ideals and conceptualize them into reality, guaranteeing a deck you and your family will love. H&H

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A Legacy of Craftsmanship

Magnolia Home Remodeling Group began its journey 30 years ago with a singular vision: to redefine the art of home improvement through uncompromising quality and unparalleled craftsmanship. From its humble beginnings, the company has grown steadily as a family-owned business, earning the trust and admiration of homeowners across the tri-state area.

At the core of Magnolia's success lies its unwavering commitment to excellence in every aspect of its operations. From the initial consultation to the final reveal, the company prioritizes superior craftsmanship, attention to detail and customer satisfaction above all else.

Craftsmanship Redefined

Magnolia Home Remodeling Group takes pride in its team of highly skilled craftsmen who are passionate about their work. With years of experience and a keen eye for detail, these professionals bring visions to life, transforming ordinary spaces into extraordinary havens.

Owner Vic Fiore shares, "For the past 30 years, we've transformed countless New Jersey homes inside and out. Our team does just about every kind of renovation project, from new bathrooms and kitchens to siding, windows, decks, porches, patios and more. With every project, our goal is to build a strong, lasting relationship with the homeowner."

Whether it's a kitchen renovation, bathroom remodel or full-scale home makeover, Magnolia approaches each project with the same level of dedication and precision. From concept to completion, the company collaborates closely with clients to understand their needs, preferences and lifestyles, ensuring that every detail is tailored to perfection.

"When you work with us, you can expect the highest quality of workmanship and professionalism. We provide each customer with a detailed scope of work, budget and timeline for your project, and you can expect us to stick to that budget and timeline. If we can't, you'll know exactly why," Fiore says.

Above all and most importantly, you can expect a high level of communication, no matter how big or small your project is. "We answer the phone when you call. We reply to your emails, and we check in with you regularly," says Fiore.

Innovative Solutions

In an ever-evolving industry, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group remains at the forefront of innovation. By staying abreast of the latest trends, technologies and design concepts, the company continually pushes the boundaries of creativity and craftsmanship.

From smart-home integration to eco-friendly solutions, Magnolia embraces innovation to deliver cutting-edge remodeling solutions that not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of a space but also improve its functionality and efficiency. Whether it's incorporating sustainable materials or implementing state-of-the-art technology, Magnolia ensures that each project is as sustainable as it is stylish.

Customer-Centric Approach

At Magnolia Home Remodeling, the client always comes first. The company understands that remodeling can be a daunting endeavor, and strives to make the process as seamless and stress-free as possible for its clients.

"You're our priority. We promise to treat your home as if it's our own," shares Fiore.

From the initial consultation to the final walkthrough, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group fosters open communication and collaboration, keeping clients informed and involved every step of the way. Whether it's providing design recommendations, addressing concerns or accommodating special requests, the company goes above and beyond to ensure that each client's vision is brought to life with precision and excellence.

Looking Ahead

As Magnolia Home Remodeling looks to the future, its commitment to excellence, innovation and customer satisfaction remains unwavering. With a legacy built on craftsmanship and integrity, the company is poised to continue its upward trajectory, shaping the homes and communities of tomorrow. Additionally, Magnolia started offering financing for those large ticket projects. "There's no reason to delay enjoying your home," Fiore says. "We have great financing options for those who want to get started right away."

All in all, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through a steadfast commitment to quality, innovation and customer-centric values. As the company continues to elevate spaces and enrich lives, its legacy of excellence will undoubtedly endure for generations to come. H&H



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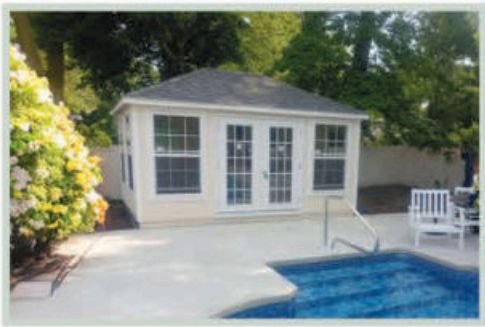
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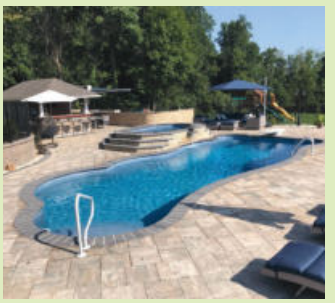
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by Lindsey Getz



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It's safe to say that the pandemic has taught us to appreciate the outdoors even more. While backyard outdoor living areas have been soaring in popularity for years now, for many, the stay-at-home orders and the experience of being stuck indoors for so long have made homeowners absolutely crave these spaces more than ever. They are truly a must-have—a fact that's been increasingly evident at Sequoia Out Back, where owner John Keller says that he's seeing even more people come into the showroom than ever before.

From the moment that homeowners walk through Sequoia Out Back's front doors, the experience is really unlike any other. The 30,000-square-foot showroom has everything you could want for your personal oasis on display so that you can envision it in your own backyard.

When you walk through a typical patio store or a big-box store, items aren't usually set up or paired together the way they would be in your backyard so it can be difficult to visualize your finished space. At Sequoia, you can see an entire outdoor living space the way that you might set it up on your own patio. It inspires so many ideas.

The goal of the showroom has always been to make homeowners feel like they're stepping into a real-life outdoor space. This helps homeowners to make the best choices when it comes to furniture and decking supplies that will work for their own projects.

Pair these gorgeous displays with the knowledgeable and helpful team members who are ready to assist—and homeowners can really appreciate the showroom visit



At Sequoia, you can see an entire outdoor living space the way that you might set it up on your own patio. It inspires so many ideas.

experience. Customers always leave Sequoia with a lot of great ideas and information.

Of course, in general, inventory has been a major issue since the start of the pandemic. Homeowners who have tried to purchase furniture and decking may have noticed limited stock. But Sequoia Out Back has been fortunate to be able to keep a lot of inventory in stock thanks to its relationship with manufacturers and its purchasing power, as well as having a large quantity from the start. Even so, with so many people coming through the doors, now is the time to start planning for the spring while inventory is still available.

After all, before you know it, the weather will be consistently warm, and we'll all be spending even more time outdoors. Homeowners want to make sure their space is ready now!

"The sooner you can start planning, the better," urges Keller. "The number of visitors coming to the store right now is higher than ever for this time of year. It's definitely not too early to start thinking about setting up your outdoor space."

As you start planning, Sequoia Out Back has all of the amenities that you might want to consider. This includes fire pits, patio furniture and all of the material supplies including decking and railing and hardscaping. Sequoia works with all of the leading manufacturers including TimberTech, Wolf, Trex, Zuri and Fiberon—all of whom continue to offer innovative products.

Whether you're a do-it-yourselfer or someone who was sent by their contractor to look for materials, Sequoia's showroom can accommodate everyone.

It's all about making the experience as easy and as enjoyable as possible for homeowners. As the true outdoor living experts, Sequoia and its team are ready to help make homeowners' backyard dreams come true.

"Outdoor living has been a trend for a long time but it's hotter than ever," Keller sums up. "I think we're all ready to start spending more time outside." **H&H**

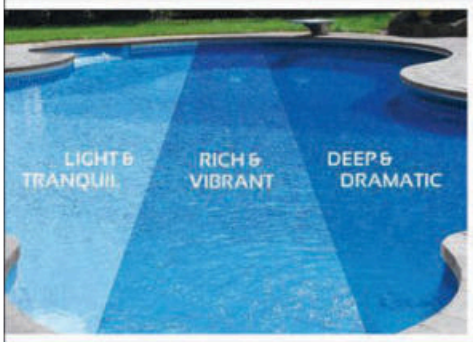
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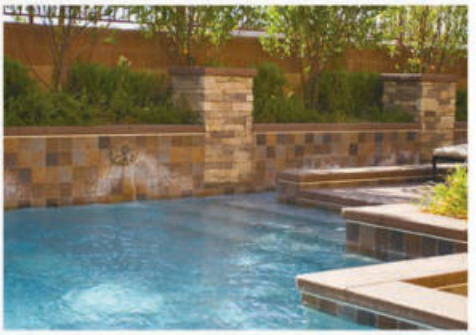
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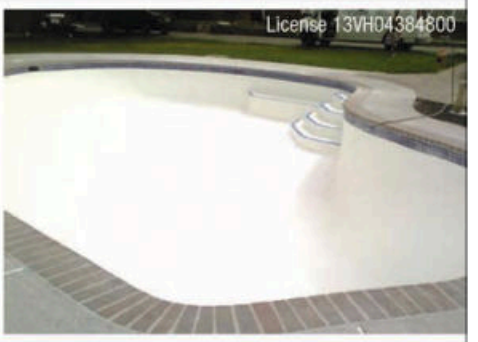


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A Matter of Trust

When it comes to finding the right contractor for the job, **Emmons Remodeling** offers clients both expertise and peace of mind.

When you need work done on your home—expected or not—you want to know that you can trust the contractor you've hired to get the job done well. After all, you're not an expert on what's involved in services like roofing, siding or windows, and you don't want to get taken advantage of as a result. Because of that, it's important to choose a company that you can feel confident is reputable.

But how exactly do you know a company can be trusted?

One important factor in choosing the best contractor is longevity. Only a company that performs great work is going to be able to stick around for the long haul. That's exactly the case with Emmons Remodeling, a company that has been offering expert care for South Jersey and the Jersey Shore area since 1996. They are a wellknown name in the region—and for good reason. Their success was built upon a reputation of honesty, integrity and good work.

In fact, the company is an Owens Corning Platinum Preferred Contractor. That's not a designation that any old company can have. Platinum Preferred Contractors are in the top tier of a premier-network of roofing professionals. In order to achieve this title, they must have passed a workmanship inspection, been professionally screened for financial stability and customer service, and continue to adhere to stringent guidelines set forth by Owens Corning. Fewer than 1% of roofing contractors in the United States are Owens Corning Platinum Preferred.

"It's a title that backs up our already strong reputation," says Stephanee Kelly, co-owner of the company along with her husband Matthew. "Only the most reputable companies are able to earn that designation."

Besides being able to feel confident that you've hired a contractor you can trust, this designation benefits homeowners in a more tangible way as well. That's because Platinum Preferred Contractors are able to offer 50-year warranties on their work—much longer than other companies can offer. According to Owens Corning's website, "because we stand behind these warranties, we need to make sure that we are backing up the best roofers in the business."

Protect Yourself Against Storm Chasers

Unfortunately, when it comes to contractors for roofing, siding and windows, there are a lot of fly-by-night companies out there and it's important for homeowners to protect themselves. In the business, many of these companies are called "storm chasers." They follow severe weather from area to area, knowing that there will be a lot of work.

They typically have no community roots and therefore no knowledge of local building codes. Their "rush job" often has shoddy work, and since they typically leave the area in chase of the next storm, they can't be reached when there are problems.

How can you spot a storm chaser? Stephanee says it's critical to be wary of contractors who may not have a physical office—again, an indicator that they may be a fly-by-night company. They'll do the work poorly and then disappear, leaving you with problems.

"We are a local small business in Williamstown with real people answering the phones—not an answering service," Matthew says. "We don't work out of a house and we do not have a 'virtual office.' Be wary of contractors that will not provide you with a physical address but instead only have a P.O. Box or suite number and only use an answering service."

Some of the worst storm chasers don't even carry the proper insurance and are therefore putting you at risk.

"We are fully insured and also carry liability insurance, which is required for roofing operations," Matthew says. "But many contractors carry cheaper insurance that does not include liability insurance, leaving you, the homeowner, liable if a worker is injured while working on your roof. Make sure the insurance certificate sent to you by your contractor's insurance agency specifically includes liability insurance."

Choosing Wisely

At the end of the day, your choice in roofing, siding and window contractors can be the difference between good, quality work—and a big headache. Stephanee says that the last thing Emmons wants to see is people in their local community get taken advantage of by unscrupulous roofing, siding and window contractors.

"You should be able to feel confident that you've chosen a contractor that you can trust— not one that is going to leave you with problems to fix after they've gone," she says. "At Emmons, you are not only investing in a new roof, new siding or new windows—you're investing in peace of mind." **H&H**

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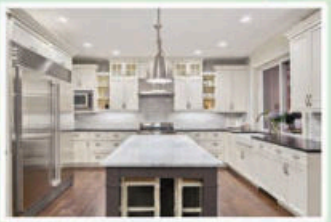
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More Than a Pool

Swim-Mor Pools & Spas elevates backyard atmospheres with quality custom designs

by **Kristen Dowd**

Swim-Mor Pools & Spas partner and general manager Mike McCool recognizes that there is a lot more that goes into a new pool than there used to be.

"The backyard has transformed over the last 10 years or so away from being just 'your yard' and into another room of your home with the same care and detail put into it," McCool says. "Because of this the design of your pool has become more than just a pool but the focus of the outdoor living room. There is a lot of coordination with creating what a customer's backyard haven is going to be."

Fortunately, the family-owned South Jersey business is more than up to the challenge of bringing a customer's backyard pool vision to life. In its 55 years of business, Swim-Mor Pools & Spas has helped to create thousands of backyard paradises throughout the region.

And what's more, they make the process as easy as possible for their customers.

"We're a start-to-finish gunite custom pool company—the design, the build and the service afterward," McCool says. "We have our own crews that handle the work which helps us control quality and makes the process go smoother."

There are six designers at Swim-Mor Pools & Spas who can help guide customers on a new pool design. The company's countless photos and 3D drawings can provide inspiration, and the final design is what best suits the backyard, according to McCool.

"Size, setbacks, elevations. We're here to help you work through that," he says.

Finding the right pool

"The first step is to give us a call. From there we'll set up an appointment to come out to your home," McCool says. "That way we can see all the aspects of the property. What the contours of the yard are. What the access is like. Even the best location based on where the sun rises and sets."

The timeline to get started is largely based on the homeowner and how decisive they are, McCool adds. Once everything is confirmed, things move to contract and Swim-Mor Pools & Spas starts working on permits.

"Time is of the essence. Permits can take from two weeks to several months, all depending on the municipality," McCool says.

Pool popularity

Prior to March 2020, business was strong for Swim-Mor Pools & Spa. That was only boosted when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the region.

"The pool business was never busier than it was in COVID," McCool says. "The lockdowns forced people to stay at home and they immediately focused on the backyard."

Although that business boom has settled down a bit, things are still busy. But pool trends, according to McCool, have held fairly steady.

Hampton-style pools have long been a customer favorite, but equally popular are the freeform designs, which can be customized to fit into any backyard environment.

"Through COVID there have not been many significant changes in the industry," McCool says, "other than the increased popularity of adding more bells and whistles to the pool."

Natural stone is popular for the coping along the pool's edge, McCool says, as well as darker finishes in the pool. A majority of Swim-Mor Pools & Spa customers are using a salt sanitation system and automated controls in their new pools, as well as choosing to add water features—waterfalls, fountains, deck jets and plenty more. The company also offers many in- pool fixtures for lounging—bar stools and benches that can tie into your outdoor kitchen or can run inside the pool, along with table areas, sundecks for your lounge chairs and custom fire features. Color LED lighting packages come with every pool, too.

The majority of customers also choose elements to lengthen their pool-enjoying season, such as heaters and spas. "It will extend your pool season by a few months," McCool says.

Why Swim-Mor Pools & Spas?

Being a local family-owned independent business makes Swim-Mor Pools & Spas a smart choice for customers, according to McCool.

"We're not national. We're not a franchise. And we do not try to sell everything. Our expertise has been building custom gunite pools for 55 years and that's what we focus on," he says.

Save for a few aspects that are legally required to be outsourced to independent licensed contractors, Swim-Mor Pools & Spas uses all of their own crews for the pool construction, which McCool says is unique for the pool business.

In addition to building new pools, Swim-Mor Pools & Spas also specializes in renovating gunite pools. The experienced team can handle everything from your standard renovation of replacing your coping, tile and plaster finish, to adding features such as raised water features, sun decks, and even spas that were not originally built with the pool. McCool says, "Even though your pool may not have originally been built with the more current popular features doesn't mean that Swim-Mor cannot add them now."

The 2023 pool season is already underway for the business, which thanks to the mild winter meant they were able to start construction early. Pool openings and service will ramp up from mid-April to Memorial Day.

But, for those looking to add a pool to their backyard this summer, it's not too late. "We're still building for this year. We're still selling for this summer," McCool says. "But don't waste time. Get in!" H&H

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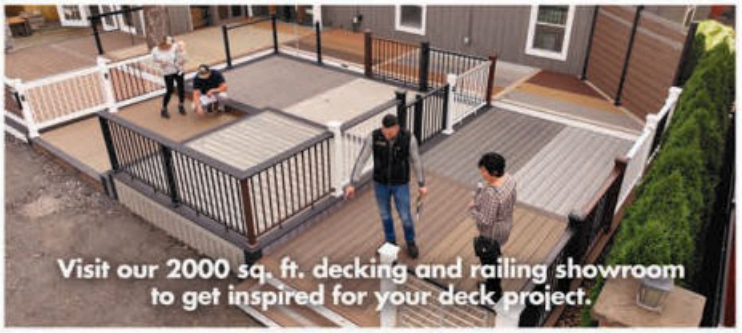
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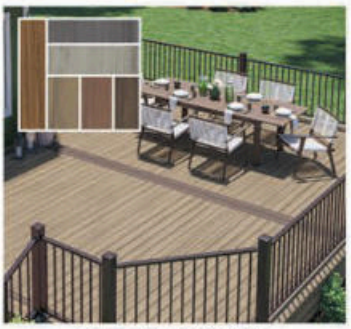
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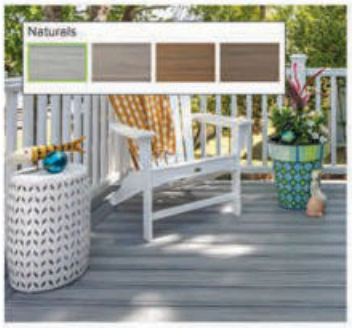


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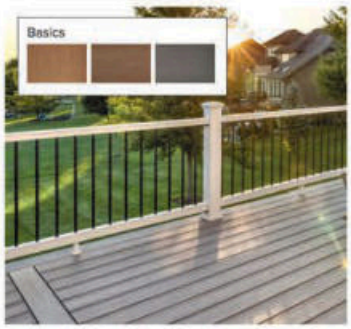

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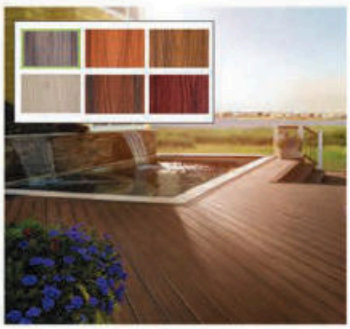

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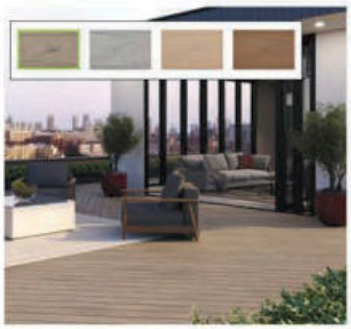


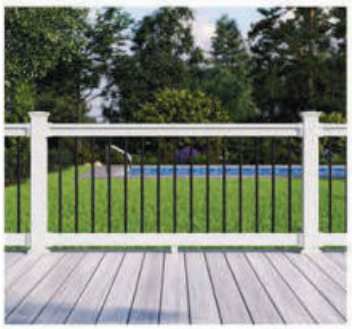
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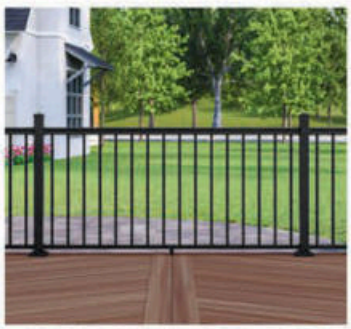


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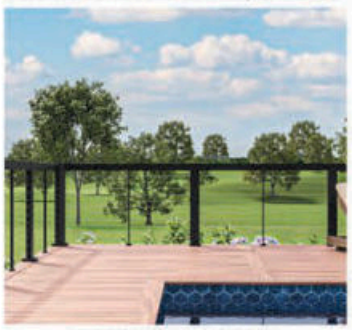

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