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On the cover:
Cabinets can set the tone for any kitchen or bathroom. From minimalist styles with clean lines and soft colors to intricate flourishes in rich wood tones, there are endless options. We asked professionals to answer some key questions about this important design decision. Turn to page 16 to find out their advice.

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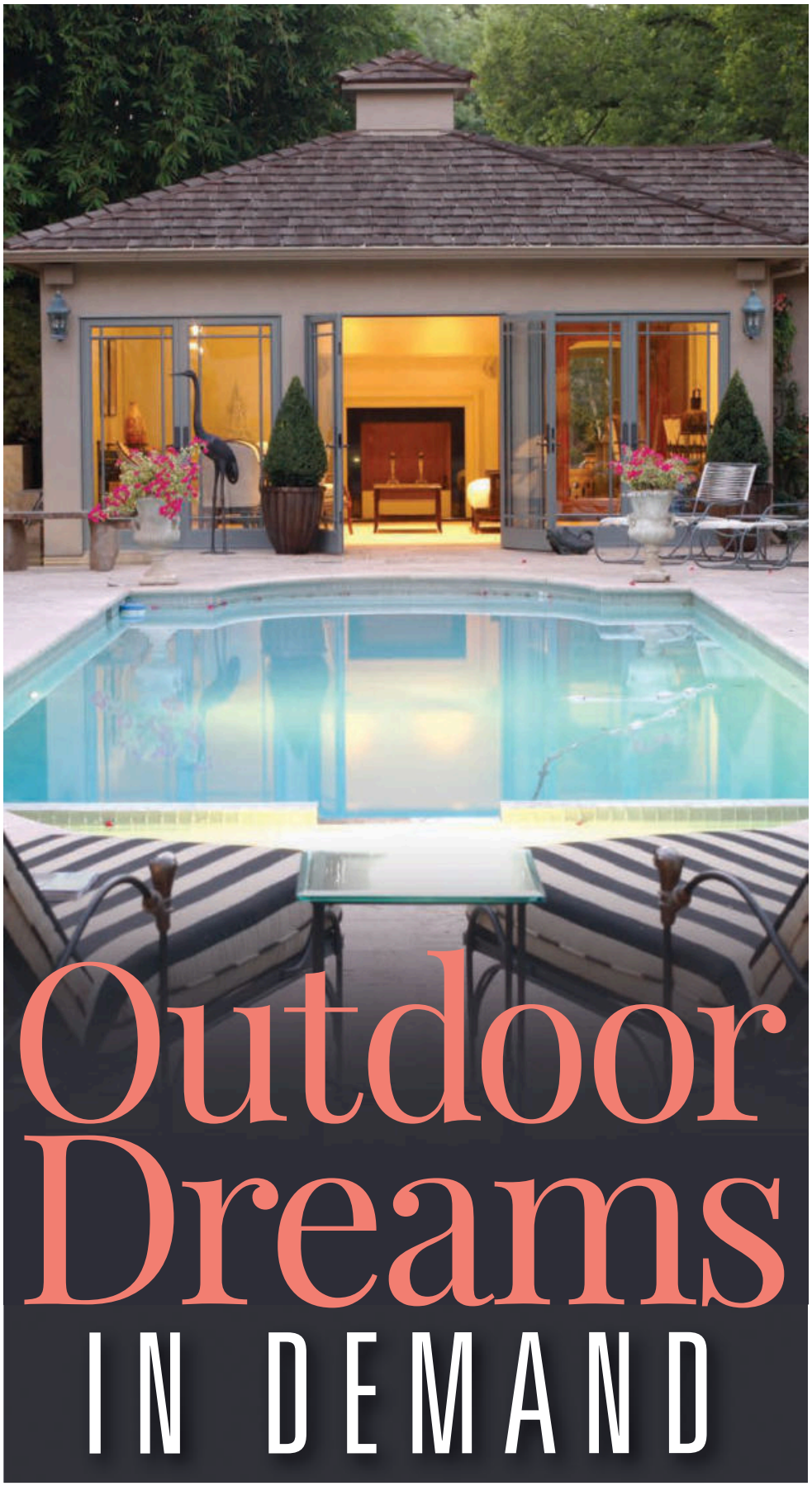

Outdoor Dreams IN DEMAND

The popularity of outdoor projects continues to rise and experts say there is no time to waste in planning.

BY LIZ HUNTER

For years, homeowners have been building up their outdoor spaces into backyard retreats that feel like a destination getaway, and in 2020, that industry saw a surge like never before. Hunkered down at home for safety reasons, they invested money otherwise saved for vacations on pools, decks, hardscaping and more. This year is proving to be another record year for these projects as well, meaning homeowners have to act fast.

"As protocols and mandates were put in place and individuals became comfortable with [people coming into their home], demand skyrocketed, mainly for outdoor entertainment spaces which included pools, patios, roof structures, walkways, firepits, outdoor kitchens, etc.," says Michael Pasquarello, degreed landscape architect at Elite Landscaping. "As we are in the beginning of 2021 the residential home improvement wave has still not crested and continues to build. I foresee it lasting clear into the middle of 2022."

Sam Waddell, owner of SLS Landscaping, says it wasn't just requests for new installations of pools, outdoor kitchens and patios he was receiving. "We have also been building add-ons to prior completed landscape and patio projects, including fireplaces and pavilions," he says.

The pandemic has also contributed to material shortages, making them more expensive and delaying projects. "The one downside of this high demand is the availability of materials. Manufacturers cannot keep up and most items are on back order," Pasquarello says.

"Good contractors are backlogged several months for work that requires permits," adds Keith Frederick, owner of Environmental Landscape Associates. "Bigger builds are

ELITE LANDSCAPING

being booked out six to eight months, but smaller non-permit work is about two to three months."

We asked these professionals and more to chime in on project planning as the spring and summer approach. Whether interested in something small or a full-scale oasis, the consensus is not to wait to make the call.

Decks

One of the most requested elements of an outdoor living space, decks have come a long way from the standard square shape. And companies that specialize in decks have also evolved to incorporate more features into their design.

"We here at Keystone Custom Decks have evolved into an outdoor living company. We no longer strictly focus on just decks but really customize each design and project to what fits our clients' needs the most," says Marv Esh, manager/owner of Keystone Custom Decks. "For most projects that means combining a deck, porch and patio as part of their outdoor living space as well as features such as fireplaces, kitchens and stone features."

Bill Wilson, co-owner of Amazing Decks, says the modern farmhouse is the dominant style for decks. "No one wants to have the '80s McMansion cookie-cutter look. The farmhouse trend features black railings, darker decking—it's more rustic," he says. "I really like the way it looks."

One piece that should be considered for any deck is coverage. "Our signature project is a deck with a porch structure. We hear feedback all the time from our clients that they use the covered areas so much more than they ever thought they would. A roof structure provides you protection from the elements and really just becomes an extension of the home in an outdoor setting," says Esh.

SLS LANDSCAPING

"From there a majority of our projects get some type of fire feature which increases the outdoor living season. Another very popular item is ways to close off the porch. For that we implement a lot of motorized retractable features that when not in use are not seen but with the push of button your porch can be enclosed. When those are in use and we combine the fire feature and heating elements, you can really end up using your outdoor space almost all year."

Wilson says he is also seeing a shift toward homeowners designing just for themselves. "It seems the designs are less for massive amounts of people and more for a smaller number of guests—cozier," he says. "In the past people wanted a design that would accommodate others. Now they are doing it for themselves so at the end of the day or the week, they have a place to sit and recharge. With so many working from home, getting through the day is difficult so you need an outdoor environment for your sanity."

Outdoor Dreams IN DEMAND

M.C. WEEKS, INC. WINDOW FASHIONS
Poolside outdoor patio screen shades with PowerView motorization

Pools

Frederick says pools are on the uptick. "With kids being home, not going on vacations, pools are a great activity for them," he says. However, there are some considerations if a pool is on your wishlist.

The first is budget. To put it bluntly, Frederick says a full-scale custom pool design and installation requires at least $150,000 to start the process. "There is permitting, plus stormwater control, grading, the pool and its decking, fencing for safety—before you know it you're at that range," he says. "I believe in openly discussing budgets with new customers. If you want the stars and the moon but you can only afford the moon, then you have to modify your wishlist or add more money to the budget."

Frederick's company is booking into 2022 for these types of projects, but there are options for a quicker turnaround and better price point.

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Fiberglass or gunite pools are a great alternative to concrete. "Gunite pools can be custom designed to virtually any shape, size, depth and include many features such as spas, waterfalls and beach entries. The possibilities are endless," says Waddell.

"These feel like a big hot tub and come in all shapes and sizes, and actually have a better longevity than a concrete pool which will one day need to be replastered and retiled through the freeze and thaw cycle," says Frederick. "Fiberglass has no plaster or tile. We've sold a handful of them in the last six to 12 months."

Additional enhancements

An outdoor living space is more than just decks and pools. There are a bunch of details that add up to a completed environment, some of which can be incorporated in time for this summer.

First is giving some TLC to your hardscaping and landscaping. "We have enhanced a lot of outdoor spaces, such as paver patios that may have been dirty and neglected. A power wash, re-sand and a sealer can work wonders on that old, faded paver. Also, adding a nice colorful border to your old patio can bring it to life," says Chris DeMato, owner of Rock Bottom Landscaping & Fencing. "Naturally edged planting beds can be re-sculpted and re-mulched, adding some contrasting colorful plants to your planting beds can add a lot of interest. Hanging lights can make those summer evenings very comfortable, and fencing may give you the privacy you need or simply block an undesirable view. These are just a few additions or changes that you can make to bring that dull landscape to life."

At-home entertaining can go up a notch too, he says, with the addition of a bocce ball court or horseshoe pit.

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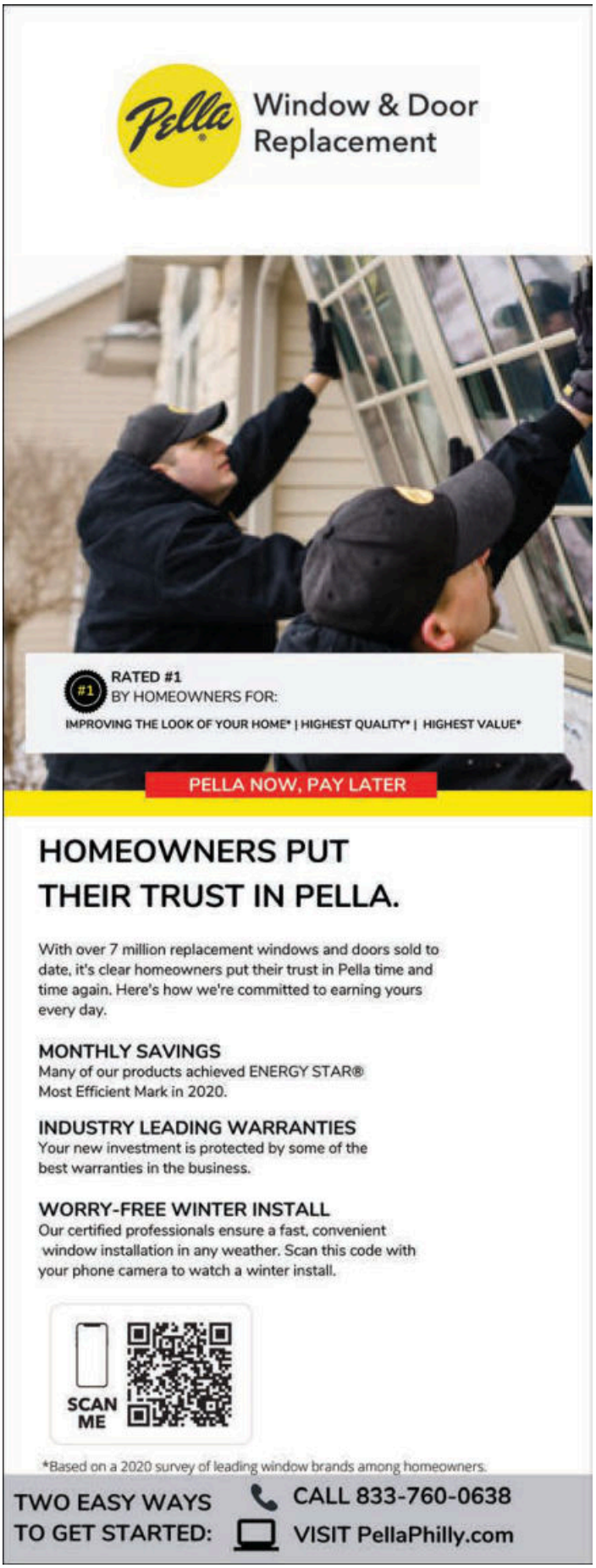

Outdoor Dreams IN DEMAND

Of course, every outdoor space needs fabrics, says Natalie Weeks Rossitto, owner of M.C. Weeks Window Fashions. "Outdoor draperies are a beautiful way to define space, adding style, design and color as well as privacy and shade. … Our Hunter Douglas patio screen shades with designer screen fabrics can create drama or add a layer of light control to any covered outdoor space," she says.

Outdoor fabrics also need to withstand the elements. "We represent thousands of quality outdoor fabric styles and patterns available through our showroom samples and resources, including lines by David Sutherland. Our Perennials fabric line is fade resistant, mildew and mold resistant and bleach cleanable for furnishings you can actually live on. Additionally we offer renowned fabric name brands such as Thibaut, Crypton, Sunbrella, Pindler and Stout Brothers to name a few."

Tying it all together is technology. "There definitely is 'an app for that' when it comes to multiple elements which compose these outdoor spaces," says Pasquarello. "The main thing to remember is to allow this technology to add to the convenience of a space and to still enjoy the outdoors and what Mother Nature has to offer."

He says most features can be controlled via smartphone. "LED landscape lighting, outdoor audio, irrigation systems, infrared heaters can all be manipulated right from the palm of your hand. Unique Lighting offers LED Bluetooth color-changing bulbs which can be used to upgrade existing fixtures as well. Sonance manufactures outdoor audio systems with multiple speaker types and configurations to deliver rich sound. Hunter Industries has irrigation controls which sync to local weather stations to only allow the system to operate when water is needed," he continues.

No matter what your dream outdoor living space includes, the pandemic has driven demand for these projects. But rushing into it won't serve homeowners well. "People should spend more time making sure the design fits their lifestyle and take the time to get it right," Wilson says. "There is nothing worse than having to do it again and paying twice." H&H

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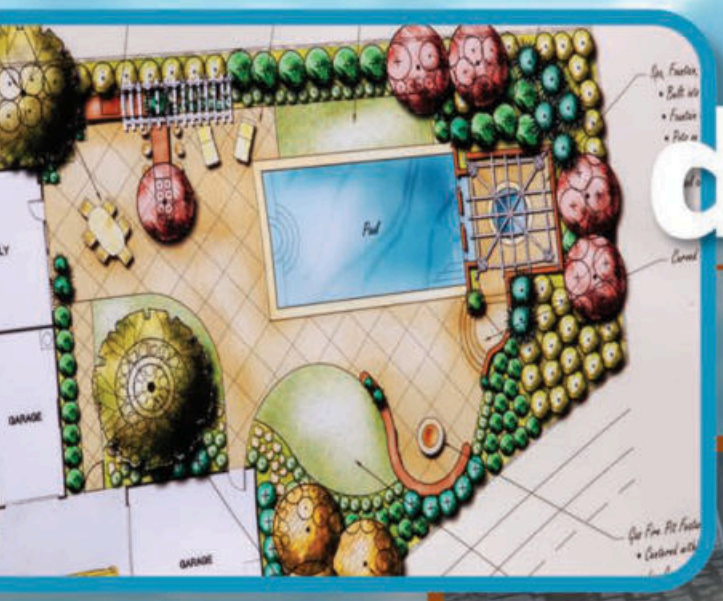

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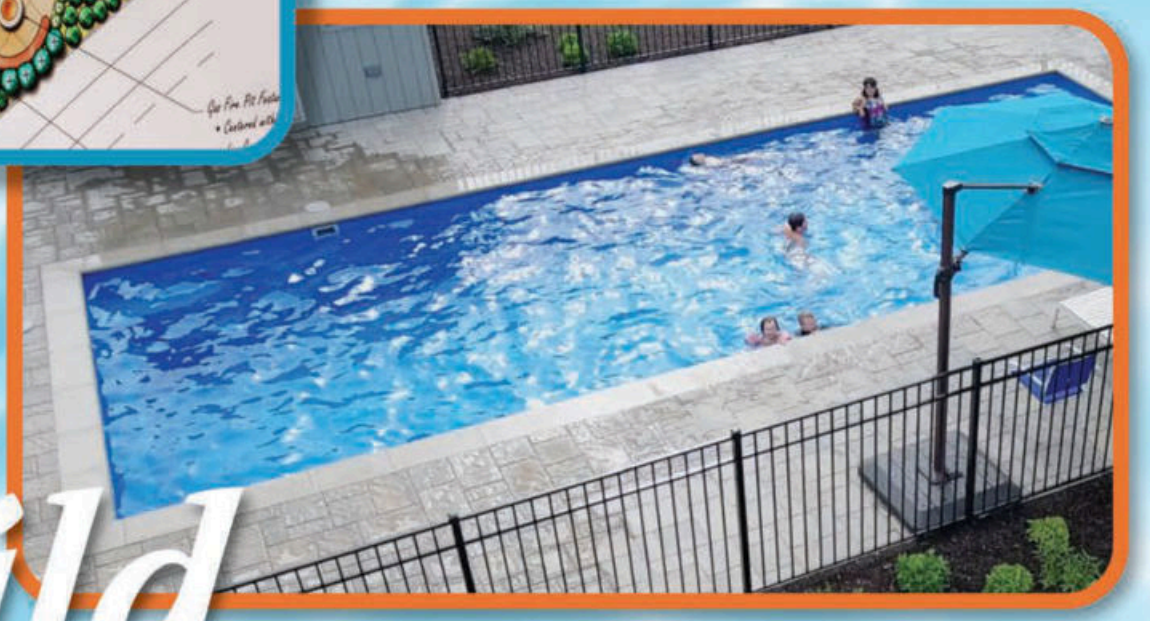

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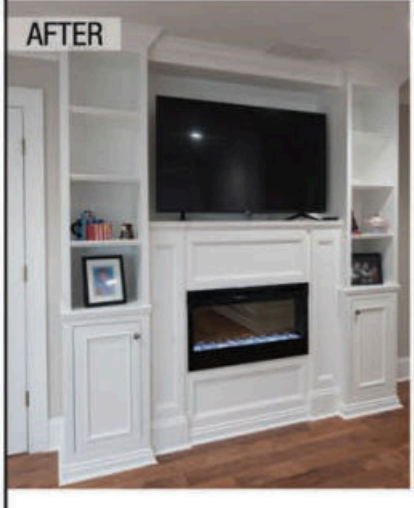

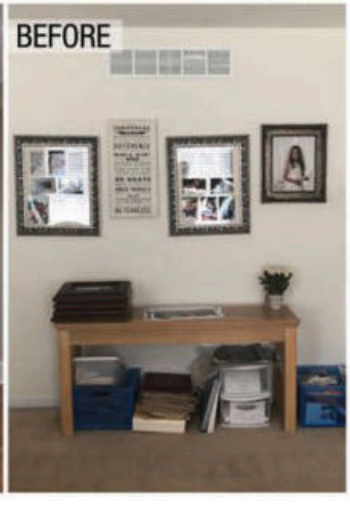

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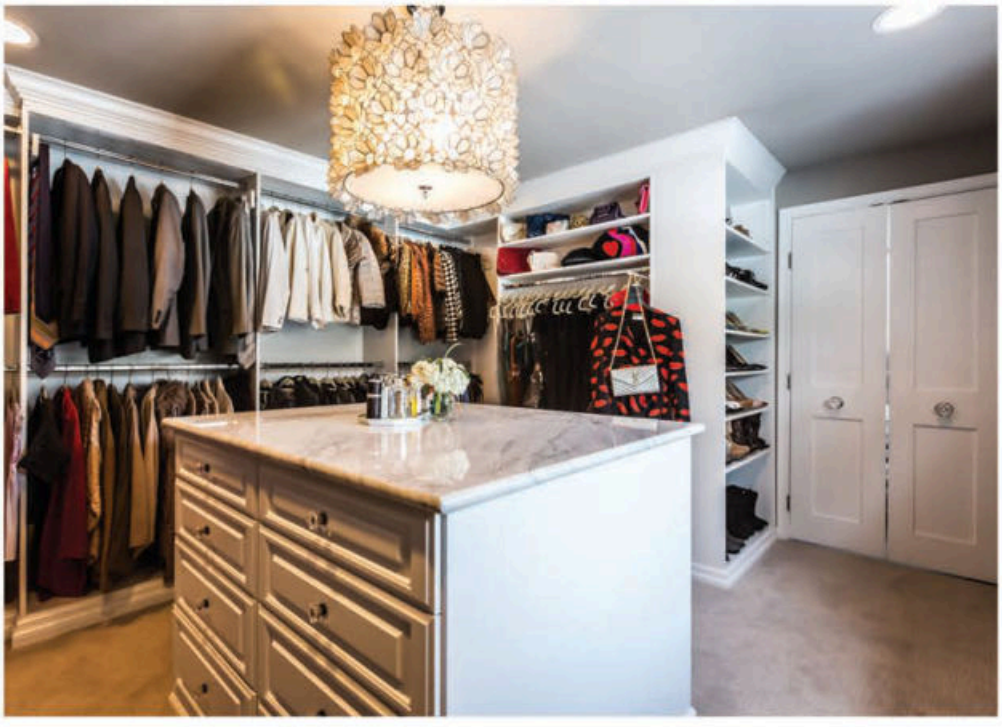

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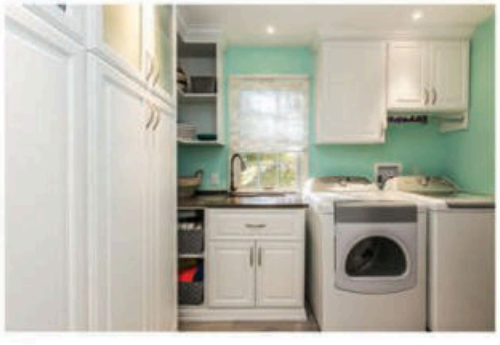

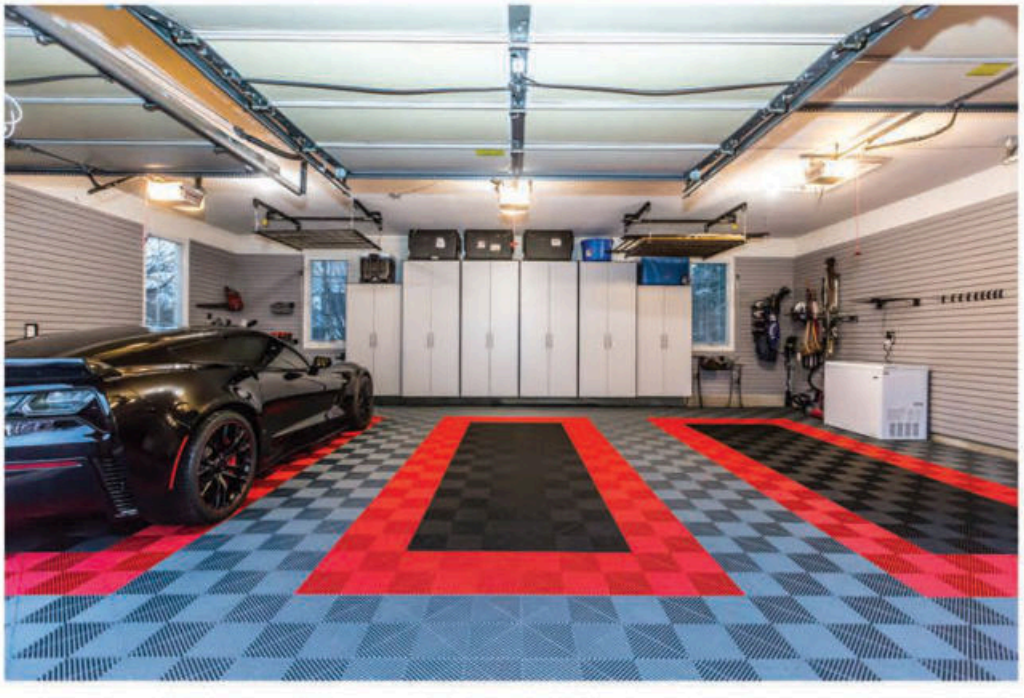

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3 Crucial Component

Cabinetry can make or break a renovation project in kitchens and baths, so it is important for homeowners to do their homework and listen to the experts.

BY MATT COSENTINO

WHEN IT COMES TO KITCHEN AND BATHROOM REMODELS—the two rooms that continue to be the most popular choices for renovations and updates—there is no question that selecting the right cabinetry is a crucial step in the process. In the kitchen, cabinetry will usually take up a significant amount of space and set the tone for the look and feel of the entire room. Bathroom cabinetry entails a smaller footprint but is just as important in storing everyday items while providing aesthetic value.

With many styles, colors and functional elements to choose from, cabinetry decisions can be a fun but overwhelming aspect of a project. We spoke to local professionals for tips that can help homeowners looking to make the leap to a brand-new kitchen or bath.

Q **Clean lines and a minimalist style seem to be trending in cabinetry at the moment. Do you see that happening with your clientele?**

"Kitchen design obviously changes year after year and it's definitely moved from where it was eight years ago, when there were a lot of traditional browns and creams. Now there are a lot of grays and whites and straight lines. It's more of a clean look and we call it a Euro look. I don't think in the United States we're at that full Euro look; it's probably more in California than on the East Coast. A lot of style influence comes from West to East, so if something is coming out in California it generally hits us a year to a year and a half later. It's starting to come over our way now and a lot of people are looking for clean, minimalist lines."

Damien Massa
Co-owner
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What are the benefits to going with custom cabinetry over a stock product?

"No. 1 is the service that most times comes with custom cabinetry. If you buy a stock cabinet, the service is obviously very poor because the cabinet is made who knows where and there's nobody standing behind the integrity and quality of the cabinet. If you buy it from the local, custom cabinet shop, typically that's much better because you get better quality and better service. There's no fillers and they're all custom sized to fit your space, which is a much cleaner look in the end. Basically, the sky is the limit [with decorative elements]. There's an endless amount of custom, specialty details that can be added. We can design or craft something from a picture someone has seen in a magazine. It's not just a cabinet out of a box; anything you think of that can be made out of wood can be custom made."

Jonas Stoltzfus
Co-founder
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Does custom cabinetry add significantly to the timeline of the project?

"The timeline varies from one company to another. If cabinets are only being supplied, not installed, then usually the delivery can be made more quickly. However, when dealing with a local cabinet shop it is best to have them do the complete install so if there is a quality control issue or fitment problem it can get remedied right away. You may have longer lead times to accommodate the install schedule, but it is worth the wait if you want more of a concierge service."

Dan Dilworth
Owner
Dilworth's Custom Design
Phoenixville, Pa.
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What styles are trending in the industry right now?

"Farmhouse is a term used as much as any term I have encountered in my 25 years in the business. [We're seeing] painted cabinets mixed with warmer wood tones to give the rooms a pop of color and warmth, almost leading into an industrial look with dark metals in shelving and framing in pictures or mirrors. The white kitchen with a wood-toned island or hood over the stove can bring in other parts of the home. If the dining room has a darker wood and the thought would be to remove it for something lighter, we can coordinate the wood tones to meld the spaces. If we are in need of a backsplash to pull the design together, we are using tiles with designs on them for added interest in the room. Our sales staff will show you many options to create the look you love."

Steve Matteo
Co-owner
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Why is glide-out shelving so popular and what kind of problems can it solve in cabinetry?

"Our ShelfGenie glide-out shelving helps with accessibility and organization in any cabinet or pantry. The glide-outs utilize full extension rails so you can easily access your kitchen or bathroom's essentials in your cabinets. There is no more bending over and reaching the back of a dark cabinet to try to find something. Our experienced designers work with the homeowner to collaboratively design how the glide-outs will best meet their needs. We will ask how they use their kitchen, what problems there are and then review our solutions. We will then design a plan together that will exceed all expectations for better accessibility and organization."

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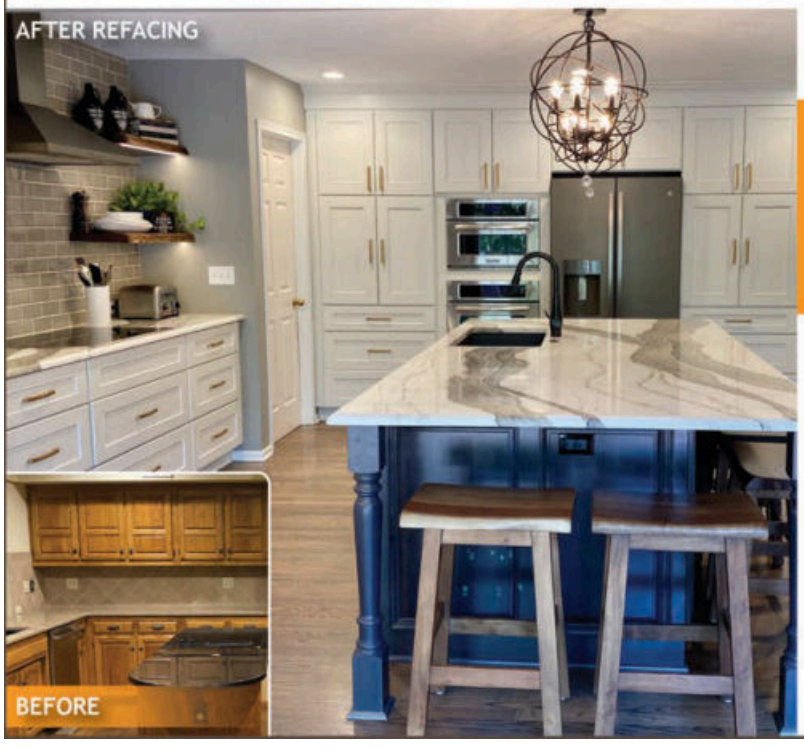

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Crucial Component

Q **Do you think it's important for customers to visit a showroom so they can see different types of cabinetry rather than make choices based on a picture?**

"I feel that a hands-on approach that includes touching and seeing the product is far paramount to just seeing it on the internet. Getting a good idea of what you're paying for helps anyone at any price point purchase with confidence. You want to be comfortable with what you're purchasing and what you're investing into your home. Having a real-time feel and real-time interaction not only with the designer but with the product is an important part of the process. [Some prefer] white cabinetry, whether it be a raised panel or more predominantly a shaker style, and it is becoming a timeless look for people in their kitchens. Bold colors have also been on the rise. It all depends on who walks through the door. We see a lot of different flavors, a lot of different ideas and a lot of different interests."

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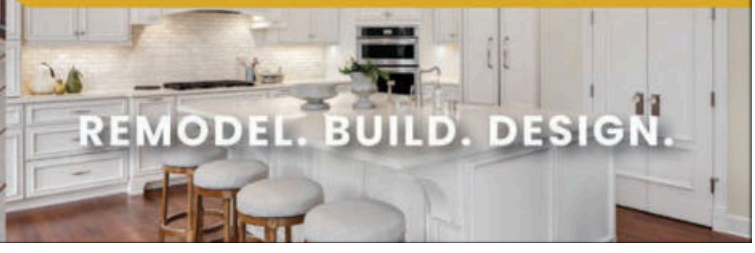

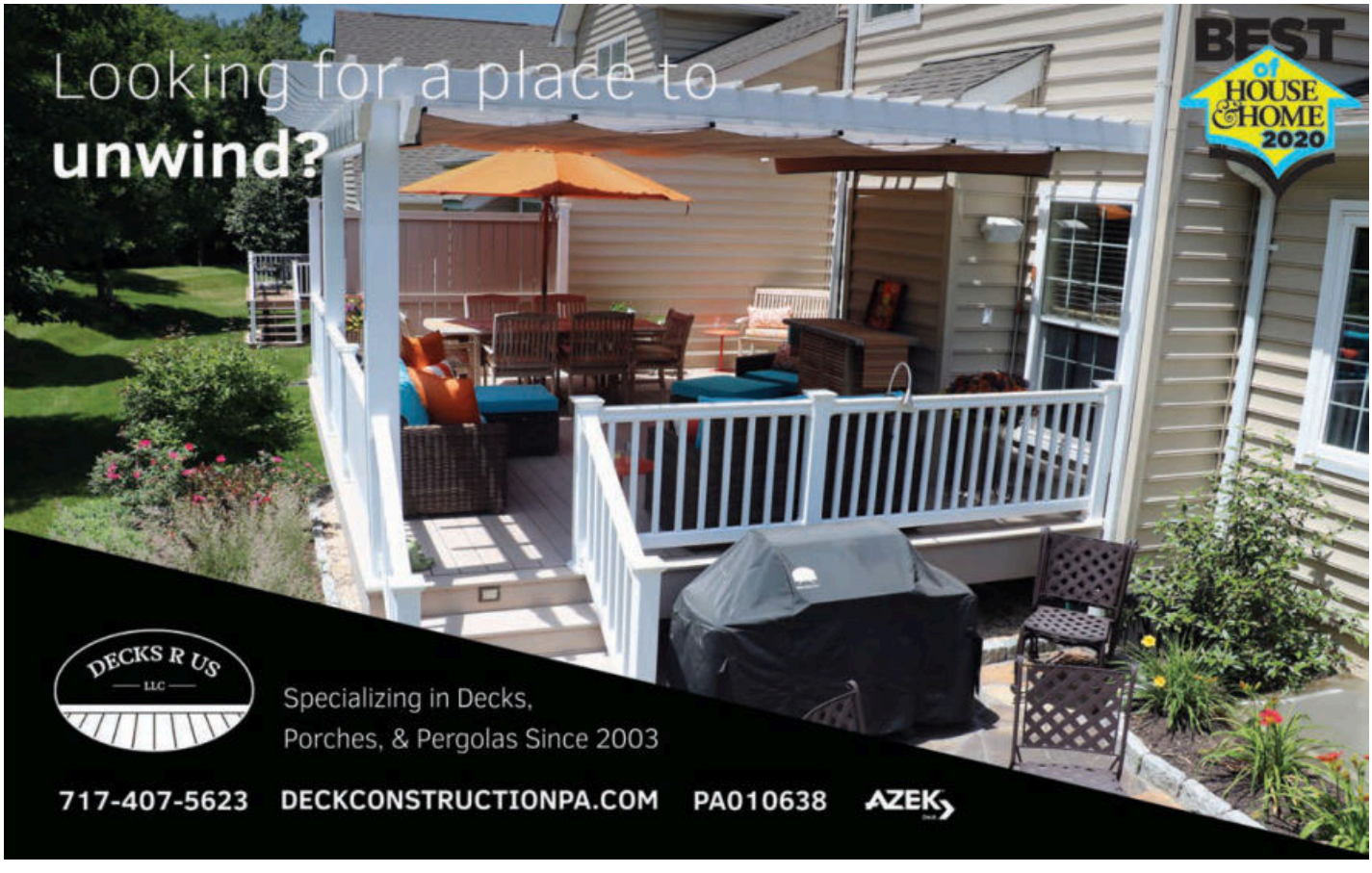

Is your home in need of exterior updates? Now is the perfect time.

SPRING REFRESH

by **Lindsey Getz**

Are you feeling like the exterior of your home is beginning to look tired or dated? Spring provides the ideal opportunity to get your home's exterior into shape with projects that will also give it major curb appeal. Exterior elements like your windows, roof or siding have a certain lifespan both in terms of aesthetic appeal but also durability and integrity. As some of these items wear out over time, it can be beneficial to replace them—and also reap the benefits of the wow factor that a total refresh will create.

Adam Parnes of Global Home Improvement says that the exterior of a home is sometimes overlooked. Homeowners often think of renovations in terms of updating their interior spaces. But when it comes to curb appeal and wow factor—an impressive exterior is meaningful. After all, the exterior of your house is the first impression people will have of your home.

"For homeowners who want that 'wow' curb appeal, we suggest updating your home with metal roofing, James Hardie siding and Infinity fiberglass windows from Marvin. Not only are these products designed to last a lifetime, but they are designed with aesthetics in mind," Parnes says.

Dave Lyons, owner of DNA Roofing & Siding, says that an exterior refresh can completely transform a home.

"Siding replacement will make the exterior look like you have a new house," Lyons says. "If you're replacing your siding, it's also a very good time to replace your windows."

Joe Cunningham of Roof Maxx of Trenton says that it's not uncommon for the roof to get overlooked in terms of updating an exterior. But this can be a vital element.

"An often overlooked 'refresher' for your home is to get your roof into tip-top shape showing no discoloration and no moss or mold—which causes uneven dark spots here and there," he explains. "Your roof makes up over 30 percent of what one sees when viewing your property, so having a good-looking roof improves not only the appearance, but also the value of your home."

Roof Maxx is a company that helps refresh and extend the life of a home's roof (not replace it). The company's roof rejuvenation process will add five years to a roof's lifespan.

"With Roof Maxx treatments, your roof will benefit in a number of ways," says Cunningham. "First, before Roof Maxx treats your roof, they'll repair any issues such as loose shingles, worn boots and unattached flashings. These conditions not only create poor roof appearance, but if left unattended, will lead to roof deterioration and leaks. Second, the Roof Maxx treatment restores the vitality of your shingles, helping them to perform as if they were new. Treated shingles will once again resist rain, wind, curling, cracking, breaking and loss of granules—the tiny beads you may be finding in your downspouts and gutters as your shingles age. Third, the Roof Maxx treatment generally will restore shingles' appearance, making them look more like when they were new. Of note, each Roof Maxx treatment provides a five-year transferable warranty."

EXTERIOR TRENDS

The industry insiders we spoke with are constantly keeping their finger on the pulse of the latest trends. One of the biggest has been a shift toward using higher-quality, longer-lasting products. Homeowners understand that their exterior must stand up to the elements, which include harsh weather, and they want their exterior to continue to look and perform well.

In terms of style, Lyons says that he is seeing darker and more vibrant colors being used in siding choices. More homeowners are looking to make a statement and have that home on the block that stands out—not fades in with every other cookie-cutter choice.

Parnes adds that a trend they're noticing is black windows with white siding. This is another trend

Above photo: Infinity from Marvin Ebony Windows with Ebony Patio Door, courtesy of Global Home Improvement

that really "pops."

"For a dramatic contrast, we recommend going with Infinity fiberglass windows from Marvin, because the acrylic finish prevents fading and does not chalk like cheap, vinyl windows," he explains.

REAPING THE BENEFITS

No matter how you go about it, when you update your home's exterior, you get a brand-new look that you can be proud to show off. But these projects can also help with overall value. Whether you may be considering selling your home in the near or even distant future, you'll also be pleased to know that these types of upgrades can have a great return on investment (ROI), which is obviously important to homeowners.

"One project with a particularly great ROI is adding a metal roof accent to your home, whether it's over a bay window or your front porch," Parnes says. "This design element can separate your home from the rest of the neighborhood."

Lyons agrees exterior projects can have a strong ROI.

"New windows and siding usually gives you a very good ROI—plus you will also save money on heating and cooling with more high-tech and energy-efficient windows," he says.

CREATING YOUR "HOME SWEET HOME"

By investing in your home's exterior, you can create a place that you're truly proud to call "home." This is perhaps one of the greatest benefits of all.

"Curb appeal is more than just a catchphrase," says Parnes. "It's a feeling that people get when they see a home and it can absolutely impact the value. The homes that are kept up with are the ones that can truly create that 'home sweet home' feeling before someone ever even goes inside. That's important for not only the home's overall value but also for the level of enjoyment and appreciation you have living there." H&H

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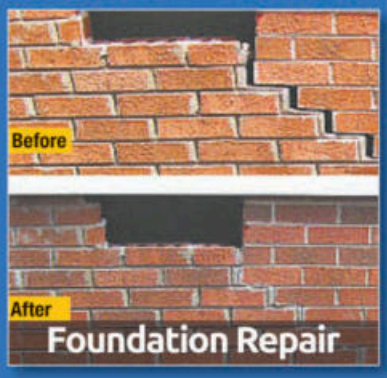

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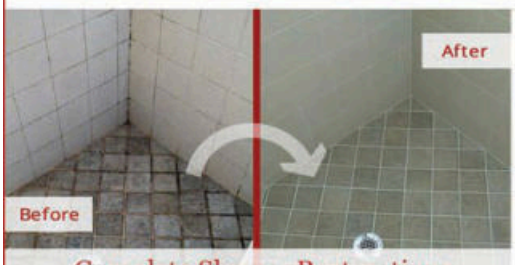

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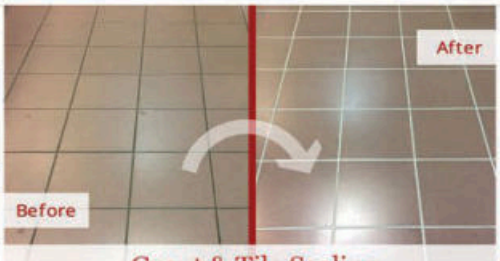

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