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Volume 23, Issue 10

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# Making a Statement

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## HomeTech Renovations

*The benefits of working with a design-build company* page 15



## Gehman Design Remodeling

*How to unlock endless possibilities for home renovation* page 25

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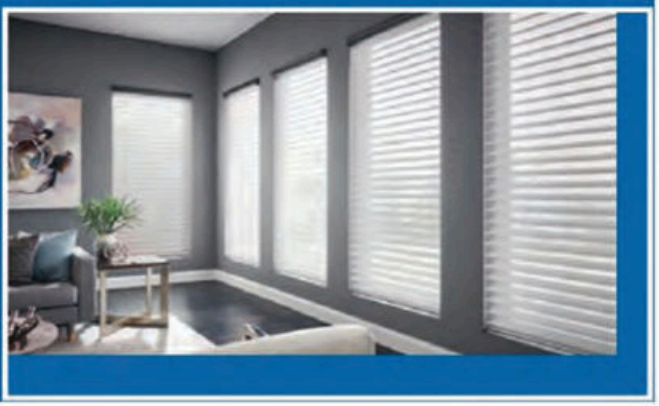
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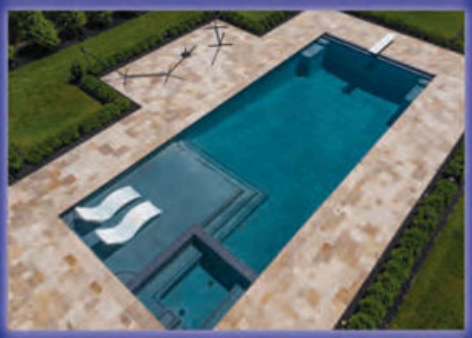
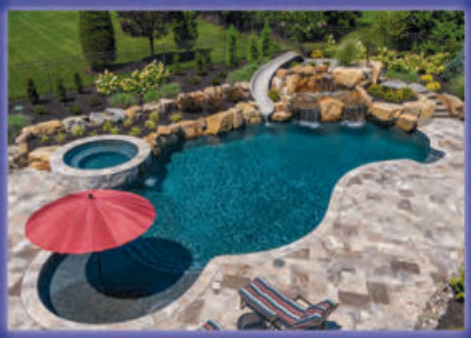
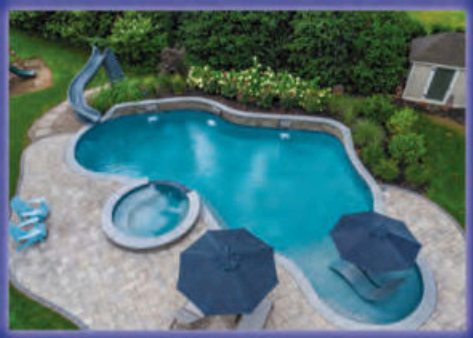
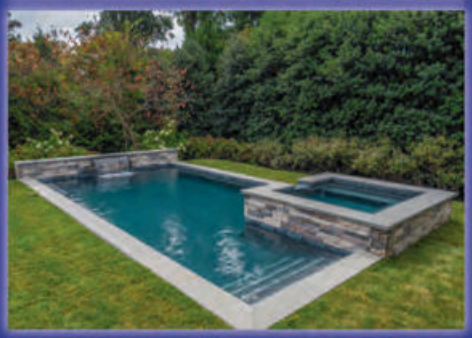


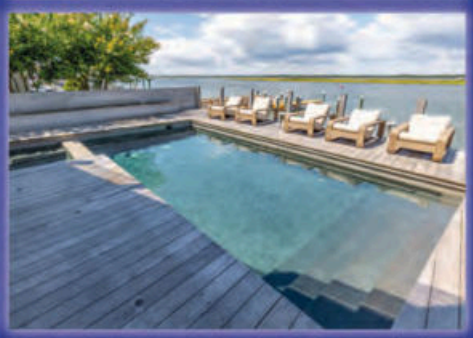


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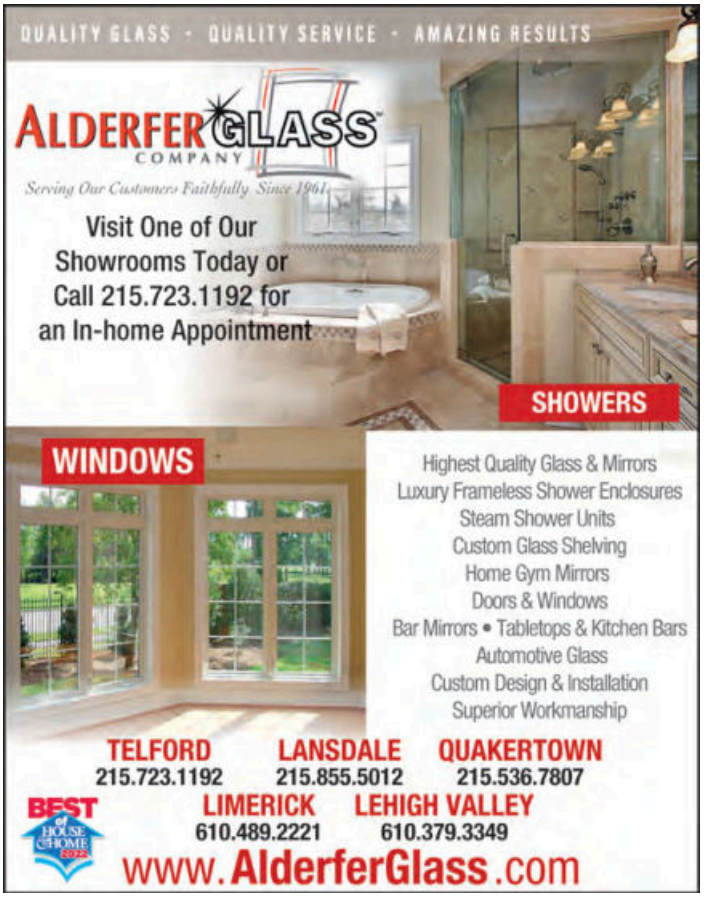
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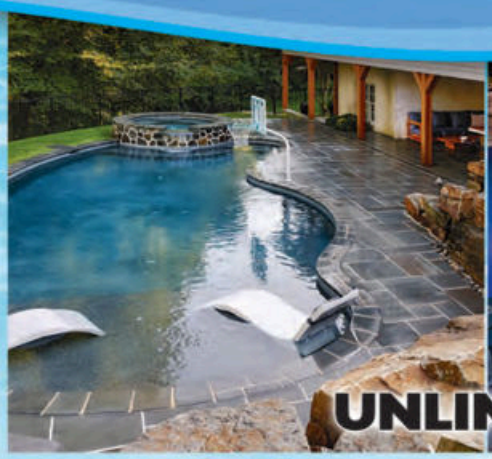
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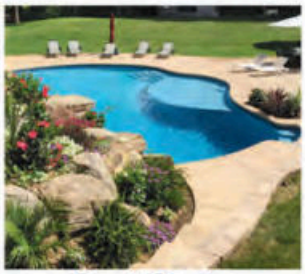
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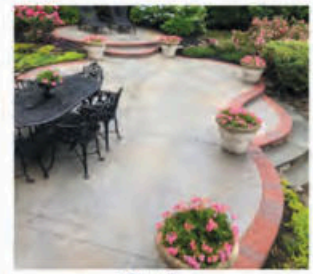
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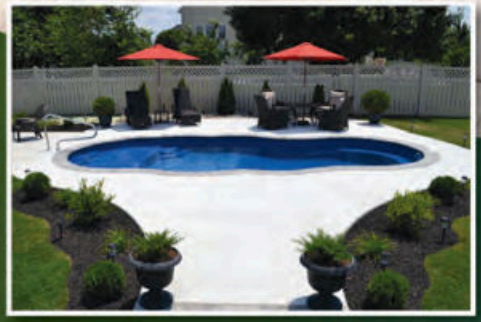
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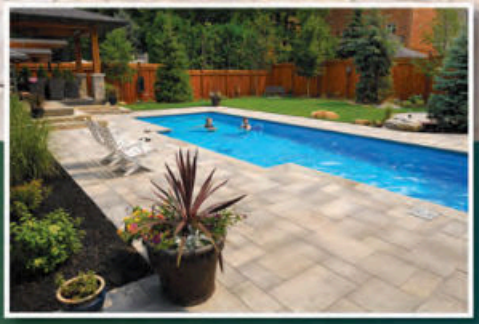
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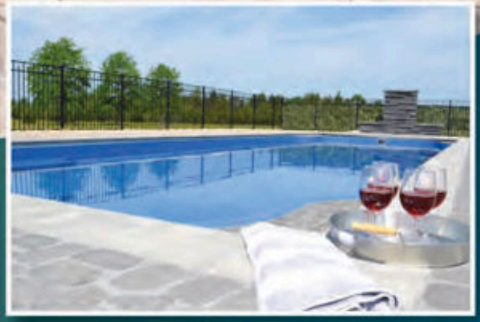
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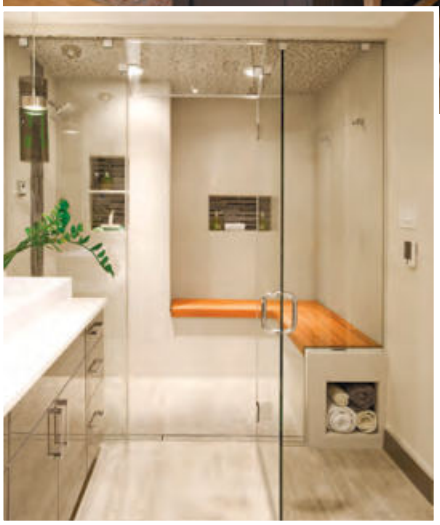
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*House & Home* magazine spoke with Cerami to touch on the important aspects that homeowners need to consider when researching and planning for a new kitchen remodel.


David Cerami, Owner





### COMMITMENT

It comes back to the individual homeowner and their commitment to that particular home. In other words, let's say you're a homeowner that moves every three to four years, do you really want to invest ... and to what extent?

Depending on your commitment to your home, depending on the details that are important to you would depend on how you would go about selecting the right design/build contractor for the job.

### EXPERIENCED TEAM

Experience does count. I tend to recommend trying to do research to find accredited, certified design/build specialists that are in line with your aesthetic values, how you prefer to work, and your commitment to your home.

The nice thing in dealing with a design/build company is that you hopefully find a firm that not only understands the design and the homeowner's needs after discussing the different options, but understands the most cost-effective way to execute the design.

A true experienced design/build contractor or designer will save you exponentially so much more money and time in the end. Because these things are thought about upfront, they're addressed upfront, and they're made consistent with visual drawings and representations that make a homeowner much more validated about moving a project in that direction. If these details aren't articulated, what you wind up with is a series of "one step forward two steps back," with a lot of finger-pointing that ultimately results in a disjointed project and a bad experience.

### PLANNING

There is a starting place: Any homeowner should talk and interview 2-3 experienced, accredited design/build professionals and make a decision after that. Look at the website, in-house talent and consumer ratings, and make sure they align with your aesthetic and practical needs.

We offer every customer a complimentary on-site visit to visually look at this space and have a very candid conversation with the homeowners regarding what their goals and objectives are.

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### BUDGETING

One of the things that we ask is whether or not if there is an ideal budget range that you'd like to stay with. Now, my experience is to use that budget range as a foundation in which to develop a project. Understanding what your needs are and correlating that into some kind of range would set the stage for what we could or could not do.

Budgets are very important, but we also want the benefit of preparing a design offering that is beyond the obvious to a certain extent, for consideration that would give them a whole laundry list of added advantages and let them make their decision. "You don't know what you don't know."

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# The Time is Right

## EMBRACE THE BEAUTY AND BENEFITS OF BUILDING A DECK IN THE FALL

*by* **Kristen Jorgensen**

**As the vibrant colors of summer gradually give way to the crisp and enchanting ambiance of fall, homeowners often find themselves contemplating various projects to enhance their outdoor living spaces.** While spring and summer might seem like the prime seasons for home improvement projects, building a deck in the fall brings with it a unique set of benefits that are often overlooked. With milder weather to help reduce project timelines, there are numerous reasons why the autumn months can be the ideal time to embark on your deck-building journey.

Ion Colbasiuc of Deck Guardian elaborates on this point. "Summer is almost over and the industry's push to get things done in the short summer months is over. Homeowners find themselves more relaxed and are able to enjoy their home more without the crazy get away weekends from summer. This also lends itself for more time to plan and budget in order to make the best decisions on their investment and builders aren't rushed by the high demand from summer jobs," he says.

### Benefits of Building

In the modern hustle and bustle of life, finding solace in the outdoors is becoming increasingly essential. What better way to achieve this than by installing a deck? A deck is more than just an extension of your living space: It's a portal to nature, a hub for gatherings and a canvas for your creativity. From offering a tranquil space to relax to increasing both the living space and value of your home, building a deck is a solid investment—and now could be the best

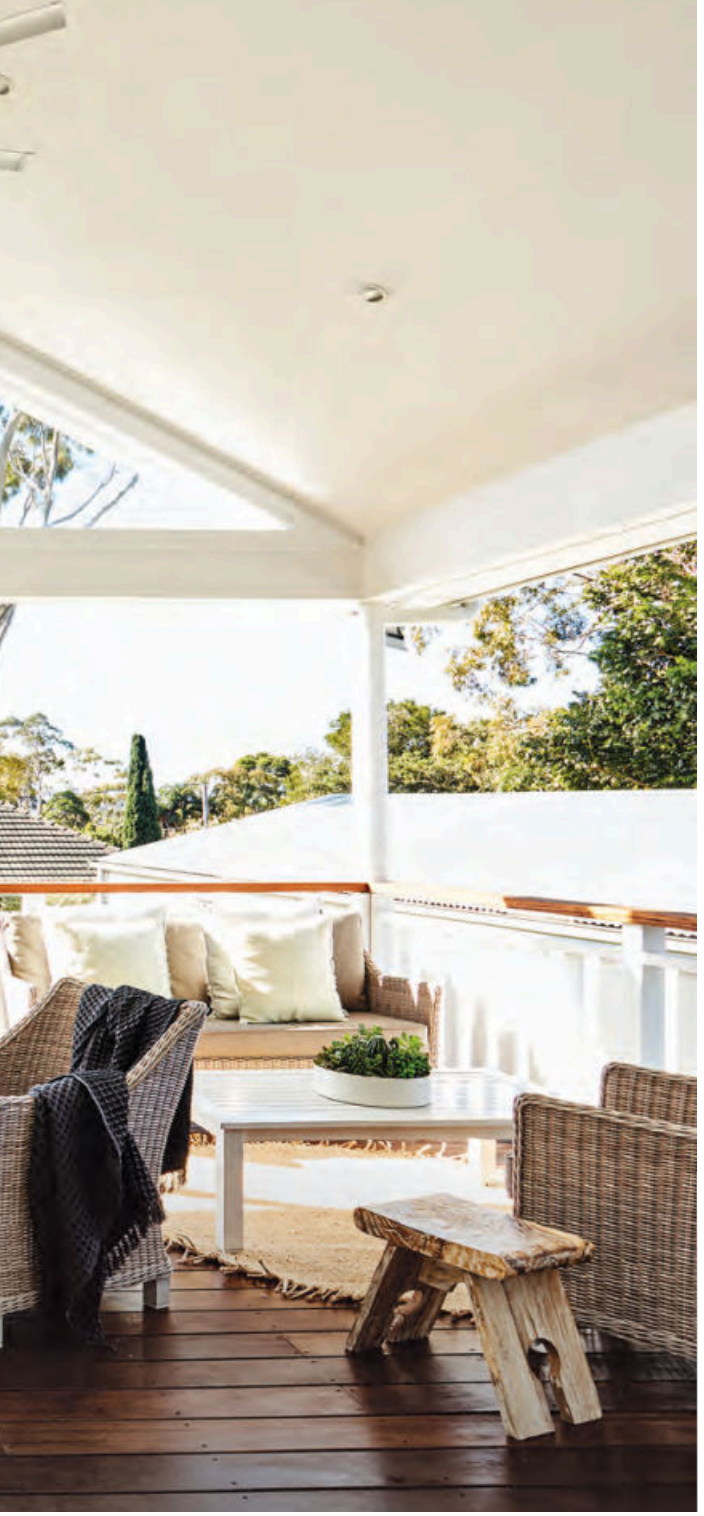


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time to pull the trigger, according to local experts.

Karim Mrad from Archadeck of Northwest Philadelphia explains just how to get started. "At the initial visit we sit down and do a functional needs analysis and that's how we extract information on how they want to use the space," he says. "Do they entertain a lot? How many people are they going to accommodate on the deck? Is it just a deck or a deck and a patio? Do they want a shade structure? We take all of that into consideration and always keep the budget in mind when creating a design for a homeowner."

Once the fundamentals and design are nailed down, you can start the next process of building, and becoming that much closer to the deck of your dreams.






## Mild Weather and Comfortable Construction

One of the primary advantages of building a deck in the fall is the more moderate weather conditions. With the heat of summer subsiding and the cold of winter still at bay, autumn offers a comfortable and stable environment for construction. The cooler temperatures mean that labor-intensive work won't be as physically taxing, allowing builders to work efficiently without the risk of heat exhaustion. Additionally, the absence of extreme cold ensures that construction materials, such as adhesives and paints, can set and cure properly, leading to a more durable and visually appealing deck.

The mild weather is also an advantage for those homeowners who may already have a deck but need to have a bit of maintenance done.

"The fall is a great time to inspect your existing deck, especially if your deck is over 10 years old. We suggest inspecting your framing, columns and supporting structures. If you have a pressure-treated deck, the fall is a great time to apply a seal, since the weather is typically cool and dry," explains Dillon Redecker of Blackfoot Decking and Fencing.

## Enhanced Landscaping Opportunities

Fall is a season of stunning natural beauty, as leaves change color and landscapes transform into breathtaking vistas. By building your deck during this time, you have the unique advantage of being able to integrate your new outdoor space seamlessly with the changing surroundings. If you are able to start the project early enough in the season, imagine enjoying your morning coffee or evening gatherings against the backdrop of golden, red and orange foliage—a truly captivating setting that can enhance the overall ambiance of your outdoor living area.

Perhaps you start a bit later in autumn, missing the length of the entire season, but you'll at least have the convenience of stepping out to your brand-new deck on the first warm spring day after a long, cold winter.

"Building a deck in the fall is great: You have some time to enjoy a bit of the fall foliage but more importantly, you're ahead of the rush and demand of those homeowners who are building in the spring," Redecker says.

## A Quicker, Easier Process

In the peak construction seasons of spring and summer, contractors and builders are often juggling multiple projects simultaneously. This can lead to longer wait times for materials, permits and even the availability




of skilled professionals. Fall, on the other hand, is typically a slower period for the construction industry, which means that you might have an easier time scheduling your project and obtaining the necessary resources. Reduced demand can also lead to quicker project turnaround times, allowing you to enjoy your new deck sooner rather than later.

"You will definitely experience shorter turnaround times in the fall than during the crazy spring and summer months, giving the advantage to fall builds," says Jasmin Toro of Archadeck of Mt. Laurel. "We still do caution our customers that even during the off-season, things take time, so it's always best to reach out sooner rather than later if they're in a hurry."

Obtaining the necessary permits for construction can sometimes be a lengthy process due to the high demand during the warmer months. In the fall, government offices responsible for granting permits may have a lighter workload, resulting in faster processing times. "Pulling permits and getting approval from the township can sometimes take a lot longer than homeowners understand, so it's helpful to do it during the slower time of year. The smoother the permit acquisition process, the more we can expedite the start of your project, making your deck-building experience more streamlined and less stressful," Toro explains.

## Extended Outdoor Enjoyment

By constructing a deck in the fall, you set yourself up for extended outdoor enjoyment. As winter approaches, your newly built deck will provide a platform to experience the beauty of the colder months. Whether it's a cozy space for stargazing or a festive area for holiday celebrations, your deck can continue to serve as an inviting outdoor escape well beyond the traditional summer season. And when that last drop of snow melts away, and spring rolls in, you and your family are ready to enjoy the season right at the start.

The benefits of building a deck in the fall are abundant and often underestimated. The comfortable weather, faster project timelines, easier permitting process, enhanced landscaping opportunities and extended outdoor enjoyment all contribute to a compelling case for starting your deck-building project during this season. By taking advantage of the unique advantages that autumn offers, you can create a beautifully crafted outdoor space that complements the changing seasons and enriches your overall quality of life. So, grab your plans, gather your materials and embrace the beauty of fall as you embark on your journey to build the perfect deck. **H&H**

## RESOURCES

**Archadeck of Mount Laurel**
Cherry Hill, N.J. | (609) 245-6530
Archadeck.com/Mt-Laurel

**Archadeck of Northwest Philadelphia**
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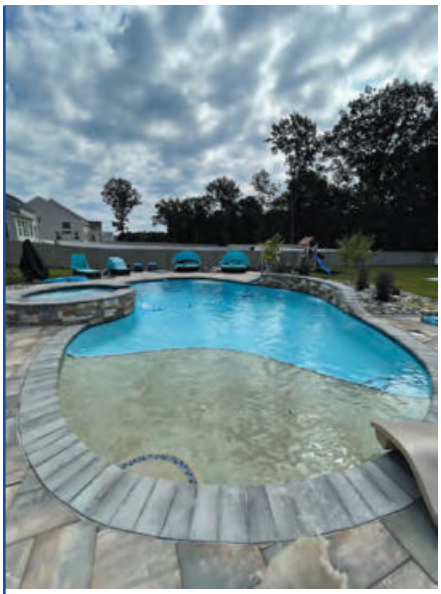
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ask the expert
by Chelsea Valcourt

# Del Val Pools & Spas

**BUILDING A POOL NEAR THE SHORE CAN PROVIDE EVEN GREATER ENTERTAINMENT,** accessibility and privacy options than a trip to the beach while still providing that signature getaway feel. A personal pool not only improves property value, but also is a relaxing hideaway from the crowds and noise of the busy tourism season. The sand terrain, however, brings along its own unique set of challenges.

Bryan Hull, co-owner of Del Val Pools & Spas, says there are a few important strategies for tackling these challenges, including good planning, regular maintenance and working with an experienced and professional pool planner. *House & Home* spoke with Hull about best practices when building a pool by the Shore and how to keep costs down while avoiding any unnecessary surprises.



**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES PEOPLE FACE WHEN DECIDING TO BUILD A POOL AT THE SHORE?**

Building a pool at the Shore requires a high level of expertise and a great deal of planning. In most cases, the footprint is small, access is difficult and what is under the sand is always a surprise. In many cases, the pool pilings and beam structure must be tied into existing structures, requiring careful planning and execution. Del Val Pools & Spas brings the essential experience to complete a project at the Shore whether oceanfront, bayfront or in between.



Bryan Hull, Partner

**HOW CAN FOLKS BEST PREPARE FOR THESE CHALLENGES?**

If building a new home, working with your Del Val Pool representative early on can minimize expenses by maximizing access and completing construction simultaneously. If adding a pool to an existing home, knowing the history of the lot helps everyone prepare for what is hiding underground. When working on the coastal islands, we have found cars, rocks and even pieces of ship under the sand. Del Val has the experience to minimize surprises when installing a custom pool in a not-so-custom terrain.

**HOW DO GROUND MATERIALS LIKE SANDY SOIL AFFECT POOL DEVELOPMENT? HOW DO YOU HANDLE THAT?**

Hurricane Sandy in 2012 was a big teacher in many ways. The storm's hydrostatic pressure popped many pools out of the sand. A new name came about to describe the innovative ways to engineer in-ground pools using pilings and grade beams. It's known as "Sandy-proof," and it's the standard Del Val lives by when constructing pools at the Jersey Shore.

**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST WAYS TO MAINTAIN YOUR POOL BY THE SHORE?**

Daily attention is the best practice, and it's important to keep both the pool and deck clean. The sun can be a little stronger by the Shore, so ensure water levels are at the appropriate level and check chemicals frequently. A little attention each day will minimize maintenance and maximize fun time. **H&H**



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ask the expert
by Leigh Stuart

# Gehman Design Remodeling

**WITH A HOUSING MARKET IN FLUX** and interest rates running high, Dennis D. Gehman, Master Certified Remodeler and president of Harleysville-based Gehman Design Remodeling, says homeowners may want to consider renovation versus a whole home replacement.


Dennis D. Gehman

"We're seeing people now who are saying they have 3, 4, even 2.5% interest and they don't want to give that up, which to me makes a whole lot of sense," Gehman shares. "In a way, people feel like they're stuck, but if you like the neighborhood, the schools, the distance to work, it probably does make sense to just stay put and remodel or renovate your existing house to meet your needs."

Some may add to an entirely new room, but Gehman says it's more common for folks to approach his firm for help in rethinking and reorganizing their existing spaces. While some upgrades are purely aesthetic, others are more geared toward improved functionality. Popular home improvements include expanding kitchens and repurposing formal living or dining rooms to serve as offices, music rooms or playrooms for little ones.

"A lot of people don't know what's possible," Gehman says. "It's hard for them to envision something different because that's the way the house has always been. We can offer a new set of eyes and we know what's possible structurally."

Another aspect of moving from one home to another that many people don't think about straight away is the sheer cost involved in selling a home: realtor commissions, taxes, attorney's fees, moving fees, etc. Also, Gehman says statistics show that most new homebuyers undertake a remodeling or renovation project within two years.

Gehman says now is a great time to consult a design-build professional who can help transform an existing space into one best suited to the homeowner's lifestyle.

"Once you start looking around, you can see, 'Oh boy, everything needs attention,'" Gehman says. "Few people have the budget to do everything at once, and we certainly respect that. But, there is wisdom in someone who can look at the whole house. It's probably wise to come up with a master plan with an end goal in mind, and that can typically be phased. What you don't want to do is one major project, then three to five years from now realize you have to take apart what you spent good money on few years ago."

Renovations to the first floor, where friends, family, and neighbors gather for social occasions, are in high demand. This is not to discount exterior renovations, which account for approximately 30% of jobs for Gehman's firm.

"People, if they're going to stay put, want to feel good about how the outside of the house looks," he says. "It can be a big range, from needing some new paint or a front door, to new siding and windows, or adding a porch or screen room, deck, patio or outdoor kitchen. If you want to put a front porch and sidewalk on now, and you know you don't have the budget for landscaping, plan for it. If you know you would like to have a pool or waterfall or koi pond, put it in the plans and make sure you have space allotted."

This planning phase is where a professional design-build team such as Gehman Design Remodeling can be invaluable.

"It's in our process to do an initial consultation and meet clients at their home, and then we certainly like to set up a second appointment to come here to our showroom," he says. "Once we've seen their home and have a better understanding with our 33 years in business, we can pull up pictures of other projects we've done, probably with a similar floorplan, to show how it turned out."

Spend some time online, Gehman advises, to form a clear vision for a space or whole home; he recommends sources such as Houzz, Pinterest and NARI.org, the website for the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, which features multiple photo galleries, including winners of Contractor of the Year for the past 20 years. Sample homes of new housing developments can be sources of inspiration, too.

"It's important to know what you like," he adds. "Sometimes it also helps to show pictures of what you *don't* like." H&H


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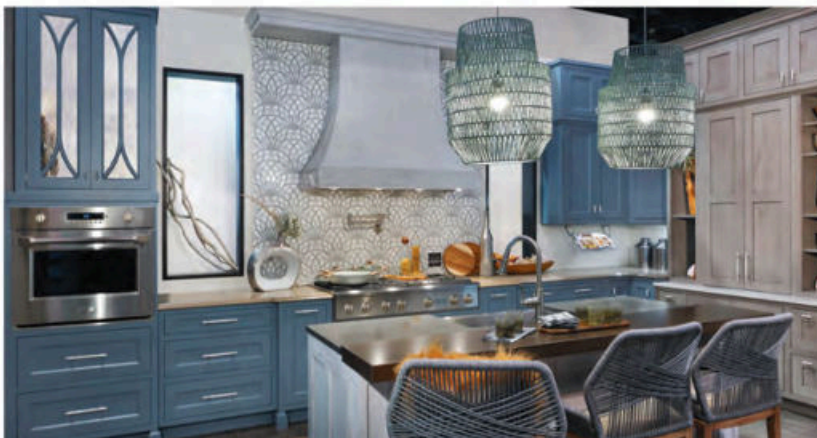
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# Not Your Basic Basement

Local companies are seeing a significant demand for expertly finished and furnished basements offering everything from in-home recreation hubs to cozily customized living spaces.

*by* **Madeleine Maccar**

**THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE INSPIRED COUNTLESS HOUSEHOLDS TO CUSTOMIZE THEIR HOMES IN WAYS THAT BETTER SUIT THEIR FAMILIES' NEEDS AND PREFERENCES, FROM THE INSIDE OUT AND TOP TO BOTTOM.** Oftentimes, those projects not only provide a personalized touch but also increase a home's value.

Justin Avishay, owner of Avishay Contractors, reports that even though lockdown is an increasingly distant memory, his company is still seeing a glut of clients eager to redo, renovate and reclaim their more neglected living spaces—particularly their basements.

"Most people, when they don't have a finished basement, normally what's happening is that it'll just collect water, become a place for unnecessary storage and collect things that should have been thrown out years ago. There's a whole bunch of boxes up against one wall and then you'll start to collect mold down there," he explains. "It ends up degrading the home value just by having the presence of mold and debris, and at the same time, you're just cluttering up your home more."

He also notes that the rising interest rates impacting today's financial landscape make it more attractive to invest in one's home: "No matter what you do, if you put money into your basement, a finished basement is always going to add value to your home. … Imagine a basement as kind of like a savings account of equity: If you have an extra $50,000, instead of it sitting in a checking account or savings account low-interest bearing, most people will take that money and put it into their house, investing in the equity of their home. You're just converting the money from dollars into home equity, which, in the long run, ends up becoming more useful and powerful in times like this because houses keep up with inflation."



For Audra DelConte, Royal Billiard & Recreation's owner, she and her team have helped countless clients turn a drab, dank basement into a recreational space humming with life and decked out with personalized touches that encourage friendly gatherings with well-appointed at-home entertainment spaces.

"We always try to create a social gathering spot for family and friends," she says. "We might suggest adding a bar with complementary barstools that go with it, or a pub table in a corner to create extra seating or put your drink on while you're playing shuffleboard, ping pong, whatever. Those complementary items really help create a great hangout space."

In fact, many of Royal Billiard's projects focus on turning basements from unfurnished to fabulous.

"I would say that about 80% of our products go into basements," estimates DelConte. "Sometimes there's that added detail about deciding how to get a shuffleboard table into a basement because they're very long boards that aren't very flexible, but beyond getting the product in, it's really no different than working with any other space."

Photos courtesy of of Royal Billiard & Recreation

Avishay, too, is seeing that demand to help underutilized, unsightly basements go from cluttered to cozy, and giving homeowners more room for activities is just one way people are breathing new life into those spaces.

"For basements, we've done everything: someone's man cave, where they want to put in a nice bar and hangout spot; playrooms for kids; custom home theaters—that's a big one, people like to build an in-house movie room," he begins. "Then there's spare bedrooms, or something like an in-law suite. I have a client whose basement we're doing right now … and there's basically 4 feet of dead space that I turned into a closet for them, which they didn't even realize was an option."

The ways a bland, utilitarian basement can be turned into a vibrant part of the home are as infinite as the lifestyles and needs guiding those transformations, but that process should always begin with consulting the keen eyes and vast experience of proven professionals. In addition to their knowledge and experience, those experts have overseen and gotten their hands on a wide range of projects, so they have the well-trained vision to see the potential—and potential issues—that a homeowner might not even know to look for.

"A client might say, 'This is where I think a pool table will be best,' and we'll take a look at the whole space," says DelConte. "By the time we leave, it's in a whole different area because it will play better there and have more space that's needed for play than what they were originally thinking."

Those experts also tend to be well-versed in logistics like zoning approvals, how an additional bathroom will affect your home's sewage system and ensuring that your dream basement doesn't run afoul of municipal regulations.

"We are a start-to-finish company, so we help our clients along the way through the whole process," says Avishay. "We'll go to the towns for them, we handle all of the paperwork, all the legalities. … My goal is to make this a seamless transition by accommodating the clients in any way, shape or form."

Having an expert on your side also means someone can help you tastefully incorporate some trendy touches without embracing so modern a design that the space looks dated despite having plenty of life left in it—while also helping you identify ways to mindfully design your new space that both accommodate and anticipate the inevitable future projects a successfully renovated basement tends to invite.

"When you think of adding a pool table, keep an open mind to eventually adding a complementary matching shuffleboard or another game table," says DelConte. "So many of our customers come back because they want to add foosball or a ping-pong table down the road. When you're designing that space, consider how you'll want to add additional fun things to the space."

"If you're going to remodel your basement and you have the abilities to add a bathroom, that's the perfect space and the perfect time to add a bathroom," Avishay adds. "You want to add those amenities as much as possible."

With plenty of options for turning your basement into a thoughtfully redesigned and lovingly appointed space, one necessity that remains the same across those infinitely customizable options is hiring someone who'll treat your home like it's their own.

"When it comes down to who you're hiring, go with your gut feeling," Avishay advises. "Go with who will treat your house the best." H&H

## RESOURCES

**Avishay Contractors**
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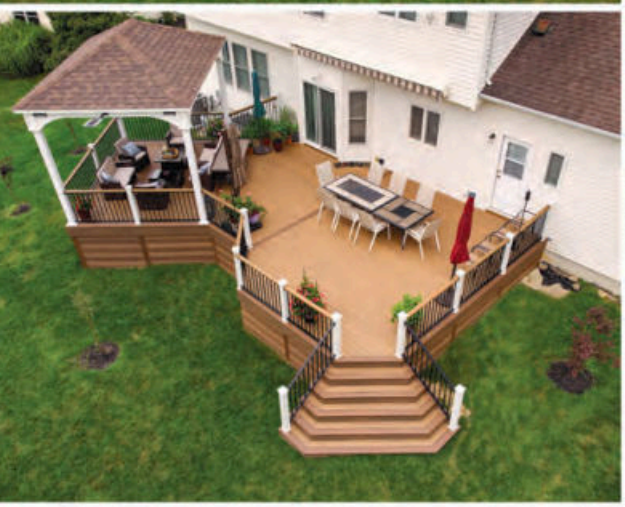
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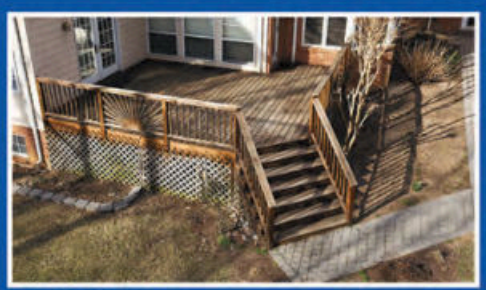


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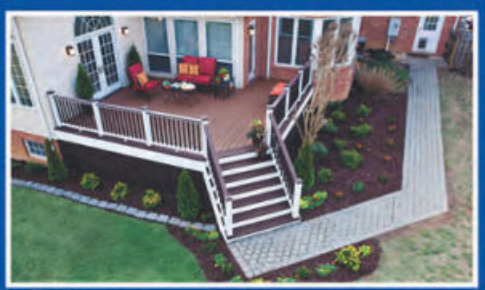
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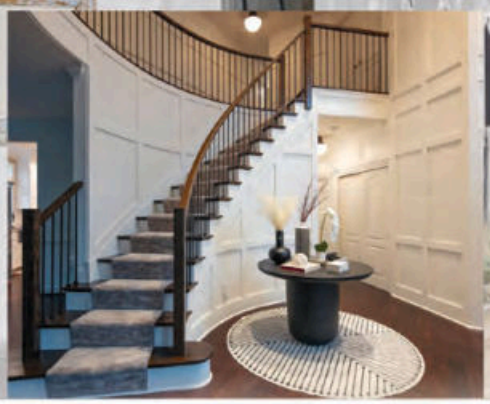


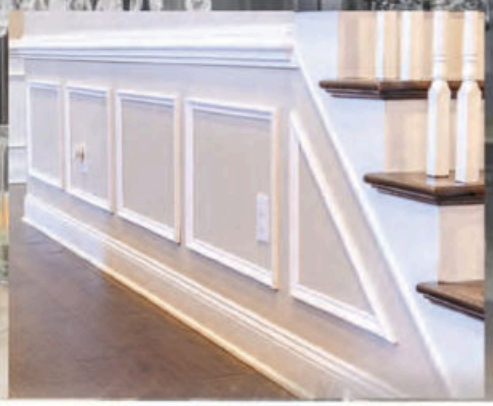
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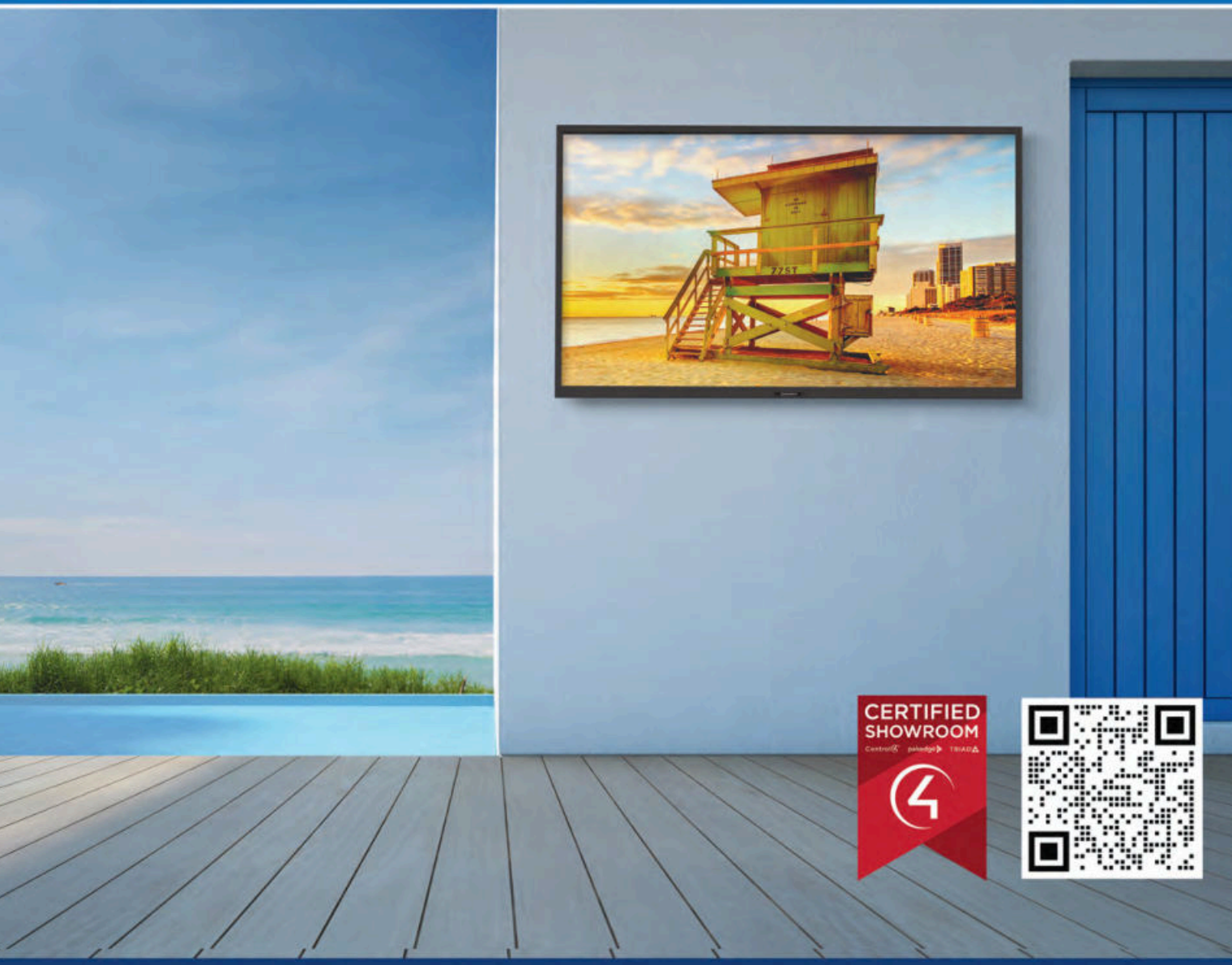
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# aquaHALT by waterAUTOMATION

**RESEARCH BY TRAVELERS INSURANCE FOUND THAT HOMES ARE 10 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE DAMAGED BY A WATER LEAK THAN BY A FIRE. THESE LEAKS ARE NO SMALL ISSUE, IN FACT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY FOUND THAT THE AVERAGE HOUSE LEAKS NEARLY 10,000 GALLONS PER YEAR.** Without preventative measures these leaks can lead to stressful situations, resident displacement and costly renovations.

Greg Capizzi, founder of aquaHALT, faced the same issue after a water leak occurred at the condominium he manages which necessitated renovations of four apartments and cost the condominium $320,000 in damages. It inspired him to create and patent the aquaHALT, a leak detection system tucked discreetly behind the toilet bowl that stops water leaks by automatically cutting off the water at its source.

*House & Home* spoke with Capizzi about the importance of installing a leak detection system and how it could save homeowners both time and money.



Greg Capizzi, aquaHALT founder

**WHAT DOES AQUAHALT PROVIDE TO ITS CONSUMERS?**

aquaHALT is the first battery-operated, automatic shut-off valve for toilet bowls.When water is detected around the toilet bowl, the aquaHALT will close the water supply valve at the source without disrupting the rest of the home, building or fixtures in the unit. It provides a sense of assurance and it is a top-quality product. We provide a product that has everything you need and if water is detected on the floor, the source is turned off immediately. It is that simple. aquaHALT was designed to install it and forget about it.

**HOW CAN INSTALLING A LEAK DETECTION SYSTEM SAVE HOMEOWNERS TIME AND MONEY?**

We've had a lot of toilet leaks within the building we manage and typically with a water leak there's displacement. You have to leave the apartment because there are renovations happening with the contractor. Water damage can necessitate renovations including new flooring, sheetrock, and finishes as well as vital mold remediation to stave off harmful colonies that can be harmful in the air. This, plus the possibility of higher insurance rates can cause a nightmare for homeowners and renters alike. In fact, a lot of insurance carriers are now asking for some type of leak detection system. Being proactive really just eliminates the time, hassle and cost of losing that area within your apartment for weeks, possibly months, to renovations.

**HOW DOES AQUAHALT COMPARE TO OTHER WATER DETECTION SYSTEMS?**

There are different water-sensing devices out there, which all operate in their own function. There are water-sensing devices that are installed on the main water lines for your home that once activated turn off the entire house. Such devices are costly and sometimes come with a yearly subscription. Most are Wi-Fi based and communication could be an issue since Wi-Fi is not a stable source for detecting leaks. Water-sensing devices that are Wi-Fi based only send a notification. Once activated they send a signal to the main unit, in turn sending an alert. Therefore, these systems are sending you an alert, if Wi-Fi allows, while water is constantly flowing, creating more and more damage.

aquaHALT is a DIY water-sensing device since a plumber or electrician is not required. The device can be installed in such a way that it is barely seen upon approach. It has a hard-wired sensor to ensure a leak will be detected and stopped. It is non-invasive and is installed with 3M double-sided tape. Once the device is activated, it will beep until it is physically reset. The device comes with all that is needed—an extra stainless steel water line, wired sensor and batteries. Depending on the number of leaks detected, one set of batteries can last over two years. H&H







# DREAM KITCHENS

From windows to countertops, lighting, flooring and more, your kitchen makeover can encompass all of the latest trends while achieving your household's ideal functionality.

By CARLY MURRAY



When it comes to kitchen design, many elements work harmoniously to create one unified, ideal vision. In addition to deciding on the materials, colors and styles for each fixture from large to small, those with renovation on their mind must also consider quality, durability and lifestyle functions that are best suited for their individual needs and preferences. A contemporary yet timeless design combined with local professional installation will undoubtedly result in the kitchen of one's dreams.

The first step, of course, is to plan. Every budget is different, and it's very possible that they will expand to include the accessory fixtures or luxury aesthetic you discover during the initial process. Deciding if a kitchen renovation will be



*Everybody wants a giant island ...mostly just to have a gathering, some prefer everybody to gather around."*

—**Brian Iwano,**
founder of Blue Tree Builders



With the popularity of home renovation projects today, there is a range of options available that can achieve a desired look at a smaller cost than expected. It's all about comparing materials, colors and styles—and experimenting. Many companies offer digital design renderings for this very purpose.

"There are many affordable options available out there without compromising function or design. Sometimes it could be choosing a cost-effective fabric, or it could be going with a more simple drapery header style, such as flat panel versus a pleated top, which requires more material and labor," agree Jessica Hagedorn and Marie Heal, senior designers for Regal Drapes.

Part of the planning process is determining if there is a preference to display a unique kitchen full of personality, or a universally agreeable style to increase a home's rental or resale value. The latter is typically the majority of clients' choice, according to the experts that spoke with *House & Home*—but it also requires analyzing the usage of a home and one's expected longevity for staying in it.

Fresh and clean aesthetics are most popular right now in kitchen design, a combination of both classic and modern that blends to meet all tastes. Large islands are also trending post-pandemic as a symbol of the simple, often taken-for-granted pleasure of congregating with family and friends—especially in a room most commonly associated with cherished memories. Entertaining and eating, or even cooking and cleaning, become more enjoyable experiences when they're communal, social ones.



"Everybody wants a giant island … mostly just to have a gathering, some prefer everybody to gather around. Wood accents have been pretty popular, whether it be floating shelves or changing the color of the island to more of a wood tone," says Brian Iwano, founder of Blue Tree Builders.

partial or complete is an excellent launching point: Thorough research can narrow everything down to the most realistic, yet ideal, financial expectations.

"We have some customers that want to salvage certain parts of their prior investments, whether it be a floor or some other element within the room that they don't want to destroy, or a countertop maybe they invested in," begins Dave Cerami, owner of HomeTech Renovations. "There's a lot of different ways that I would direct the customer but overall it's important for any homeowner to have an idea of what they're comfortable with in terms of an overall investment. I think what we as professionals try to do is try to get as much value for that customer, given whatever budget concerns that they have."

He continues, "Sometimes budgets are not in line with reality, and very often we offer a complimentary in-home consultation. One of the things that does come up, quite frankly, is: 'What's your comfort level with a level of investment?' I certainly could develop beautiful designs and specified, beautiful materials and lighting and flooring, but it all comes back to how much you're willing to spend for those things. Everybody has different thresholds and different needs. So I think understanding a comfortable expenditure budget is always helpful as you go into any process. And secondly, I think it's always best to do some research."

Images courtesy of HomeTech Renovations


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Professionals are still seeing the stalwart white kitchens and quartz countertops, but natural, wood components are being increasingly implemented as either a dominating aesthetic or to supplement pieces as a finishing touch.

"I will definitely say the trend is more transitional to contemporary presentations. These are more simple door designs, modified Shaker doors, flat panel doors, less-is-more natural woods. We see a huge movement toward a natural rift cut white oak or quarter-sawn white oak. We see just more simple designs, letting the beauty of the wood speak to the character of the design in the home. White kitchens, painted white … that's been in vogue for quite some time. But we are seeing an end to the quintessential white kitchen. We are seeing more of a migration into natural woods. We see colors being expressed—color meaning charcoal, blacks. We're seeing richer tones as accents for islands, or maybe bars or things that would play off a natural wood kitchen. If we're doing a natural maple or quarter-sawn white oak, we want to put a very interesting paint color in for an island—whether it might be charcoal or black or blue, we see an expression through unique hardware. … We see really beautiful jewel-like quality hardware that becomes a statement in a kitchen," Cerami notes.

Then, of course, carefully selected details will complete or expand upon a room. Necessity fixtures, like drapes, should complement the walls, floors and countertops. Like any home renovation project, natural factors can either make or break the idealized finished product.

"We partner with our clients to help them determine which type of window treatments would be best for their functional needs as well as their design aesthetic. For example, we offer multiple lining options based on the client's light filtering needs as well as privacy needs," say Hagedorn and Heal.

It truly is all in the details when it comes to design, and small pieces can turn a solid, neutral-colored structure into a statement piece.





Each coordinated decision can lead to previously unthinkable results to truly make a kitchen one-of-a-kind.

"It's all in the finishes and lighting; cabinet finishes, countertops, tile, floor, it's all the finishes that they choose. And the sky's the limit really. There's all kinds of stuff they can do," says Iwano.

Whether homeowners decide to incorporate trends or a style completely their own, the first step to a perfect kitchen is to get in touch with local professionals. An expert opinion in culmination with each client's expectations can yield the epitome of one's vision for an impact on the entire home. H&H

## RESOURCES

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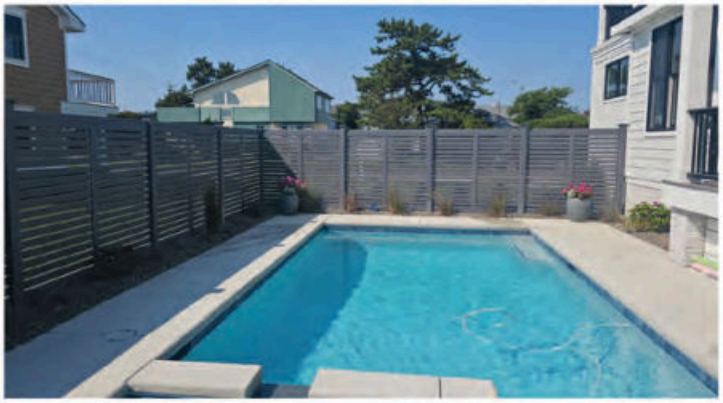
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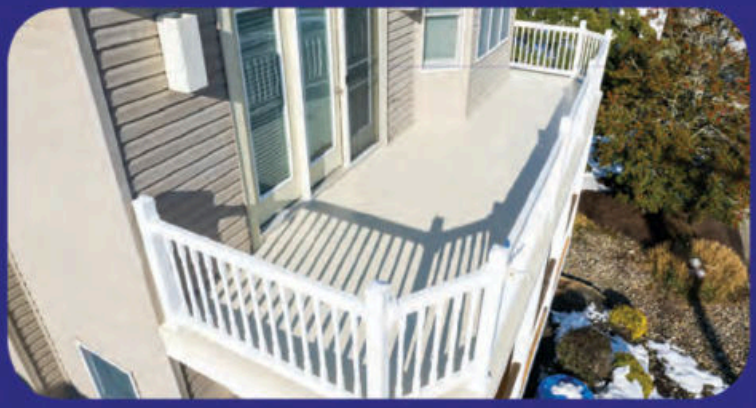
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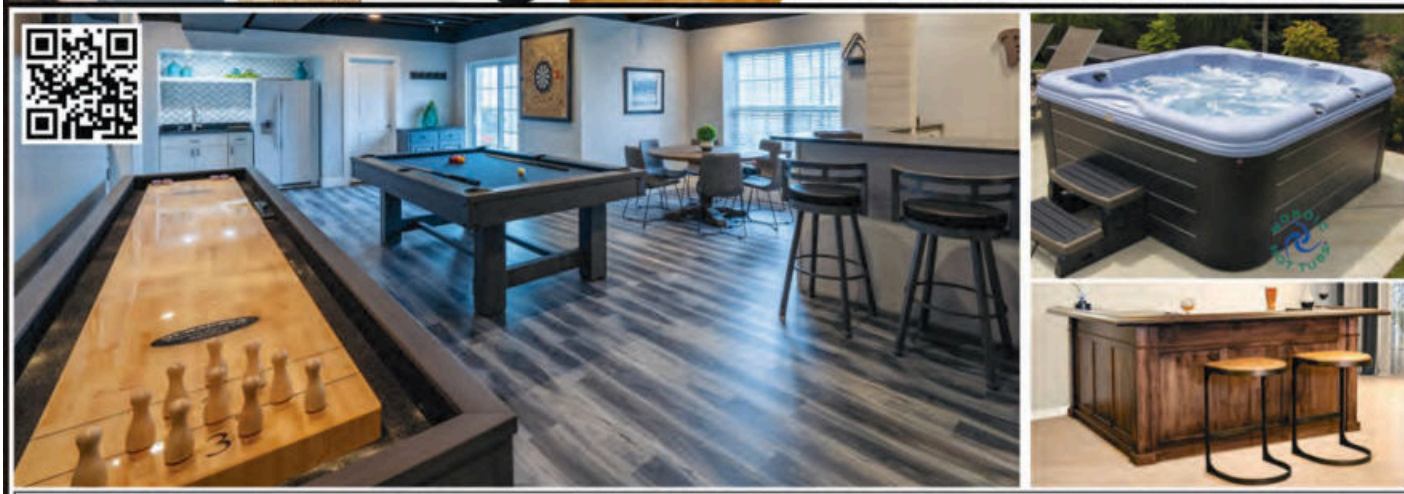
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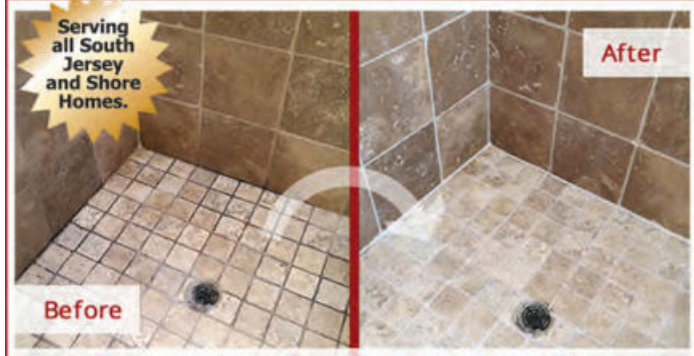
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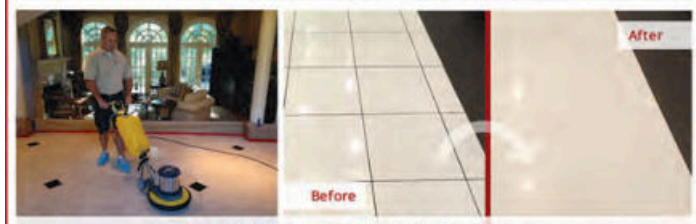
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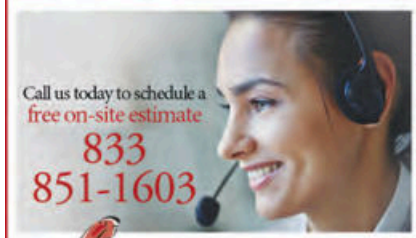

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201-581-0459
greatmoving.com

## Outdoor Furniture

**Barlow Tyrie Outdoor Furniture**
800-451-7467
btusastore.com

**Oskar Huber Furniture and Design**
609-494-8127
oskarhuber.com

**Sequoia Out Back**
215-918-DECK (3325)
866-650-DECK (3325)
sequoiaoutback.com

**Tropicraft by Pavillon du Soleil**
(610) 645-5400
tropicraftpatio.com

## Outdoor Structures/ Sheds/Pergolas/ Pool Houses/Pool Bars

**Barnco Woodworks LLC**
856-767-6887
856-241-7660
barncoamishbuilders.com

**Deck Remodelers**
973-729-2125
deckremodelers.com

**The Louvered Roof Company**
610-310-0429
thelouveredroofcompany.com

## Painting

**Rhino Shield**
717-638-4100
myrhinoshield.com

## Plumbing

**Eddie B Plumbing**
856-303-8150
eddiebplumbing.com

## Pool Renovation/ Repair

**Acryfin Coastal Coatings**
732-927-6224
acryfincoatings.com

**Swim-Mor Pools & Spas**
800-794-6667
swimmor.com

## Pool, Spa/Hot Tub Design & Installation

**Del Val Pools & Spas**
856-629-2999
delvalpoolsandspas.com

**Evergreen Pool Professionals**
609-214-8552
evergreenpros.com

**Pool Designs**
609-324-9900
poolinaday.com

**Swim-Mor Pools & Spas**
800-794-6667
swimmor.com

**Ted's Pools**
610-359-1301
tedspools.net

## Siding/Roofing/ Gutters

**All Perfections Construction**
201-636-7610
allperfectionsconstruction.com

**Dave Adams Roofing & Solar**
609-889-5000
daveadamsroofing.com

**East Coast Roofing, Siding & Windows**
609-646-1444
eastcoastroofing.com

**Emmons Roofing**
856-556-6029
emmonsroofing.com

**Expert Roofing**
833-329-0912
expertroofingcompany.com

**Global Home Improvement**
866-735-1121
globalhomeinc.com

**Grand View Roofing & Exteriors**
856-305-9883
gvexteriors.com

**Hynes Construction**
(610) 896-6388
hynesconstruction.com

**Paramount Home Solutions**
856-602-6600
paramounths.com

**Preferred Home Improvement**
215-264-9989
preferredhomeimprovements.net

**Seashore Construction Corp**
800-326-5211
seashoreconstruction.net

## Shower Enclosures/ Frameless Doors

**Glass Castle**
609-531-0303
908-751-4481
908-428-4244
glasscastle.com

## Stair and Wheelchair Lifts/Ramps

**Abby Lifts**
888-845-5438
info@abbylifts.com

## Stone Veneer

**Riverside Supply Company**
732-257-3434
rsc-nj.com

## Trash Bin Cleaning

**Shore Cans**
609-365-7733
shorecans.com

## Water Leak Detection

**AquaHalt by Water Automation**
732-631-3225
aquahalt.com

## Windows/Doors

**Global Home Improvement**
866-735-1121
globalhomeinc.com

**Window World of Atlantic City**
609-484-8088
windowworldac.com

## Window Tinting/ Film

**Doyle Window Tinting**
215-657-1000
doylewindowtinting.com

**Jersey Shore Window Tinting**
800-985-8468
jerseyshorewindowtinting.com

**South Jersey Window Tinting**
856-840-0900
southjerseywindowtinting.com

## Window Treatments

**Blind Builders, Inc.**
215-322-5855
blindbuilders.com

**Blinds Shade & Shutter Factory**
215-398-6886
blindsshadeandshutterfactory.com

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