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Delaware

Your #1 Resource and Design Magazine

Volume 21, Issue 7



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POOL, PATIO
AND DECK
DIRECTORY**

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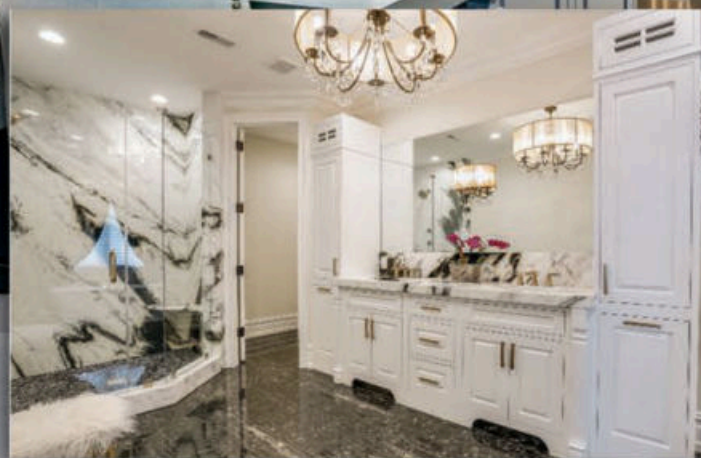
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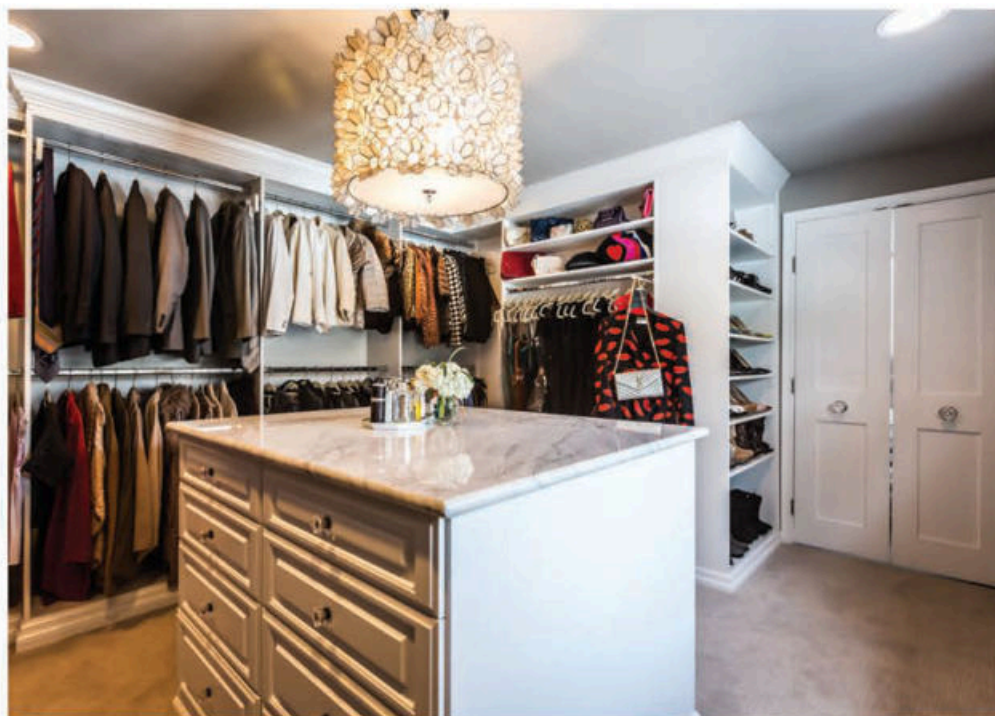
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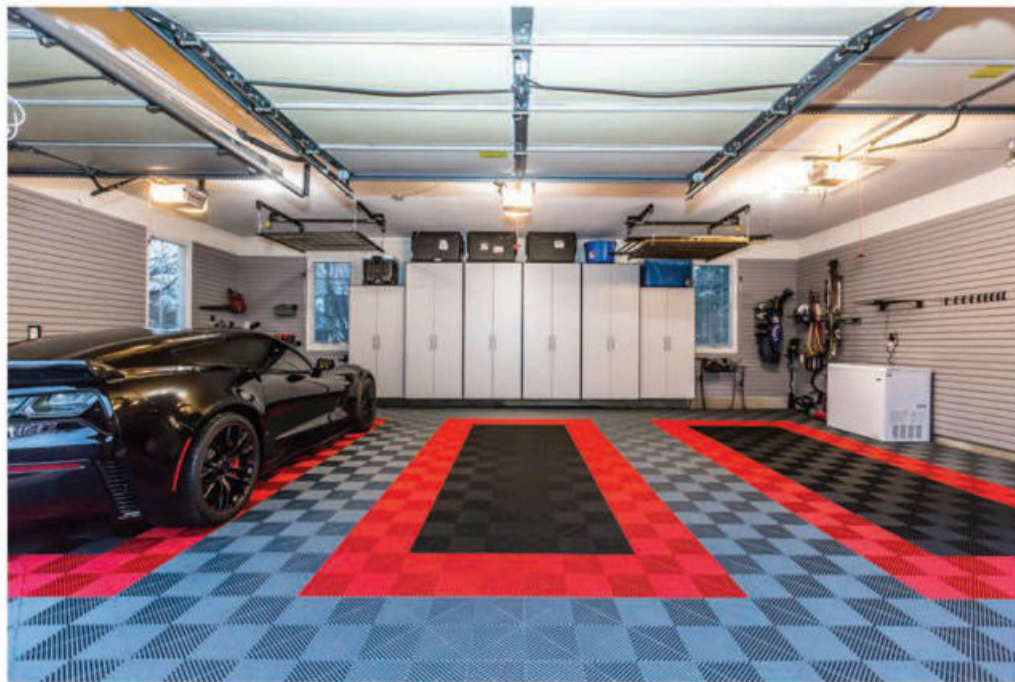
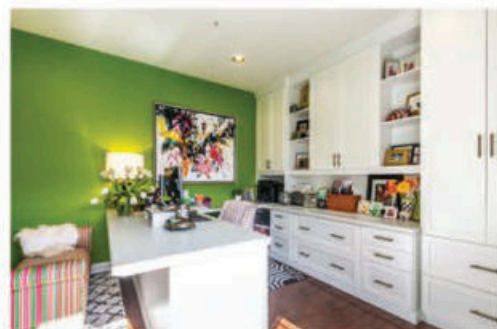
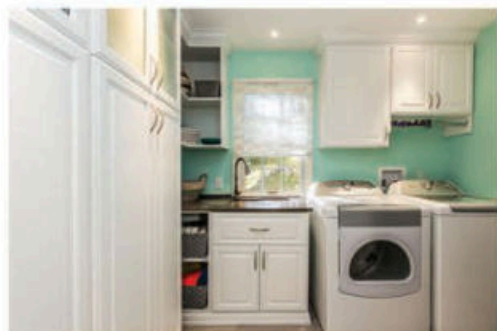
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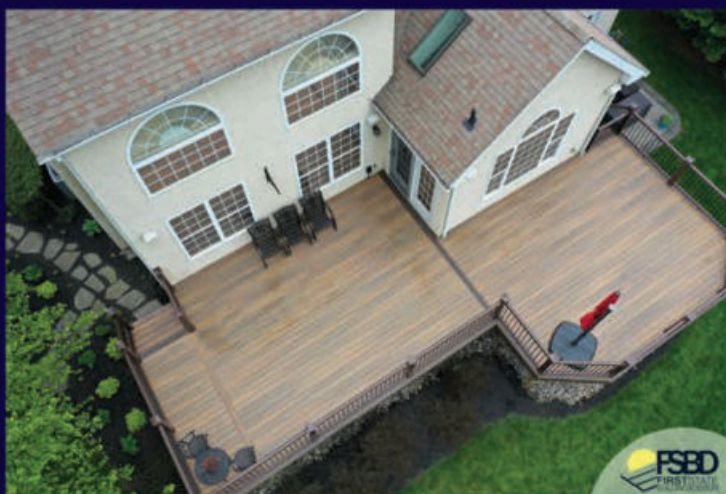
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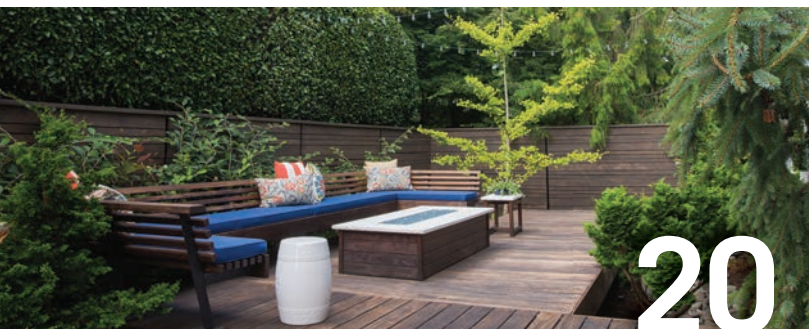


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National Sales Office:

HOUSE & HOME Magazine, LLC

700 E. Main St.

Norristown, PA 19401

Phone: 610-272-3120 Fax: 610-272-2805

Email: info@housemagazine.com

Regional Editions:

Bucks County HOUSE & HOME - PA

Central Jersey HOUSE & HOME - NJ

Delaware HOUSE & HOME - DE

DelChester/Main Line West HOUSE & HOME - PA

Montco/Main Line East HOUSE & HOME - PA

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Maximize Space and Storage



Closets by Design SE Pennsylvania and Delaware creates organized, clutter-free spaces that are tailored to your lifestyle and budget. *by Brittany Morrissey*

We're all spending more time at home these days. So, it's no wonder many people are wanting to maximize the space and storage of their abodes.

Charles Waterman, CEO of Closets by Design SE Pennsylvania and Delaware, a leader in home storage and design solutions, says right now homeowners are reinvesting in their homes because they have new priorities or living situations. For some families, it's needing space to work from home alongside children who are completing their schooling online.

Closets by Design has a number of clever

solutions to this dilemma. For example, if you want a temporary workspace, knowing that you will no longer need it after a certain amount of time, Closets by Design can construct a free-standing home office for you that can easily be moved or disassembled at a later date.

"We can put in pullout trays and sliding shelves," Waterman says. "We can put printers behind doors. We can make provisions for different types of monitors. There's a lot that we can do."

Need some privacy for video conference calls? Closets by Design can also create areas of seclusion within your workspace so you can conduct business with minimal interruption. Whatever your needs, the company can create a space that is tailored to your home and your budget.

Reorganizing the garage is another project many homeowners are undertaking right now, Waterman says. Unlike competitors, Closets by Design's garage systems takes into account what needs to be accessible and what should be stored and ready when needed.

"Other companies have garage systems where everything's readily accessible," Waterman explains, "and so you get a very overwhelming, cluttered feeling from those designs."

With Closets by Design, a designer will work with

you to understand what items in your garage need to be behind doors and what you'll want within reach. This approach results in a space that is less cluttered and safer for children because items that are toxic or have sharp edges can be put out of reach.

Additionally, Closets by Design can install ventilated flooring in your garage, which can cover up imperfections in the concrete, provide anti-fatigue cushioning and make it a safer space for little ones.

Closets by Design recently opened a new facility in Malvern where it makes all of its custom furniture. This is in contrast to many other storage and design companies that claim to provide custom pieces but actually order their products from a third party. Closets by Design does not employ subcontractors either. All of its employees are background checked and held to the highest standards.

The process of transforming your unfunctional space or room begins with a free in-home consultation with a Closets by Design designer. Following COVID-19 protocols issued by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the designer will measure your space and ask you a series of questions to determine your needs. Then, with your budget in mind, he or she will supply you with a 3D drawing of what your space could look like.

From there, the company will construct all the pieces of your new space and make an installation plan.

Waterman says it's astonishing the impact that an organized home can have on people. In fact, the company often receives thank you notes from customers who say their newly organized spaces have changed their homes and their lives for the better.

"What we do, it's not just about beautification," Waterman says. "It's about the organization. It's about the calmness it brings to the home. And in a world right now that's a little topsy-turvy, that's something that is needed. And we're happy to provide it." **H&H**



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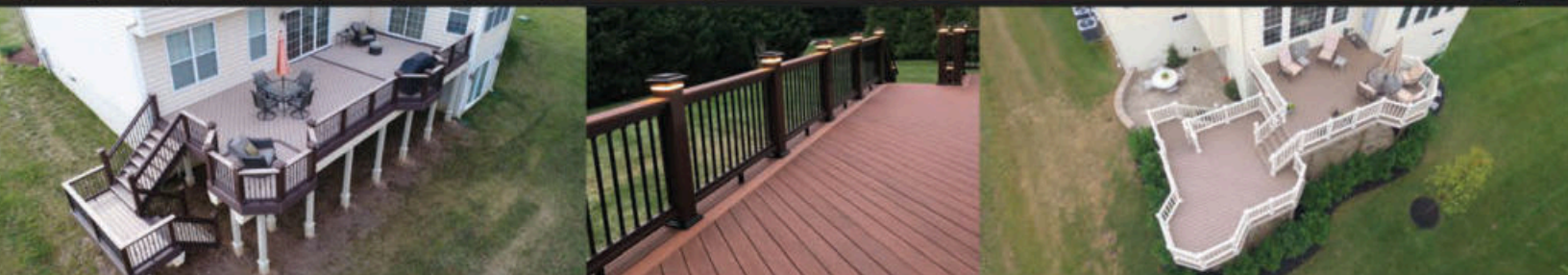


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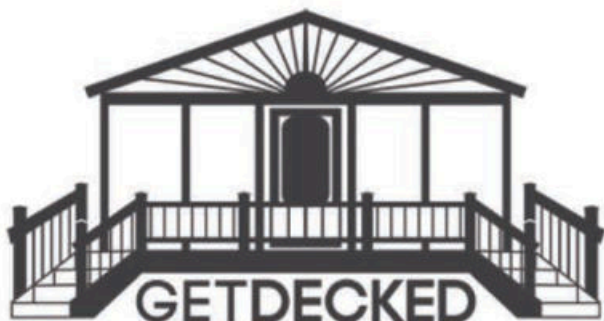
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Dedicated to Decks

Looking around the home remodeling industry, how many deck builders can say they have 36 years of experience under their belt? And how many build only decks, or employ no subcontractors? Who has been named best deck builder by local magazines and newspapers for 12 years and counting?

The process of elimination leads you to Get Decked, a company whose quality product can be found in countless backyards across the state of Delaware.

From its first deck in 1985, the company has made a lifelong commitment to the deck-building trade. Founded by Mike and Connie Jerminski, this family-run business now includes sons Mike Jr. and Jerry.

"In our trade, we have a lot of competition," says Mike Jerminski, owner. "Our customers do not choose the cheapest option, they want value, and they expect their deck to be an investment that lasts forever."

With over three decades of experience, Get Decked has assembled all of the key

ingredients to produce a product that gives its customers a foolproof blueprint of satisfaction.

The first component is the intentional lack of salesmen. Jerminski says, "Initial free estimates are given directly by the deck builders themselves. This ensures no middleman, no guessing as to whether the project is built exactly as discussed."

Next, no jobs are contracted out. "We employ no subcontractors. All work is done by one crew—a crew educated solely in deck construction, a crew that has spent decades together, constructing some of Delaware's most breathtaking projects," he says. "We provide thousands of references

before any work begins to ensure our reputation."

Permit costs are included in the cost of the deck, and, unlike much of the competition, Get Decked doesn't take any money down.

"We use only state-of-the-art tools and construct one project at a time. And to ensure our commitment to our valued customers, we include a strong lifetime warranty and custom financing," Jerminski says.

While other companies offer decks as just one of their various services, decks are the only service offered by Get Decked. "A valuable key to our commitment to excellence is the reputation of our strong work ethic. We build decks year round—nothing else. We hone our craft by not being a jack of all trades, rather a master of one," says Jerminski.

"We love what we do, and are very proud to have the support of so many loyal customers." **H&H**



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Strut your Stuff



Local professionals
show off some
of their favorite
outdoor projects.

We're all daydreaming about summer—the sun, burgers on the grill, cold drinks and diving into the pool—so we decided to explore a few of the best outdoor projects in our area to add to the excitement. These photos are just a small sample of the skill and savvy required to bring a homeowner's vision to life, and show the wide range of possibilities you could incorporate into your own space.

EDITED BY LIZ HUNTER



“This project was started by another contractor who didn’t finish the job and left it in disarray. The homeowner was so disappointed in the other contractor, they took their trust in us and contracted us to come in and take over the job. We installed retaining walls, patio, coping, planting beds, plants and mulch. The homeowner was so happy that we did a professional job from start to finish.

“It was important to us to help this homeowner who put a lot of money in their backyard and was so put off from the first contractor that we wanted to secure their trust that not all contractors are like that. We can come into any stage of a project and complete it, making the customer happy.”

Donald Panetta, owner
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“Outdoor living is a passion of ours. Most of our staff enjoys being outside as much as possible, so the ability to create spaces for our clients to enjoy their own backyard is incredible! This project is a perfect example of seeing the need, hearing the want and designing the dream. We were able to pull this off by mixing form and function; giving the homeowners space to entertain, space to retreat and a space to call home. Somewhere they are excited to spend time, where memories are created that will last a lifetime. From design to build this project showcases our passion to bring life back outdoors.”

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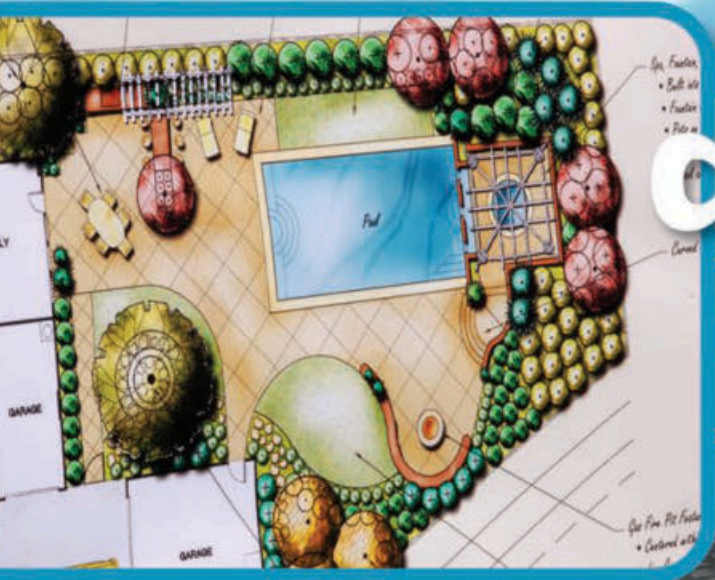
“At CKC, we focus on creating outdoor living spaces that homeowners can enjoy for years to come. Now is the perfect time to move the party outdoors and create a space that’s perfect for cooking and entertaining. Built-in grills, outdoor kitchen island grills and outdoor refrigerators all come together to create a stylish and functional space during those months when you want to move the heart of your home outside.”

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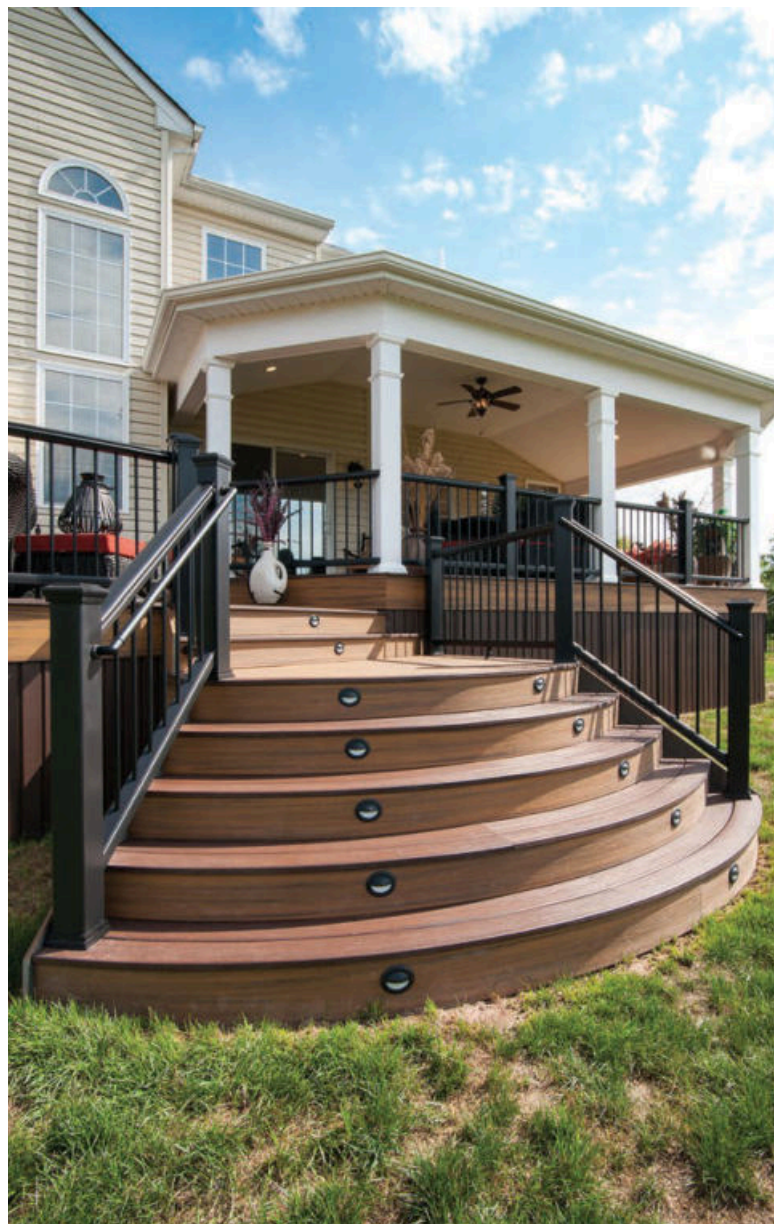


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Bill Wilson, co-founder
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Archadeck of Delaware

DAVID LYONS WAS RAISED IN THE HOME IMPROVEMENT INDUSTRY. He started working with his father in general contracting as a teenager, followed by employment in a hardware business which then transitioned into working for other companies in the industry. However, Lyons couldn't shake the itch of breaking out onto his own. Decks have been something he enjoyed designing and building, so it was only natural for him to launch Archadeck of Delaware. Operating since 1980, Archadeck is a trusted and reliable custom deck, patio and porch builder, serving Delaware since 2017 with their expertise and knowledge in the decking industry and providing the best materials and design that can turn your dream outdoor living space into reality.

House & Home spoke with Lyons about how deck preferences have changed and why Archadeck stands apart from the rest.



David Lyons,
owner

WHAT MAKES ARCHADECK STAND OUT FROM ITS COMPETITORS?

We strive to build at a higher standard. We build above and beyond the code, and we aim to excel in customer service and communication. From the initial phone call in the beginning until the project is finishing up, we're going to be spending a lot of time with our clients. I've had several people tell me they were surprised we showed up for the appointment. Everyone has those nightmare stories. While other companies use subcontractors, they can be hit or miss. Our crews are employees, high-quality people with benefits and workers' compensation. With us, customers can expect professionalism, a clean job site and honesty.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN DECKING TRENDS EVOLVE OVER THE YEARS?

More people are getting away from wood, although some still go with pressure-treated wood, but there has been a big increase in costs for it at the moment. Composite is the preferred choice because it's maintenance free and comes in a variety of colors.

For a time curved decks were popular but we don't do many of those anymore. I like doing two tones such as having the frame in a different color than the boards or trying a parting board in a different color. You can change the design of it just by changing the colors of the deck boards.

I also see more people who want a screened-in porch or sunroom, not just a deck.

MANY PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO THINK ABOUT HAVING A DECK BUILT FOR THIS SUMMER. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ABOUT THEIR TIMELINE?

People should pull the trigger fast. Right now, it would be June or July before we could start on it because we are booked so far out. With summer fast approaching, that wait time will only get longer. If you

would like to have a new outdoor living space in time to enjoy for the summer, don't wait. But, with all of the features available, decks can be enjoyed well into fall, so there is still plenty of time in the year to get use out of it.

WHAT FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR HOMEOWNERS AS THEY RESEARCH COMPANIES FOR THEIR DECK PROJECT?

I would make sure the company is insured and has workers' compensation insurance. You might save a couple thousand up front by going with a company that cuts corners, but if someone gets hurt on your property it could cost you tens of thousands of dollars or more. Look for the best value—typically the best value is not the lowest price. Check out the company's workmanship and professionalism. We seek to build something for our customers that they can enjoy knowing that it is installed correctly and we can be proud of building it. **H&H**

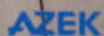


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ask the expert
by Liz Hunter

AAA Hellenic

STONE MATERIALS ARE ESSENTIALLY THE ICING OF ANY KITCHEN OR BATHROOM PROJECT, PROVIDING BOTH THE FUNCTIONAL VALUE OF PULLING THE ROOM'S COMPONENTS TOGETHER AND SOMETHING PLEASING FOR THE EYE.

Choosing the perfect stone takes careful consideration, and the guidance of someone who knows the product. At AAA Hellenic, customers can turn to professionals who have decades of experience designing and installing stone in kitchens, bathrooms, foyers, fireplaces and even in outdoor living spaces. Mike Werner, sales manager, is one such expert who has been with the family-focused company for more than 10 years.

House & Home spoke with Werner about how new products from Silestone and Dekton are giving people the high-end looks they've wanted at a more reasonable price.



Mike Werner,
sales manager

WHEN YOU MEET WITH CLIENTS, WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THEIR LIFESTYLE TO GUIDE THEIR SELECTION?

Most individuals typically have saved pictures they found online or in magazines to establish an idea of their design preferences. We also want to know about what's going on in the space where the stone will be used. Every household is different. Materials they might like or find attractive might not be the best choice for their home. Granite is very dense and durable. It is heat resistant and scratch resistant, with minimal maintenance. Marble is a classic

choice with unrivaled beauty and gives you a timeless look. It may be a little softer than granite, but will still give you a very durable surface.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE EMERGING POPULARITY OF NATURAL STONE QUARTZITE AND YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF IT?

Engineered quartz has gained popularity over the past couple of years, but natural stone is still the most requested for its beauty and durability. Natural stone quartzite is an especially good choice for kitchens. Everyone likes the look of marble, but it's softer and more porous. Quartzite is a dense stone that can handle the impact and functionality in a kitchen, and it's not as porous.

We directly import this stone from the quarries to our facility, which enables us to

pass discounted pricing on to clients for rare quartzites in a wide variety of colors. The materials are temperamental and require a high level of care and precision, which Hellenic excels and specializes in.

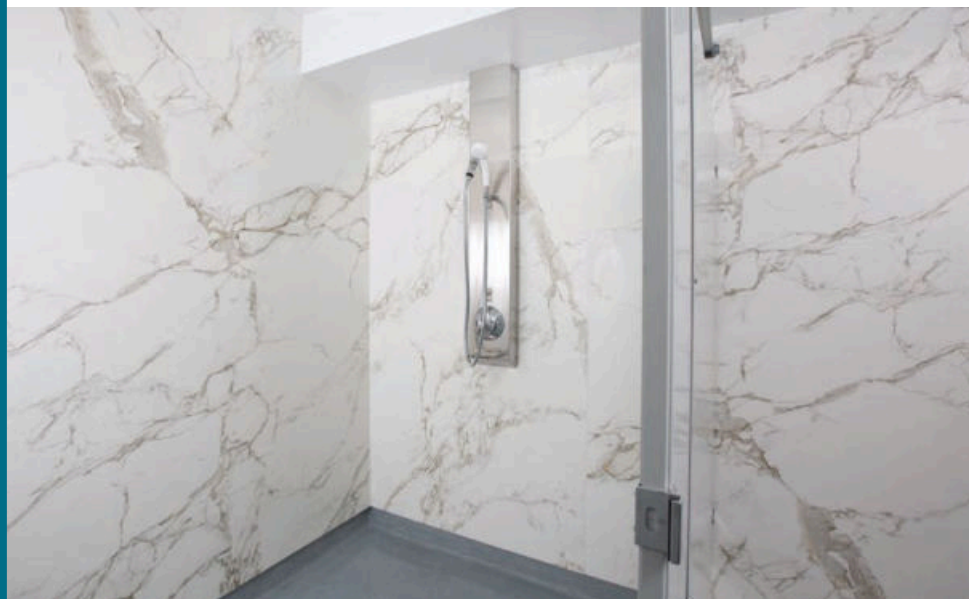
WHAT ARE THE NEWEST MATERIALS ON THE MARKET AND WHERE ARE THEY BEST USED IN THE HOME?

We're really excited about the design potential with products from Silestone and Dekton in shower wall and bathroom applications. People have been longing for a solid-slab, seamless look on their shower walls—nobody likes grout joints—but this comes with additional labor to get these large slabs into tight shower spaces. These new products are more durable and thinner, making them easier to transport and install. Silestone is engineered quartz and in particular has some nice combinations of natural stone-looking materials, as well as muted patterns for the monochromatic look people want. Dekton is a porcelain and glass hybrid with quartz that is more durable and still gives that desirable natural stone look. This is something that we are specializing in.

HOW CAN CUSTOMERS ARRANGE TO VISIT YOUR SLAB YARD TO SEE THEIR OPTIONS?

Our slab yard is open by appointment so we can control the amount of people in the building at a time, everything is spaced out and we also have outdoor inventory available weather permitting. We have implemented additional safety measures, including UV light systems and UV air purifiers to reduce airborne contaminants and provide more peace of mind for customers. We also offer virtual appointments.

Our inventory of marble, granite, soapstone and quartzite is very strong right now, we've added a lot of new products for people. We have about 200 different colors on display, and our stones are directly imported from places like Italy, Brazil and Africa. It's always beneficial to walk through and see the stone in different lighting, and more often than not, people find something they never expected. **H&H**





YOUR BACKYARD *Oasis*

Crafting a gorgeous outdoor space by blending landscaping and hardscaping elements in harmony.

by **Lindsey Getz**

When it comes to enjoying your home to the fullest, there's nothing quite like having a backyard oasis to which you can escape.

But in order to truly get the most out of such a space, it's essential that you're partnering with the right landscaping professionals. The landscaping and hardscaping decisions you make will ultimately impact how much use and enjoyment you get out of these areas and you want to be sure to maximize it.

According to Michael Pasquarello, degreed landscape architect with Elite Landscaping, the pandemic has created a surge of interest in residential outdoor entertainment spaces like never seen before. While outdoor living has always been popular, homeowners are looking to truly maximize the most of these areas. As they look to move indoor parties and events to the outside, they want more functionality out of their backyards.

"There is a newfound interest in maximizing the use of one's property," Pasquarello says. "The opportunity to bring the indoors out has led the way to some awesome projects which rival vacation resorts. I also believe that home resale values are going to be based on the amount of outdoor living space square footage is available."

Ronni Hock, owner of Ronni Hock Garden & Landscape, has seen a similar surge in interest. She says that so many homeowners who found themselves in lockdown began to look around their homes and start to think about where they could make improvements. For many, an enhanced outdoor space was the opportunity to find pleasure, “despite the difficulty and darkness that surrounded them,” she adds.

Hock says that she had the opportunity to be able to create a backyard oasis for a family in Princeton, which provided them with a personal sanctuary. Hock says that every outdoor living space should be personal and reflect the homeowners’ specific wants and needs.

“One of the first questions I asked my client was, ‘What do you love in life and how can we incorporate your passions into the outdoor space?’” Hock recalls. “In this case, she was a mom with a family that loved to swim and an avid gardener who wanted to be surrounded with beauty, a wide variety of perennials, a vegetable garden, flowering trees and a greenhouse. She also wanted spacious patios for entertaining. That was my challenge and I spent the better part of three months designing the outdoor space to include all of these elements and more.”

ADDING AMENITIES

Oftentimes, it’s the amenities that help get the most enjoyment and use out of an outdoor

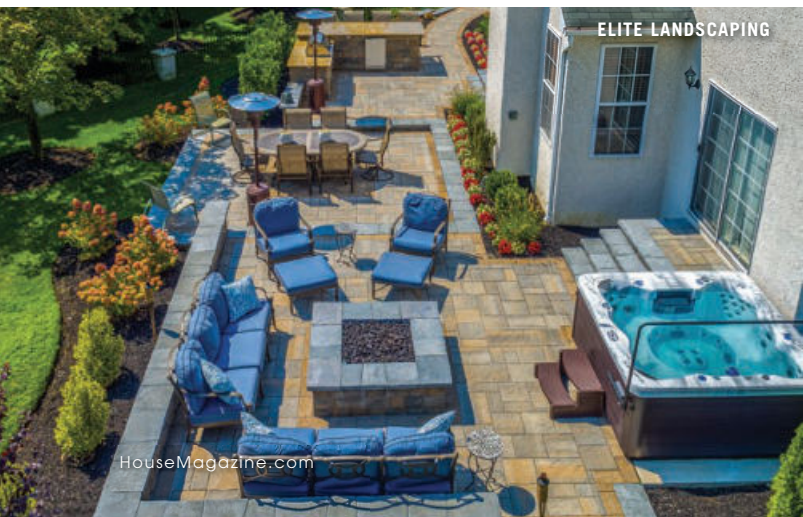
living area. Pasquarello says that when designing a space, he’s often thinking about “the three F’s.” That is, Food, Fire and Fluidity.

“Nothing brings people together better than food, so an outdoor kitchen is a must,” he says. “Fire has a mesmerizing quality which should always be incorporated in some fashion. Whether it’s a simple fire pit or a grand stone veneer fireplace, it will surely entice a crowd to gather around on cool nights. Finally, the fluid movement of water from a pool waterfall or a pondless water feature creates a calming effect and helps to drown out outside noise.”

Undoubtedly, a water feature can be a tranquil and welcomed addition to any outdoor living area. It helps to create a sense of “zen” or well-being in your outdoor space.

George Mihalchick, owner of Ponds by George, says that nothing adds aesthetic appeal and enjoyment quite like a pond. A backyard pond gives you the visual beauty as well as the sound of water that just immediately begin to have a sensory effect. Of course, Mihalchick says homeowners often have a lot of questions about the maintenance involved—and he says they’re generally pleasantly surprised by the answer.

“If built correctly—and that’s key—the maintenance could be as little as cleaning out the skimmer every 10 to 14 days,” he says. “But it’s important to remember, it’s not just




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a hole in the ground with some liner, water and rocks. It's an entire ecosystem so it must be built properly from the start."

Mihalchick says that so many details go into creating an aesthetically beautiful and optimally functional pond. One that's really important is lighting. You want just the right amount of lighting to be able to see and enjoy your pond at night—but you don't want it so bright that you can see the particles in the water.

"You want a subtle look with lights situated in just the right places," he explains. "You can have color-changing lights and you can have them hidden in the waterfalls so that they light up. The big thing is hiding the components—not just the lighting but everything involved in making your pond complete. When a pond is built correctly, you shouldn't be able to tell what makes it work. You shouldn't know where the water is coming from or going. That's all important for a natural, integrated look."

EXTENDING YOUR TIME OUTSIDE

Of course, if you're investing in an outdoor living space, you want to be able to fully maximize your time there. That means spending time outside both day and night—and as late into the season as possible.

Hock says that her Princeton client loved the greenhouse and appreciated being able to spend time gardening, even in the winter months.

"It can be difficult constructing a design that incorporates elements that can be appreciated all year-round," Hock says. "However, in the case of this Princeton residence, a greenhouse was constructed which gave the client many pleasurable moments—even as the snow fell. She's an avid gardener who planned and planted seed trays for installation in the spring in her vegetable garden. She also had a large number of tropicals that she pruned, shaped and fertilized throughout the winter months."

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Pasquarello says that homeowners can definitely extend their time outside.

“Open air pavilion roof structures with built-in infrared heaters can extend use into the winter months,” he says. “Infrared is the best option, as this heat source only emits heat where it is directed. The roof structure will also provide some relief from the heat in the summer as a shaded escape. Water misting systems can even be installed along the perimeter of the roof, creating a cooling blanket of droplets.” **H&H**



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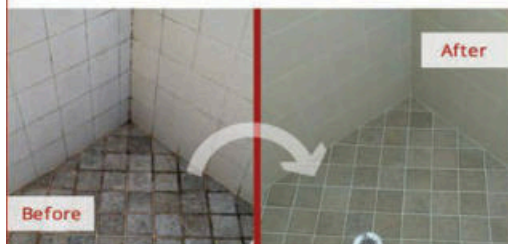
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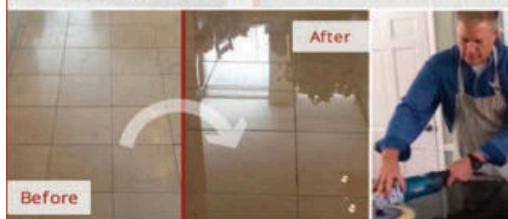
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One-Stop Shop for Bath and Kitchen Remodeling

At **Bath, Kitchen and Tile Center**, being prepared for a bath or kitchen remodel leads to less worry.

by **Debra Wallace**

Preparation is key when it comes to starting a major bathroom or kitchen remodeling project, or any other home renovation project. Whether you're working on your own or with a contractor, if you do your homework, it's more likely that you won't be overwhelmed by the myriad of choices available in colors, products and designs.

"When you walk into a showroom with photos, measurements, style ideas and other concepts, you will feel more comfortable embarking on a renovation project," says Chrystal Hess, showroom manager at Bath, Kitchen and Tile Center, who brings her 18 years of remodeling and interior design experience to each project.

What sets this family-owned and -operated business apart from other kitchen and bath companies is the full scope of the work and the high-level "turnkey service" provided at no charge to each client and for every project.

Since 1963, Bath, Kitchen and Tile Center continues to be the "single source" for kitchen and bathroom design and supplies in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

"First, we go to the home, do field measurements and talk through what the clients want to achieve—from taking down walls to moving sinks and other appliances," Hess explains.

"Next, we sit down for a design appointment and to lay out the kitchen and bathroom based

on the limitations of the space and what they want to achieve. We provide the full scope of the work—from the tile on the floor and the drain in the sink to the countertop—this is one-stop service," Hess says with pride.

This 'one-stop service' means that "the clients do not have to deal with multiple vendors, and we are here to see the project through from start to finish," she says.

A major problem for many homeowners considering a small or larger renovation project is not knowing where to start or where to go for help. They are often unsure if they need to get the design first or the contractor first, and help can sometimes be difficult to find.

"At the end of the day," Hess says, "people just need guidance to help make all of this feel less overwhelming."

Clients who have their own contractor can purchase just the materials, or have the entire job done by Bath, Kitchen and Tile Center.

"When I am working on a project with my contractor, I design for him and we figure out all of the behind-the-scenes aspects," Hess explains.

Also, when she is working with someone else's contractor, she makes sure that they are both on the same page and that there is no miscommunication.

This is why the 'turnkey service' on products and services that are complete, installed and ready to use upon installation is so important.

The No. 1 piece of advice she offers from her 18 years of experience is: "Do your homework. This is so important," she explains, "because of the many different choices when it comes to tile, paint, lighting, cabinets, cabinet hardware and color schemes, so do an online search or find other sources in order to get a sense of your style."

In addition, she recommends taking photos of your existing space and taking preliminary measurements, because all of this helps a lot when it comes to picking items and making



decisions. "I am always so excited about getting started to select the various materials."

What does Hess appreciate about her design work? "I am one of those rare people who absolutely loves what I do—creating the new space and being able to thoroughly enjoy looking at the before and after," she says.

When it comes to kitchen remodeling trends, Hess is seeing many clients select white and gray cabinetry and marble and quartz countertops. Blue is already also a common color in renovation projects, and green is also becoming a "new" neutral that she is looking forward to working with in upcoming kitchen and bathroom design projects.

Bath, Kitchen and Tile Center can accommodate any size budget and any size job, from one room to an entire house, including bathrooms, laundry rooms, mudrooms, kitchens, and, of course, the kitchen sink. "We have materials for a wide variety of budgets," Hess explains.

Another sense of pride for Hess and Bath, Kitchen and Tile Center is the repeat business and referrals.

"I have several clients for whom I have done all of their bathrooms, kitchens and a wet bar in their basement, and they have constantly referred me to their family members, friends and neighbors," Hess says. "For me, it's all about building relationships with my clients."

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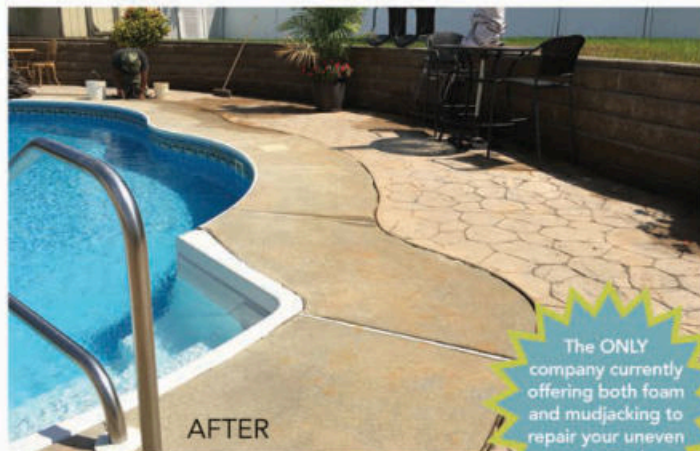
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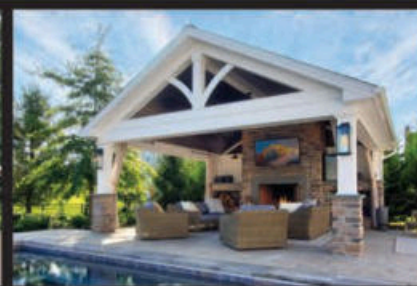
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