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Volume 22, Issue 3

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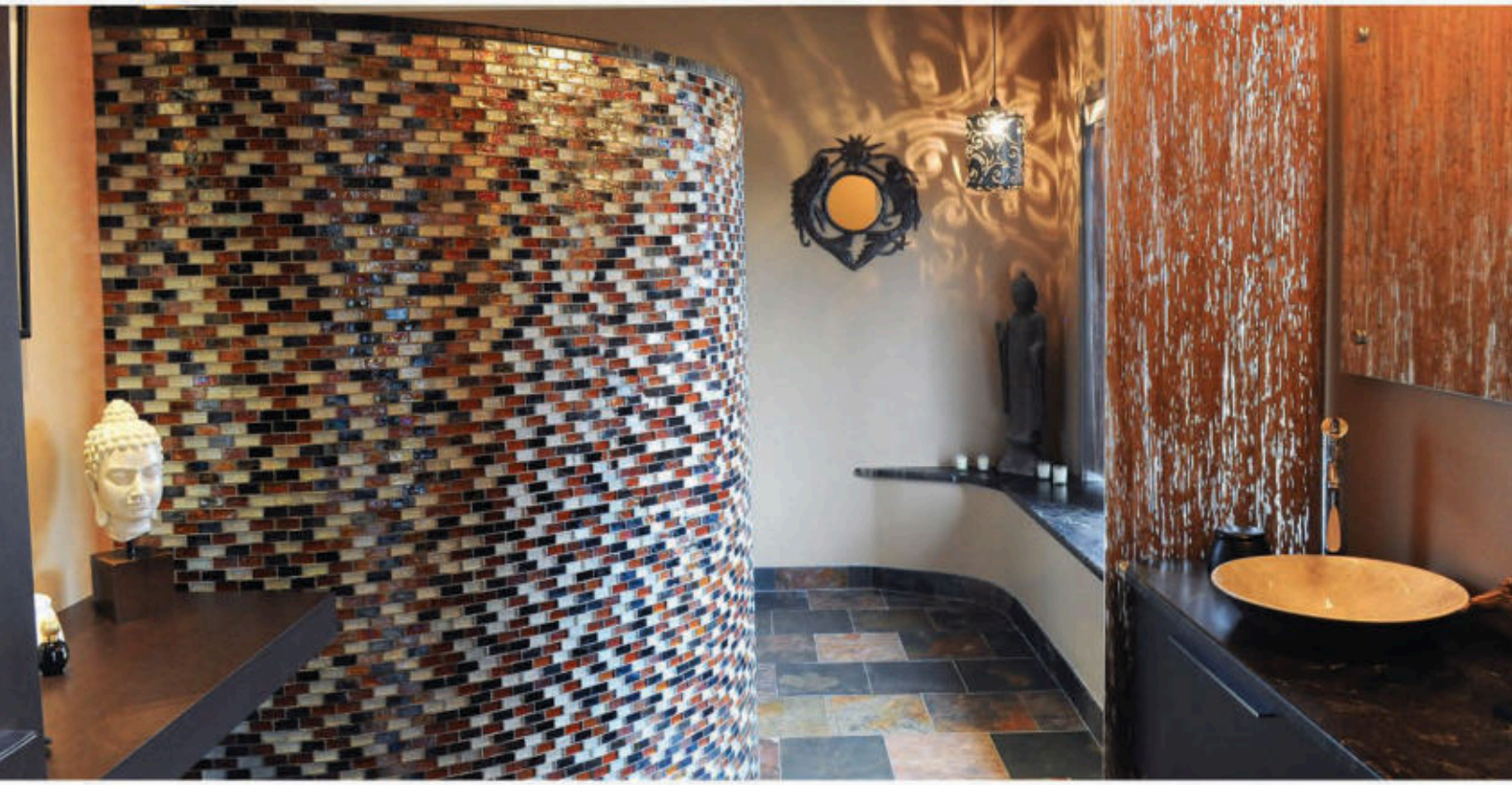
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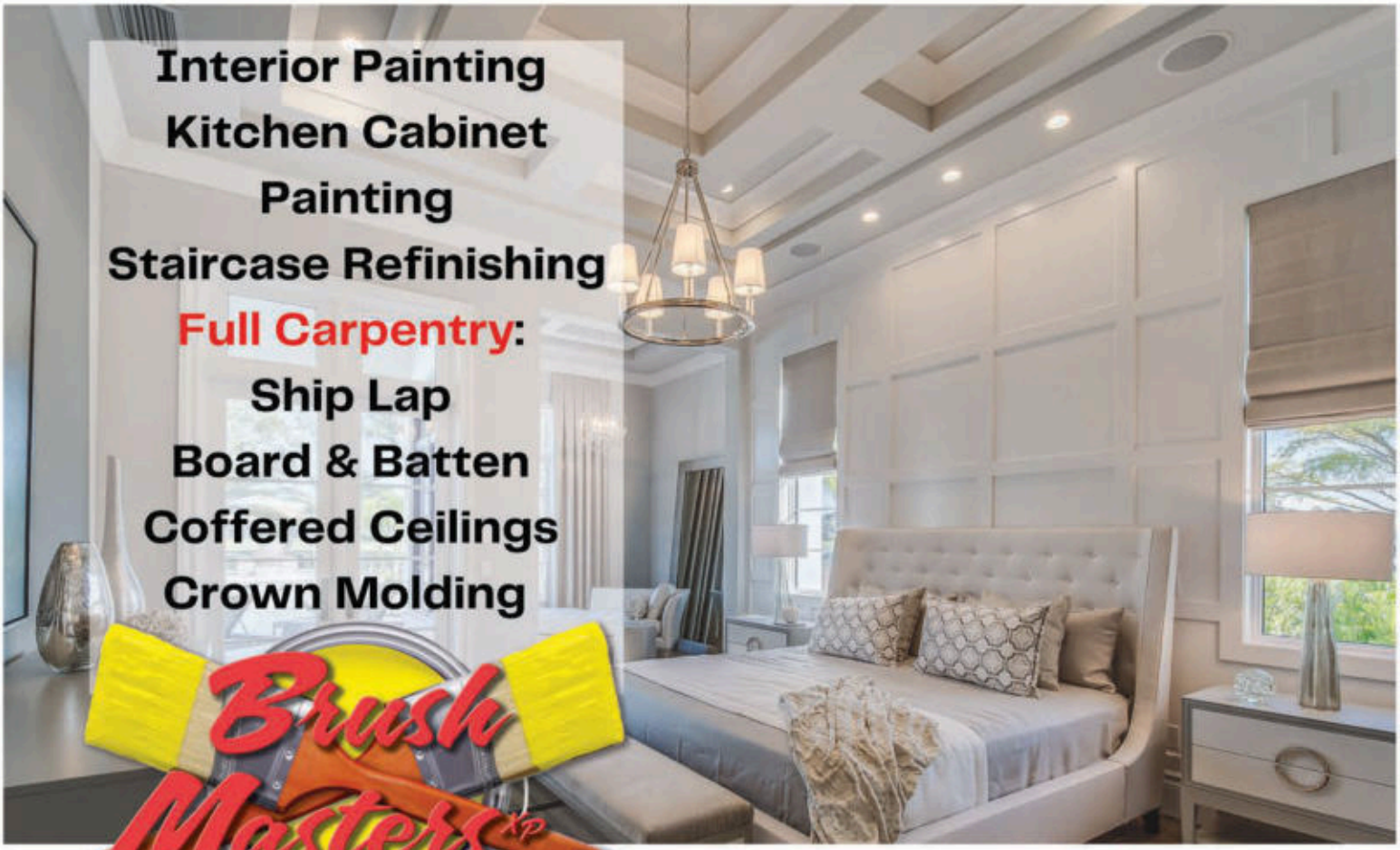
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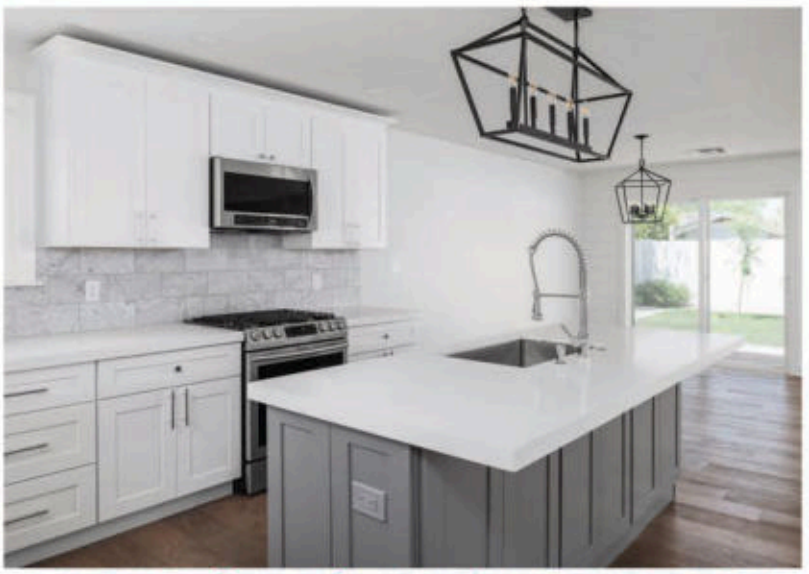
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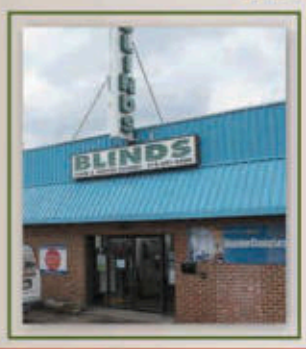
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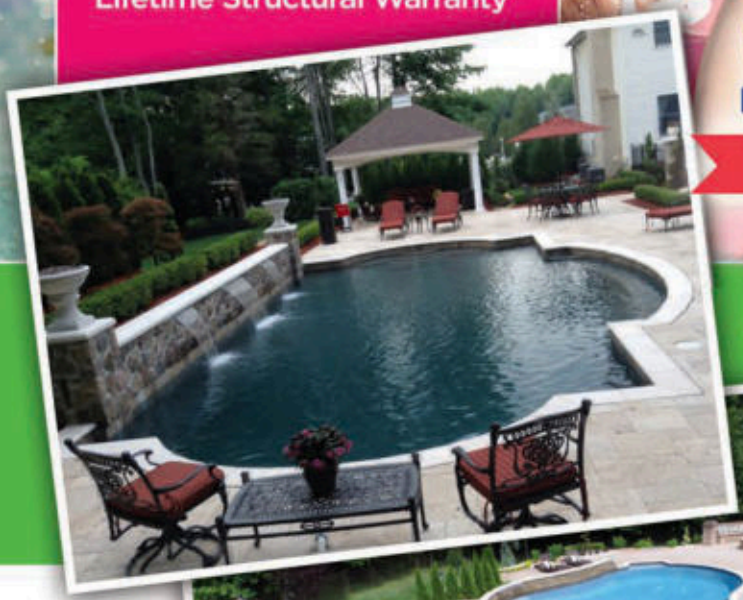
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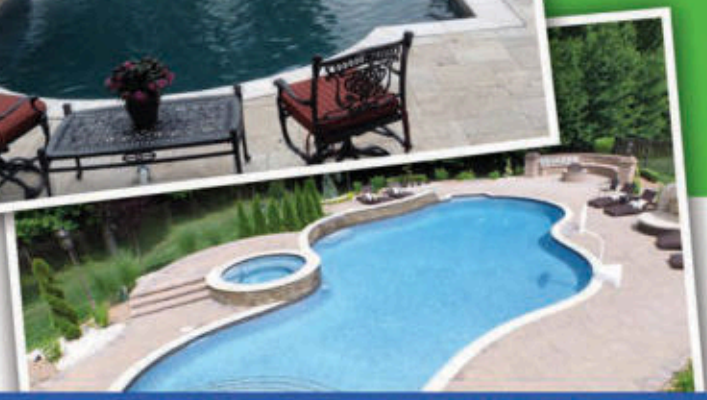
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contents

12 Home Safe Home
With more people choosing to age in place at their longtime homes or in an in-law suite, there are more options for doing so safely and comfortably

17 Ask the Expert
Angela Desch, Coldwell Banker

21 Ask the Expert
Coast Tile & Marble Supply

24 New for 2022
Industry veterans identify emerging trends in kitchen and bath design

27 A Place to Relax
Gehman Design Remodeling offers tips on transforming your master bath into a spa-like retreat

29 Best of *House & Home* Showcase Special Advertising Section

36 A Paradise Puzzle
Putting together the pieces of your outdoor living space

42 Best of *House & Home* Spotlights
A closer look at this year's winners and what sets them apart

46 Great Estates: Seaside Park

49 Generating Peace of Mind
Colonial Generators helps homeowners and businesses eliminate the stress, inconvenience and cost associated with losing power

50 Smarter Than Your Average Home
Manufacturers are responding to the demand for automation around the home with innovative products that make life easier

53 Premier Partnership
Global Home Improvement is pairing up with Infinity Windows and Doors from Marvin to bring their best products to your home

54 Shore Resource Directory

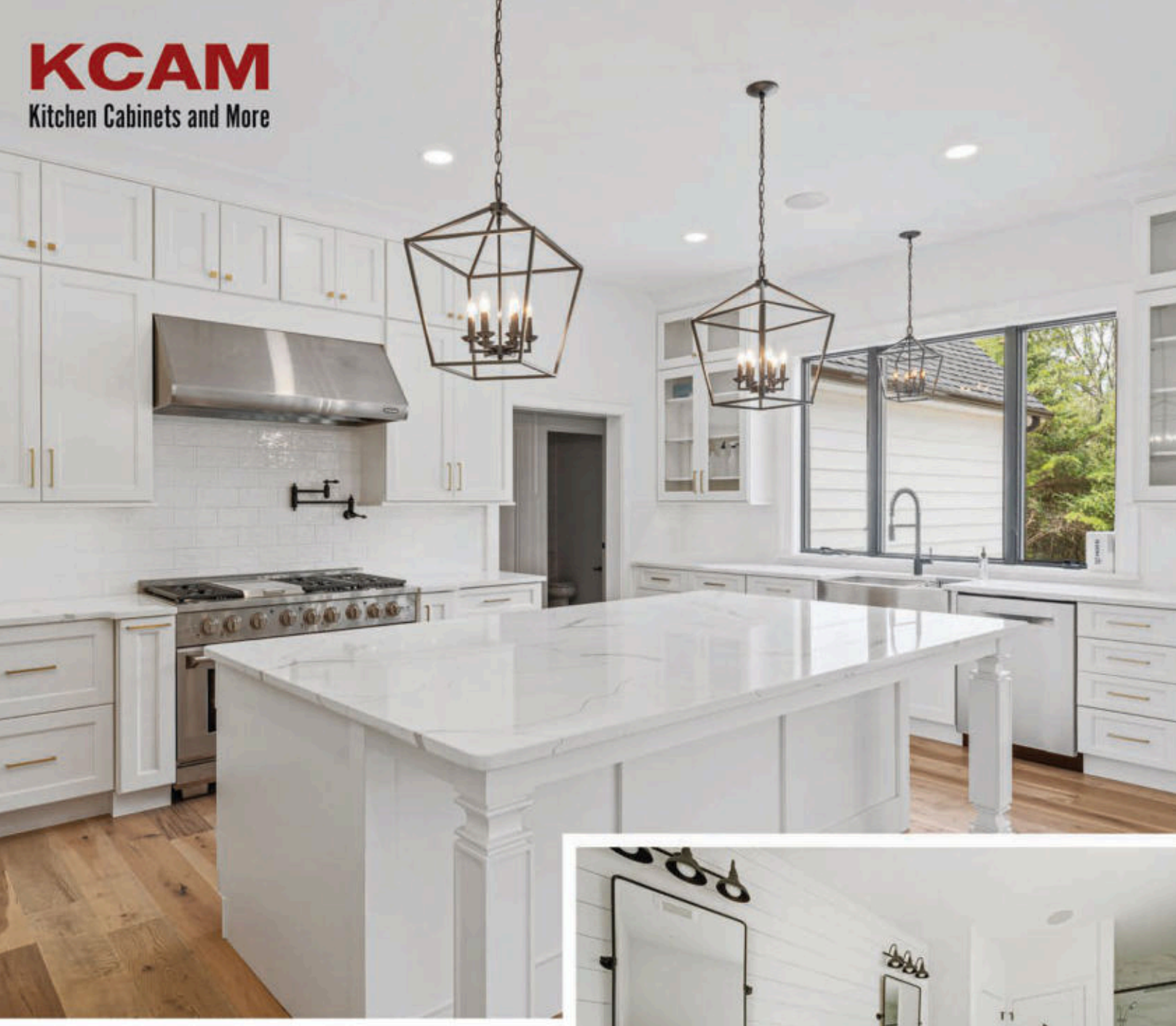


On the cover:
This family-friendly home in Seaside Park features a mix of tasteful coastal touches and a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor living. Turn to page 46 for a pictorial tour.
Cover image courtesy of Monetti Custom Homes, LLC and Stephen Govel Photography



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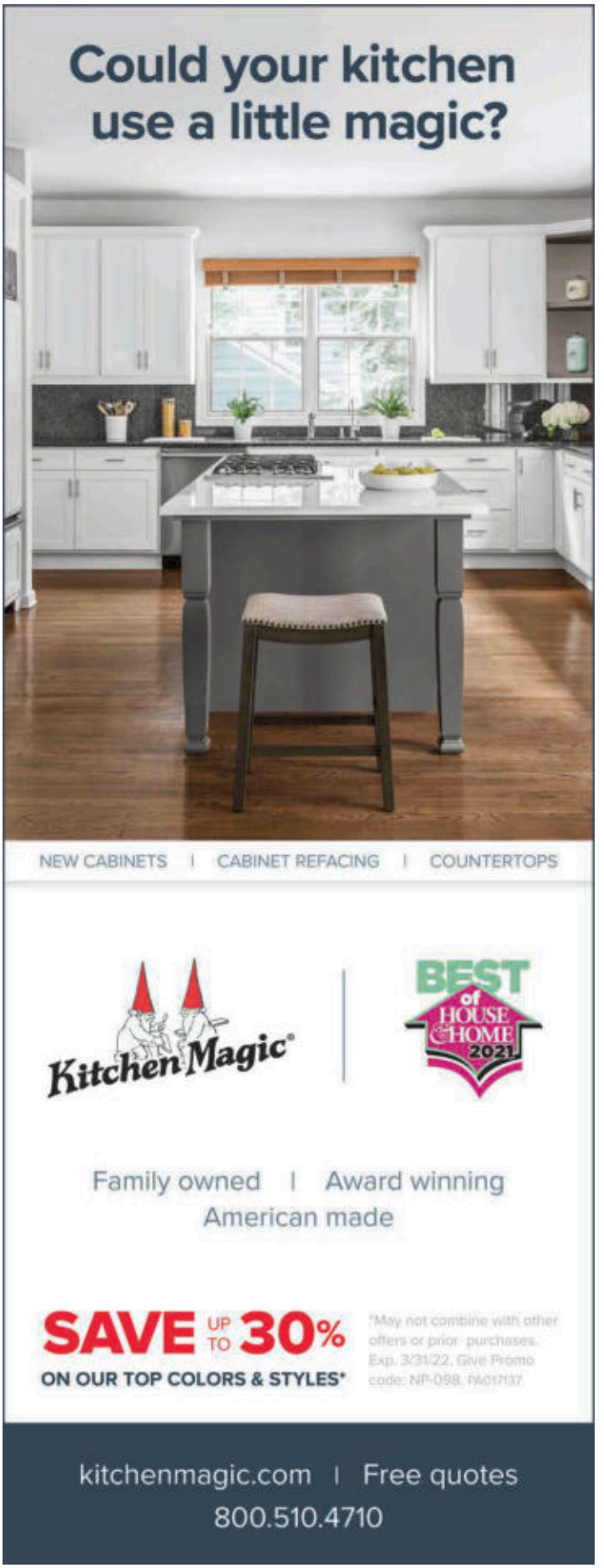
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HOME SAFE HOME

BY MADELEINE MACCAR

With more and more people choosing to age in place at their longtime homes or in a dedicated in-law suite at an adult child's home, there are more and more options for doing so safely and comfortably.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, baby boomers will all be 65 years or older by 2030. And while 65 isn't as old as it used to be, the generation's elder members have already retired and are considering where they want to spend their golden years—and it's never too early to start thinking ahead for those who aren't quite there yet. Retirement homes and assisted care facilities are increasingly popular options that offer independence, a sense of community and the comfort of professional care while others hire an in-home caregiver, but those options aren't for everyone.

Many wish to assert their independence by growing older in the homes they've filled with a lifetime of memories; others prefer moving in with family. A familiar home retrofit with safety features is an attractive and accessible option, just as it's becoming more common for multigenerational households to rely on converting or adding a dedicated "in-law suite" to accommodate aging loved ones' needs while offering the peace of mind that comes with being close by in the event of an emergency.

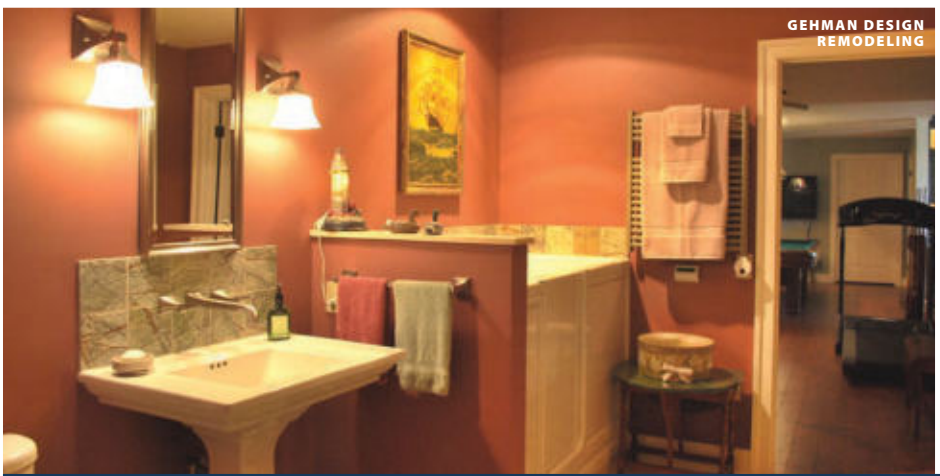
And there will be emergencies, though external hazards can be minimized by consulting experienced professionals.



GEHMAN DESIGN REMODELING

"One of the most common mishaps is falling, so you need to really look at the space and eliminate those risk factors," notes Dennis Gehman of Gehman Design Remodeling.

Whether you're planning to age in place, you're the caretaker providing a living area to keep elderly loved ones nearby or you're just now starting to explore your options, how you proceed depends on personal preferences, influencing factors and individual situations. But one thing remains the same: Safety always comes first.



GEHMAN DESIGN REMODELING

A Safer, Comfortable Space

Taking the proper precautions begins with minimizing the potential for falling and tripping.

"The most common room in the house for falls is the bathroom. People are getting up and off the toilet and might be off-balance, they're stepping up over the side of a bathtub to get in and out, and then you have wet feet, and so there's slippery surfaces to watch out for," Gehman explains. "Adequate lighting helps since our eyes don't see as great as we get older, and you'll want to identify tripping hazards, such as area rugs on hardwood floors."

A daily tripping hazard are both indoor and outdoor steps. But installing a residential elevator can be a surprisingly easy potential solution, according to Todd Trovarello of Personal Elevator. He notes that it's often to clients' pleasant surprise to learn that an elevator only needs five square feet of interior or exterior space and tends to be more affordable than they anticipate.

Trovarello has specialized in installing and retrofitting home elevators for three decades, and he's noticed a significant uptick—he used to annually average six or seven retrofits a year and says it's now up to nearly 30—over the past two years of the pandemic.

With area real estate prices soaring and the lack of available properties, Trovarello has seen how reluctant older homeowners are to move, even into an adult child's home with dedicated space and amenities. It has contributed to a surge in outfitting a family home with safety features specifically designed for the elderly.

Of course, people who age in place want to be surrounded by the cozy familiarity of the homes they love and those moving into a suite created for them don't want to feel like they're relocating to a medical facility that's more coldly functional than warmly inviting.



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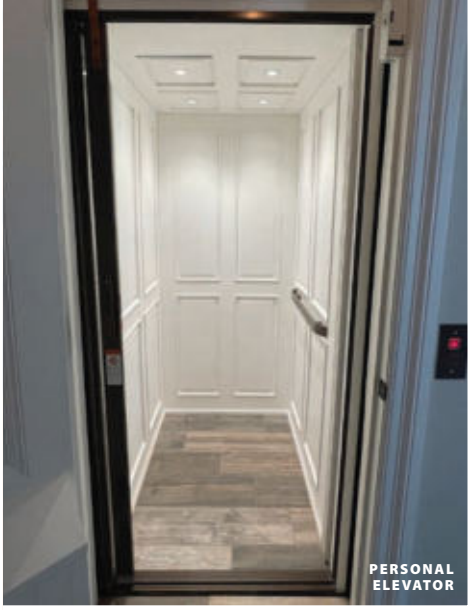
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Installing grab bars is a must no matter what, though they don't have to be permanent and, with modern manufacturers reliably combining safety and style, they certainly don't have to feel clinical.

Gehman emphasizes how crucial grab bars are in outfitting older loved ones' living spaces, although there are some options that can be easily removed. "People are often hesitant about grab bars because they don't want their house to look too institutional, like a hospital or a nursing home, but there are some good-quality grab bars out there nowadays that work with a suction cup if you have a smooth surface—they won't work as well on walls with smaller tiles or a painted surface," he explains. "That's a do-it-yourself project where you wouldn't have to pay a professional to install it."

Something as simple as switching out round door knobs for levers and handles can make a huge difference for people with arthritis. On a larger scale, wheelchairs and walkers need to be accommodated so an older loved one has enough room and stability to navigate corners and elevated areas. Replacing existing hinges with offset ones, which allows a door to swing clear of the inside frame to widen the entry space, is a common solution.

Technology has been a huge asset in creating accessible spaces. With the touch of a button, assistance of a remote or voice-activated commands, it's easier than ever for individuals with limited mobility to have complete control over the comfort of their homes. "Anything that's electrical or electronic these days, there's an app for it," Gehman points out. "Your thermostat, the WiFi, locks, security cameras: It can all be controlled from a smartphone."

Aging in Place at Home

Those spending their later years at home will benefit from being surrounded by a familiar, cozy environment, but their homes will need to undergo potentially extensive remodeling and retrofitting.

"An existing space can certainly be modified but it's oftentimes a whole lot easier if we're designing an addition, because we're keeping those [safety features] in mind right away," Gehman says.

The most important thing, Trovarello says, is ensuring that modifications make the entire house accessible.

"A lot of people are trying to stay in their homes—they're not trying to move or downsize," he observes. "When they want to age in place, my main goal is always to give them access to every floor."




GEHMAN DESIGN REMODELING

Creating an In-Law Suite

Whether you're converting an existing space or building an addition, designing an in-law suite means being cognizant of any potential restrictions.

"Every municipality has different zoning classifications. … We have found that they will permit an in-law suite, with a caveat about the kitchen," says Gehman. "If all you need is a bedroom, living room and bathroom space, it's not a big deal. But if they want a kitchen and it's not zoned for it, what determines that it's a kitchen is a built-in cooking surface."

There's also the additional demands on a home's plumbing to consider.

"Sometimes we run into issues if they do not have a public sewer because on-lot septic systems are sized for the number of bedrooms in the house," Gehman adds. "And so by adding another bedroom, sometimes that means you'll have to address your sewer capacity."

You'll also want to consider privacy measures like separate entrances—with ramps, a gradient sidewalk or even lifts rather than steps.

Additional Advice

To ensure that you're creating a space with current and future needs in mind, Gehman advises seeking input from a physical or occupational therapist during the construction or modification period, especially one who knows an individual's specific limitations.

No matter the approach you take, the upfront cost can be daunting, for sure. But, as Gehman points out, that's a one-time upfront payment, versus the ongoing costs of relocating to a retirement community.

He does caution that, no matter the approach you take, prepare for delays, especially with the ongoing material shortage creating unusual snags in the process.

"It's always going to take longer than you think," he notes.

Whether you're looking to age in place or break ground on an in-law suite, Trovarello emphasizes the importance of working with an experienced professional who's just as invested in the occupants' safety and comfort as you are.

"We've done elevators to accommodate people's parents, handicapped people and even disabled children and aging animals," he says. "I just have a passion for helping people and helping them get around their homes as they age." H&H

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by Madeleine Maccar

ANGELA DESCH FOUND HERSELF JOBLESS IN THE WAKE OF SEPT. 11, after she and her husband had just faced a lackluster home-buying experience with an inexperienced realtor. The two closely occurring events inspired her to try real estate. "I thought I'd be good at it," she recalls. "As a good salesperson with great customer service, I liked the idea of helping people."

Two decades later, she's the broker sales manager at Coldwell Banker Argus Real Estate, an award-winning realtor, a property matchmaker and a well-regarded expert in luxury Shore properties. She's had a hand in more than 3,000 property transactions, placing her among the top 1% of U.S. realtors.

But what really sets Desch apart is her authenticity and love for the region she calls home: "People relate to me because I'm experienced and genuine. When you sell what you love, people get excited with you."

House & Home recently chatted with the frequent Circle of Excellence winner and Atlantic City & County Board of Realtors president about COVID's impact, professional relationships and what makes a good realtor.


Angela Desch

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN LUXURY COASTAL REAL ESTATE?

Experience and knowledge. Confidentiality and sensitivity. Being a great negotiator and problem-solver. Knowing how to read people and earning their trust. You have to understand clients' family dynamics and work with their financial advisors, accountants and attorneys; if they're famous, you could be working with their managers. You have to be a good listener to see the whole picture.

HOW ARE SECOND HOMES DIFFERENT FROM PRIMARY HOMES?

With a primary home, it's about schools, how the family will grow, why they're moving. For secondary or luxury homes, it's why are they buying, how will they use it? Is it something they'll rent out? Are they a blended or multigenerational family? Who's going to be there, what do they need? Do they want something close to the beach, or something more affordable?

HOW HAS COVID CHANGED THINGS? WHAT WAS ITS IMPACT ON SHORE REAL ESTATE?

It was a change in lifestyle, including a lack of travel. Some people pooled that money to buy a Shore home: They realized we only live once and they want to walk on the beach at lunchtime now that they can work from home. With the primary market, people were putting holds on their loans and getting forbearance. We thought there would be a huge foreclosure rate but we're actually seeing banks work with people. It's interesting how COVID wound up helping everyone be a little more sensitive.

With the demand and lack of supply, it's been frustrating. [Buyers] held so much power for so long that they think they're overpaying when prices were depressed prior to COVID—they're not overpaying, prices are catching up. Yes, they're removing their contingencies, home inspection, mortgage contingency, or selling another property first; however, when their agent's looking out for them, it helps. That's where relationships and experience come in.

WHY ARE RELATIONSHIPS SO IMPORTANT?

The big one is trust. When you're showing any property, knowing the other agent and having a relationship of respect with them means a better experience for your client. Then you have to consider things like zoning and tax assessments. … When you have good relationships with all kinds of people—city officials, lenders, title companies, home inspectors, exterminators—it helps. I've been lucky enough to share what I've learned. … It's important to me that new agents, or even established agents, have a resource for asking questions. Most of the time, I know the answer. Sometimes I don't—but I know how to get it!

With clients, it's an intimate relationship: It can be a bit of a roller coaster with the highs and lows. You know what's happening in their lives, so there's extreme confidentiality and a high level of respect.

HOW DOES YOUR LOVE FOR AND FAMILIARITY WITH THE SHORE BENEFIT YOUR CLIENTS?

When you're selling what you love, people are drawn to that. I'm in love with Margate, Ventnor, Longport, Atlantic City—they have so much to offer! What I've given my children by having them grow up here … it's wonderful living at the Shore. It's a phenomenal place to live and raise a family.



WHAT SHOULD PEOPLE LOOK FOR IN A REALTOR?

Someone with your best interests at heart, who's going to tell you the good, the bad and the ugly, who's going to fight for you like they'd fight for their family. Hire someone who is professional and tenacious and asks the right questions. Hire a realtor who knows how you can keep the most money in your pocket when you buy and sell, who can get you the best price either way. Realtors sometimes have a bad reputation and I am here to prove that we are not all like that. H&H

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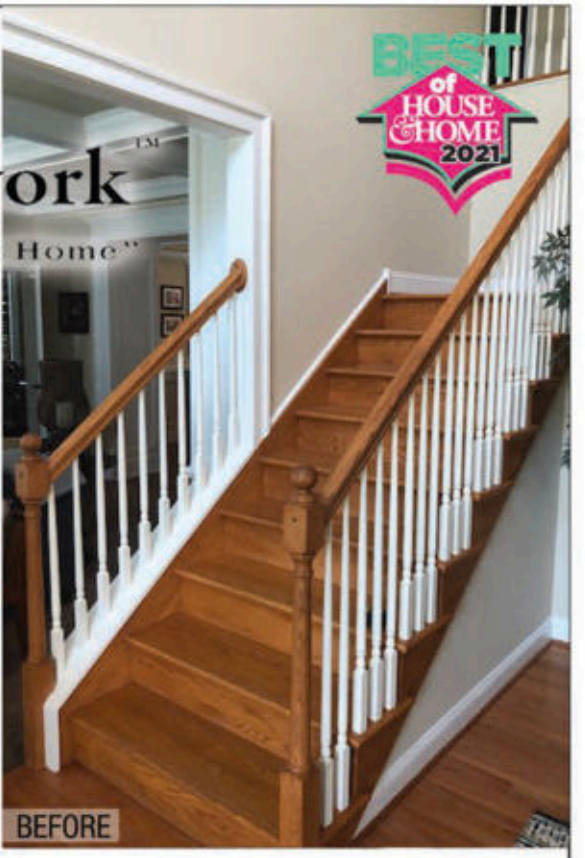
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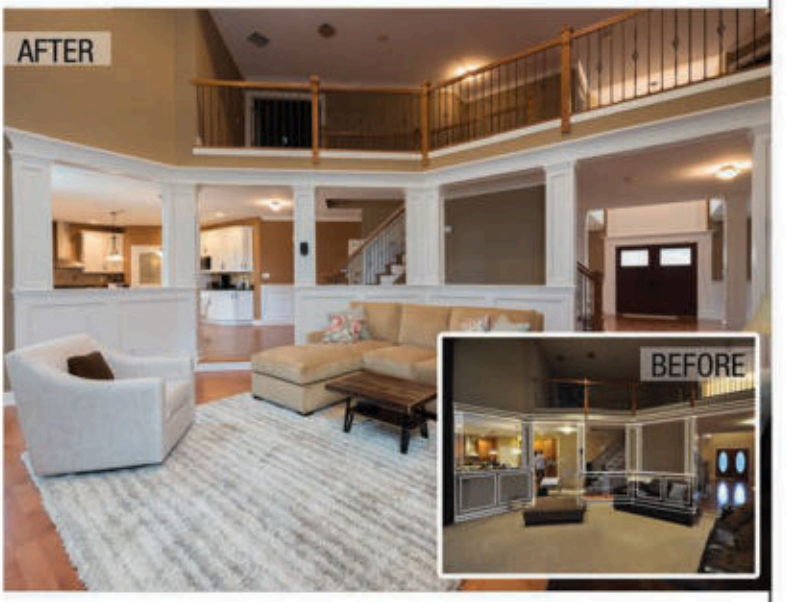
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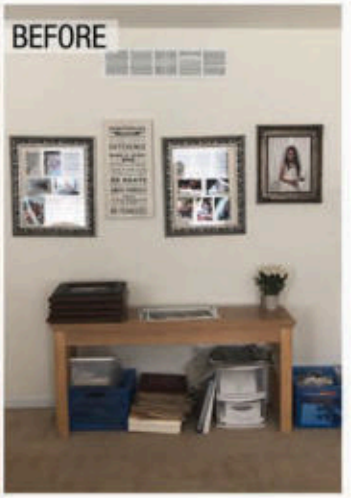
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ask the expert by Matt Cosentino

Coast Tile & Marble Supply

DESIGNING A KITCHEN OR BATHROOM, REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE HOME REMODELING SHOWS ON TELEVISION WOULD SUGGEST, CAN BE A TRICKY PROPOSITION. More and more homeowners these days desire a focal point in the space, something that will immediately draw everyone's eye as soon as they walk into the room. But with so many different material options available, as well as multiple elements to the renovation, it is easy to end up with a project where the backsplash clashes with the countertops or the flooring, creating a sloppy look.

That's where the experts at Coast Tile & Marble Supply can step in and help turn a lackluster remodel into a stunning one. A third-generation family company in business since the 1960s, its team specializes in flooring as well as accent pieces, working with everything from tile and hardwood to natural stone and marble.

"The idea is to have someone walk into the room and have their eyes catch something interesting like a unique pattern or elegant mosaic, and then gaze at the rest and see that the whole concept works so well together," says Mike Eisele, head of design. "You do need the showstopper, and we help our customers pick that first."

We spoke with Eisele to learn more about accents and how Coast Tile & Marble Supply can guide homeowners down the right path.



Mike Eisele, Head of Design

ARE A LOT OF CUSTOMERS LOOKING FOR A FOCAL POINT IN THE KITCHEN OR BATHROOM WHEN THEY DECIDE TO REMODEL THOSE ROOMS?

Absolutely. Nowadays with Pinterest and Instagram, a lot of people will come in and ask for something exotic or exciting in a certain area, and they look to us to help them decide where to put it. Once we've established what the focal point is going to be, they want us to help them find the right pieces to complete the whole aesthetic feel to the room. We do see them wanting to pick the accent first, so that's our starting point and then we help them get to the finish line.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE POPULAR CHOICES FOR A FOCAL POINT IN A KITCHEN?

For the longest time people were doing subway tile with a 3-inch accent band that would run across the whole backsplash. Now, it's typically a choice between three different options. If you have a range hood, something that has a little more space to it, you can do a 2 foot-by-2 foot boxed out area right behind the stove, where we would draw the attention as a focal point. If not that, then we do the full range, which is one of my personal favorites. You go from inside the range all the way up to the ceiling and that really creates a nice look. Finally, if you want to go really bold you can do the entire backsplash in something more exotic, and then we would have to be very careful in managing their countertop, cabinet and flooring selections.

HOW ABOUT IN A BATHROOM?

A bathroom is the same kind of idea. It was an accent band for the longest time and it has transitioned over to the back wall of the shower or the wall behind the vanity. There are a couple different points in a bathroom that you can choose as your accent areas, and then you work around those to add complementing features that are a little more subtle for the rest of the bathroom.

ARE HOMEOWNERS GETTING A LITTLE MORE ADVENTUROUS IN TERMS OF THE COLORS THEY'RE CHOOSING?

Definitely. We're seeing people move out of the traditional whites and grays and they're starting to introduce more vibrant colors. Serving the Shore area, we've always had the beachy blues as a popular color, but it's been exciting to see people do more greens and vibrant oranges and different colors that really pop. People are definitely getting out of their comfort zone.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON MISTAKES YOU CAN HELP CUSTOMERS AVOID?

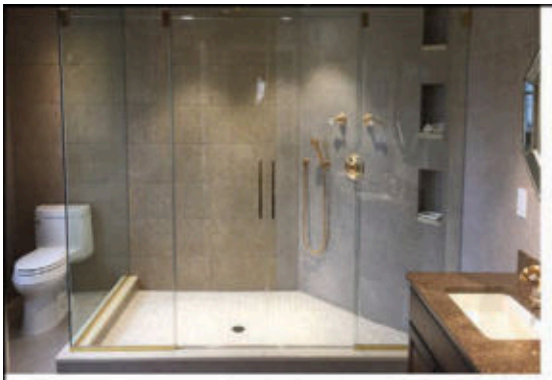


A lot of times people will come into our showroom and fall in love with all of these different accent pieces, but when you put them together, it can be a little bit much. That's where we try to guide them to do it in an elegant way; to not over design the area. That is one of the things that makes me the most proud of our team. We care about making sure you get what you want, but we want to make sure you're going to love it in the end, too. We don't just want to push product out the door, we want to do it in a way that is going to be beautiful, and as our saying goes, "make your decorating dreams come true."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE THE THIRD GENERATION OF A FAMILY BUSINESS THAT WAS FOUNDED BY YOUR GRANDFATHER?

My brother and I are fourth generation in the industry and third generation here at Coast Tile. We've seen it all and we're constantly looking to see how we can improve and make the design process and the customers' experience even better. That was always my grandfather's goal, my father's and uncles' goal, and now that is our goal. We're so blessed to even have the opportunity to be in business for so long, and to carry it on has also been a blessing. H&H

Interior Designer: Jen Buster Interiors; Builder: Georgetti Construction; Photographer: Ben Hale





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H&H TRENDS

New for 2022

Edited by
Amy Kodrich



Industry veterans identify emerging trends in kitchen and bath design.

Bold and Dramatic

"A new year means new trends and we are seeing the personality of many homeowners translate into their design styles. People are leaving safe and simple behind in 2021 and moving into a bolder, more dramatic 2022. The resurgence of deep color tones and more exotic patterns in 2022 is going to razzle and dazzle. People want that pop when they enter a room. They want to welcome people back into their homes with a wow factor. Whether it be a foyer accent wall, full backsplash showstopper or a flavorful bathroom accent wall, it is clear that people are trending toward elegant and exciting designs. Bottom line, in 2022, people are letting their personalities shine through their aesthetic visions."



Kyle E. Eisele
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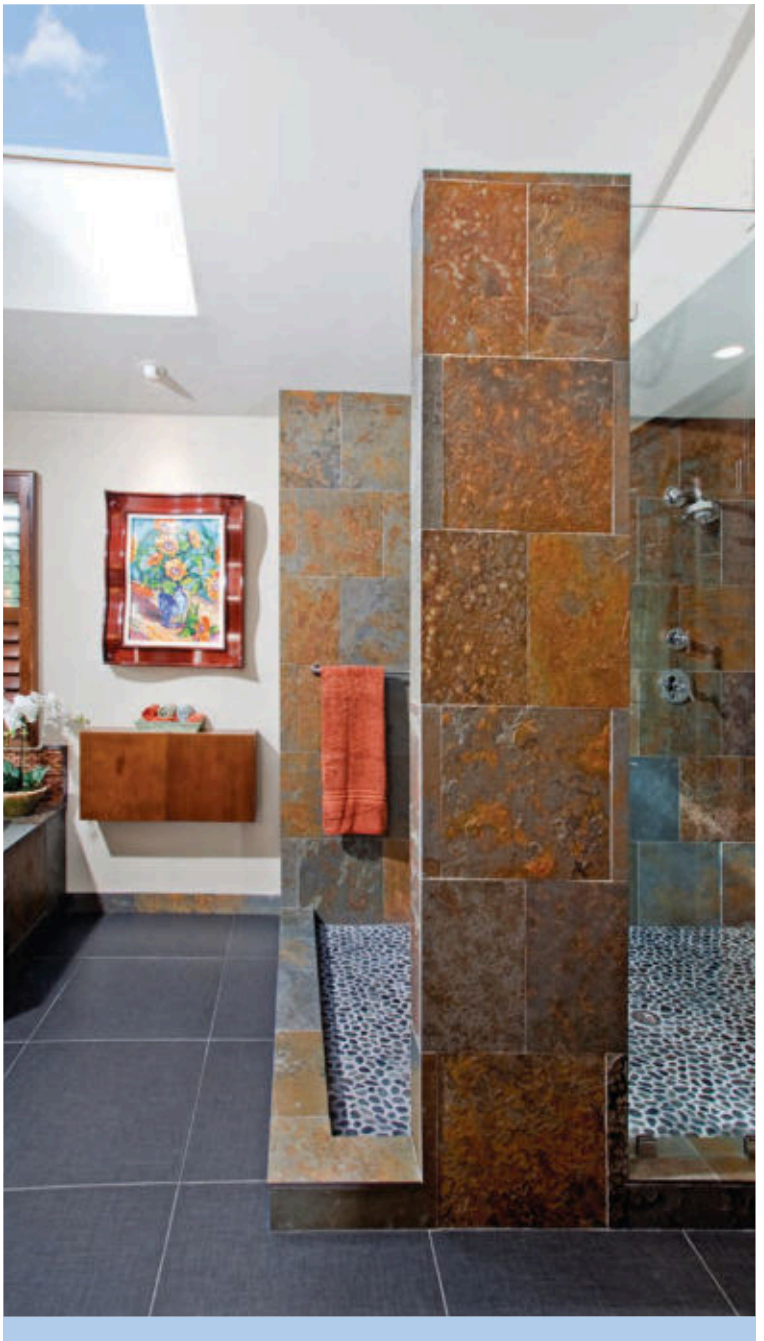
Natural Elements

"Looking ahead to emerging trends for the new year, eco-friendly materials and design considerations will champion 2022, as people are seeing the advantages of integrating energy-efficient products into their homes. Now, there's even more of a focus on sustainability and bringing the outside 'in.' With natural and engineered stone countertops serving as focal points, the trend is slated to manifest itself in color, accents and features. Reclaimed, recycled and ethically sourced materials, along with natural elements like plants and grasses, are gaining momentum thanks to a widespread sustainability movement crossing into the homebuying market. Time spent at home during the pandemic means there's a need to feel even more connected to nature to reduce stress and anxiety. … With this in mind, kitchen and bathroom features will be considered on both an aesthetic and ecological basis."

Sandra Phillips,
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"Many clients ask about new emerging trends for 2022. This question has different answers depending on an overall budget consideration, as well as intended length of time you expect to be in your home. Naturally, most everyone wants to include high-level design and function from any inspiration seen in magazine portfolios or kitchen and bath design websites. Without hesitation, I can tell you that more clients remove the builder's grade materials and upgrade to larger, walk-in, barrier-free, multifunction showers. Gone are the large builder's grade Jacuzzi tubs."

David Cerami, CKBR, owner
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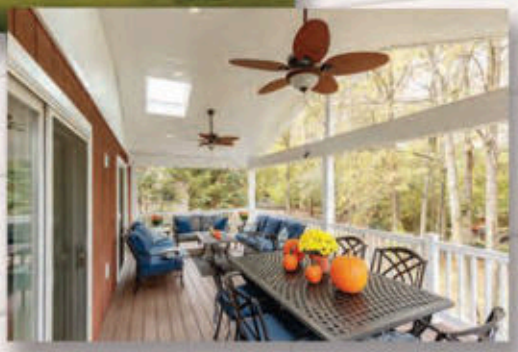




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A Place to Relax

Gehman Design Remodeling offers tips on transforming your master bath into a spa-like retreat.

by **Lindsey Getz**

With more people staying home than ever before, many are looking at renovations that will make their space more enjoyable. When it comes to bathrooms, particularly the master bath, homeowners are interested in creating a spa retreat where they can truly relax.

It's a trend that Dennis Gehman, MCR, of Gehman Design Remodeling, says he's seeing more and more. People might not be traveling as much—and may even be working from home—so they want to make their personal spaces into a safe, comfortable escape.

Of course, when partnering with a qualified vendor to complete any renovation project, homeowners have numerous options from which to choose. But when it comes to something as important as a place to relax—something we all need more than ever—you want to be sure that it's done right. No one wants any more hassles and headaches than they need, which is why choosing a design/build firm that can handle every aspect of the project—from design to construction—is essential.

House & Home spoke with Gehman about the ways homeowners can transform their bathroom into a spa-like retreat.

What are some of the most essential components of a luxury bathroom?

Some homeowners might be accustomed to traveling and visiting resorts where they'd have some of these spa amenities and now they're asking how they can have them at home. Along with the idea of a spa at home has come a shift back to large tubs— something that homeowners had been trending away from for a while. Previously, people might have said they didn't have time to relax in a bath, but now they're making the time. A soaking tub can be an excellent way to de-stress, and we're getting more requests for them.

Of course, large showers remain popular, too. A lot of homeowners want both options. Homeowners love the ability to have multiple spray features, including a regular showerhead and a handheld, as well as a rain shower. Those amenities help to make the shower feel like a spa experience, too.

Are there stress-relieving features to consider?

Some homeowners truly want to go the extra mile in creating that luxury spa experience with a steam shower. The warm, vaporous steam is good for the skin and the sinuses. Other homeowners prefer the idea of adding a sauna, which uses dry heat. A sauna may help to produce "a good sweat" and therefore flush toxins from their body. Proponents of this feature suggest it's another great way to release stress.

Gehman Design Remodeling

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What are other details that will make a difference in enjoying the space?

In terms of bathroom flooring, tile still reigns, but many homeowners are adding heated tile for a more luxuriant feel. The heated floors can be put on a wall timer so that by the time you step out of the shower or tub, the floor is sufficiently heated. Homeowners can even add towel warmers for that spa-like feel. Also, if you add steam features, no-fog mirrors are a must. Options include those that are insulated or use heat to prevent steam-up.

Homeowners may also want a lighted medicine cabinet. They have ones which open up and there are also mirrors and lights inside,



so you can create a whole tri-view mirror setup, almost like a dressing room. Some homeowners add Bluetooth speakers to their bathroom so they can connect to Spotify or another streaming service. In fact, Kohler makes a showerhead with built-in Bluetooth speakers.

Why should homeowners consider Gehman Design Remodeling to execute this type of project?

We have a proven track record and a long list of happy clients. We were recently awarded two Region 1 - Contractor of the Year (CotY) Awards from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, also known as NARI—one for a spa master bath, and another for an entire second-floor residential interior, including three bathrooms. In the end, choosing the right partner can be the difference between having a gorgeous space with all of the amenities where you can truly relax, versus a compromised space that suffers because it wasn't designed or built correctly in the first place.

After all, it does no good to invest significant time and money to create a sanctuary designed to help you unwind and de-stress, only to be left wondering: If only I could go back in time and do things differently. **H&H**

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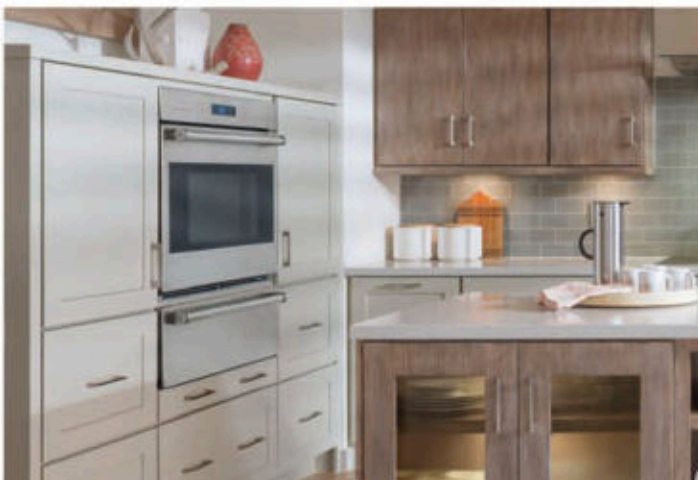
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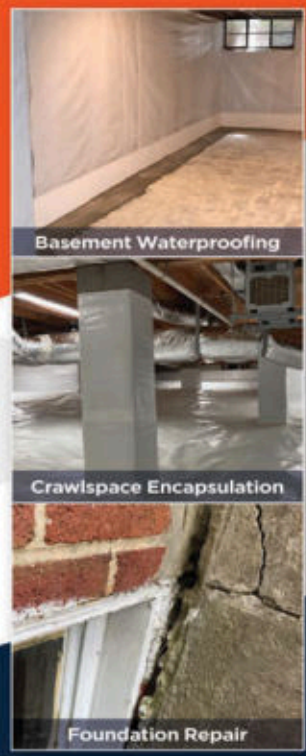


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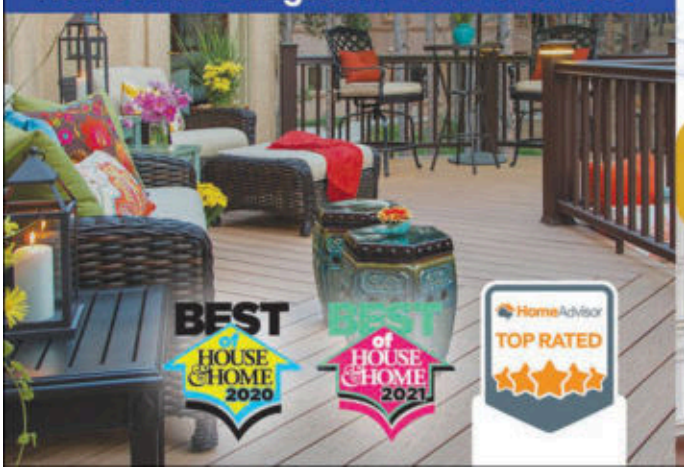
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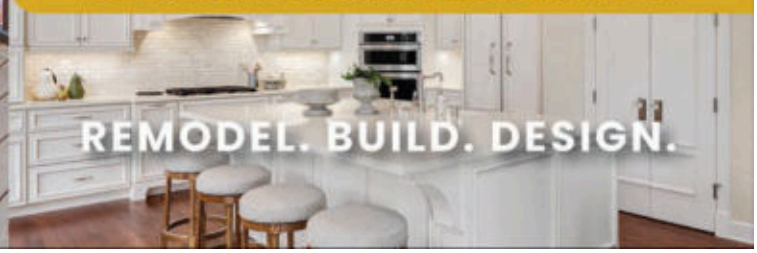


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Image courtesy of TLC (Tarleton & Family) Landscaping

A PARADISE PUZZLE

BY LIZ HUNTER

Putting together the pieces of your outdoor living space.

Paradise has never been as close to home as it has in the past couple of years. Homeowners have been opting for staycations and creating outdoor living spaces with all the features of a five-star resort. Professionals in the industry say there's no sign of this slowing down and urge people to make a plan now.

We spoke with a variety of professionals who offer a range of services in the outdoor living industry about what elements they may want on their master plan and how to figure out what's right for their lifestyle.

Preliminary Ideas

Any project's success relies on a solid foundation of understanding between the client and designer/builder. Amazing Decks puts a great emphasis on the planning stage. While some potential customers will ask for estimates over the phone or through email, it is important for the designers to personally visit the site and get to know the homeowners.

They will ask questions regarding the size of their family, how often they entertain, whether they plan to add a pool, etc. The company has often been called upon to fix mistakes by other companies that did not design a backyard space properly. Co-owner Bill Wilson says the space should not only work now, but in the future, should the homeowners want to add to the space or decide to sell the home.

"We're interviewing them just like they're interviewing us," Wilson says. "Our initial meeting is very easy-going. We get to know the client and find out how they're going to use the space. Then we're able to tie everything together and design something in the backyard that they're going to use. It doesn't have to be expensive; it just has to be designed right."



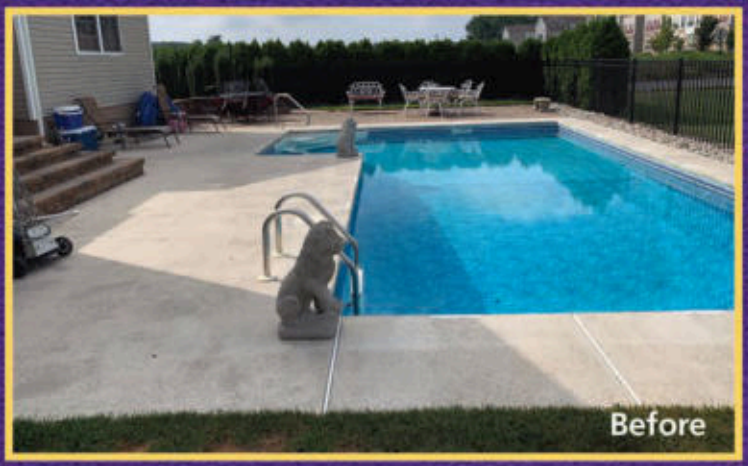
Image courtesy of Elite Landscaping

Michael Pasquarello, degreed landscape architect at Elite Landscaping, says homeowners should ask themselves: "Do they see the space being used just for their immediate household or to include extended family and friends? Which seasons are the spaces to be utilized?" This would ensure there's enough space for everyone and also signal if infrared heaters or fire features should be incorporated, he says.

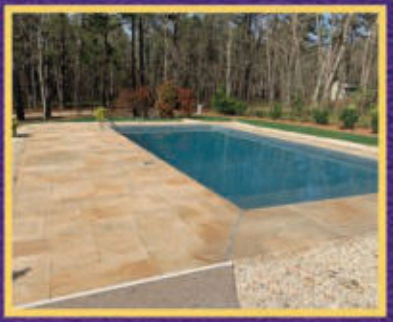
"Each project is different," says Michael Tarleton, owner of TLC Landscaping. "I take into account the size of the yard, where the sunlight hits. … We also listen to what people want because a backyard plan for a couple nearing retirement

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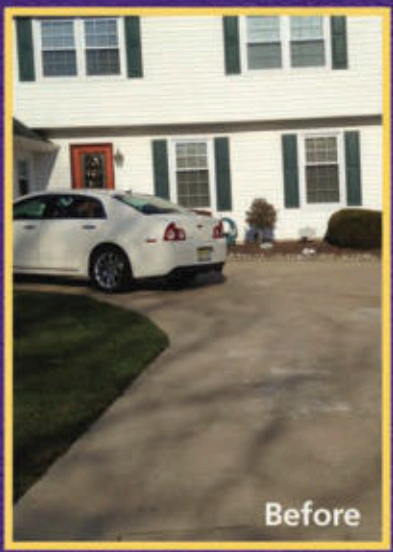
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would be different from a family with babies or teenagers."

Decks and Patios

The structure of a home may naturally lend itself to a deck if a back exit is raised off of ground level, but both a deck and patio can have a place in an outdoor design if desired.

"Our designs are unique," Wilson says. "We also integrate other materials, like paver patios or bluestone. Maybe the backyard doesn't just call for a deck; maybe it calls for a combination of the two. Even though we're a deck company, we have to be honest with the customer and tell them what will work best."

Joseph Kalnas, general manager of My Deck, says his company uses cutting-edge materials. "We use steel framing, helical pier footings, composite or PVC decking and custom aluminum railings. This gives homeowners the best build possible and allows us to build almost any design you can imagine," he says.

"Your deck area, more and more, is an extension of the house," says Omar Stoltzfus, director of sales and marketing at Deck Craft Plus. "It's a place to host parties, to hang out with family and friends, to grill on a nice day. In today's market, the only limit is your imagination."

Patios have their merits, as well. "A ground-level patio adds more privacy especially in fenced-in rear yard spaces," says Pasquarello. "Stone/paver patios can also be elevated but that does drive up installation costs exponentially."

If longevity is top of mind, Tarleton says stone will outlast any deck material. "Even Trex can warp or fade. Stone lasts pretty close to forever," he says.

If that's the route you go for your outdoor space, there are several materials to choose from, depending on the desired look and function.

"You can never go wrong with natural stone," Pasquarello says. "It's been around for millions of years and has a timeless appeal. The look of stone veneer on steps, walls and outdoor fireplaces adds a touch of elegance to patio spaces. Pennsylvania Bluestone is another geographically local stone that looks great for patio floors and step/wall caps."

Concrete is another option with lots of versatility, says Adam Myers, residential sales lead at Architectural Concrete Design. "Concrete is an incredibly durable, cost-effective and low-maintenance material, especially when compared to natural stone and pavers," he says. "One of the main strengths concrete has in comparison to other hardscaping materials is the fact that it is installed as a monolithic surface. Having a solid plane and a hard surface without gaps between individual pieces allows for water to be better controlled, and limits penetration. Once water penetrates through degraded polymeric sand, or chipped grout, it will expand, contract, and begin to move any individual pieces that are not bound together. All these properties show why concrete is the most popular selection out of all the hardscaping options to be used around pools. When working with areas that will always be wet, such as a pool deck, it's best to use a surface with a safe texture that can be pitched to control runoff and resist water penetration."

Concrete can take on many looks, Myers adds, with the application of stains and dyes, color hardeners or by coloring the concrete integrally. "When done correctly, these various techniques can allow for concrete to stand out as a show piece or incorporate surrounding colors and textures into the slab to complement existing stone, stucco or siding. … Stamped concrete can continue to look great after 20 years if maintained properly. Installation with reinforcement, strategic sawcut control joints and application of a sealer are a few ways ACD makes sure a new pour will continue to look good and stay structurally stable for years to come."

Before committing to any outdoor surface, Kalnas advises: "Always look for a licensed contractor specializing in building decks and/or patios. Research their ranking level through manufacturers and then I would take a trip and visit their showroom."

Fencing

Although a fence can seem like a finishing touch



on an outdoor space once the overall living area is complete, Lou LoPorto, product specialist at Progressive Fence and Rail, says a fence should be discussed at the beginning of a project.

"There are so many ways people can enclose their backyard paradise and so many aspects to consider," he says. "If they plan on putting in a pool, there are specific fence regulations to follow. If they have a dog, the gate should swing a certain direction to prevent the dog from jumping onto it and pushing it open."

A fence immediately makes people feel safer, says LoPorto. "It keeps other people and animals out, and keeps your pets and kids in. It makes you feel good about sending them outside to play."

While a fence also defines your property limit, it can dispel any awkwardness with neighbors. "One main thing we've heard from people since they've been home so much is how they feel like their neighbors are always around. It's awkward because you can be outside barbecuing and you feel obligated to invite them over. But it can be equally as awkward putting in a complete privacy fence and risk offending them," LoPorto says.

Fortunately, he has solutions for every scenario. "We're going to ask you about your relationship with the neighbors and what your needs are. We can do anywhere from picket fencing to full privacy, or semi-private where the top one or two feet of fence is decorative and can still allow conversation with the neighbors," he says. "Some people have woods around them and want to be able to enjoy that view, so we can suggest an aluminum fence that doesn't obstruct the view but still gives security. We tailor everything to your situation."

Fun Features

Professionals say various features will make the space more useful and enjoyable.

LoPorto recommends solar caps on fence posts, as well as a retractable awning over a deck or patio to provide instant protection from rain or sun.

Stoltzfus says, "If you're looking for shade, a pergola with a canopy is a good option. If you want protection from the rain, then you should get a roof. If you want protection from the bugs, you should get a screened-in porch, which can even be an all-season room with heaters to enjoy the cool spring and fall days."

These days, almost no outdoor space is complete without a kitchen and fire pit/fireplace. "Every project I'm doing has one of these," says Tarleton. "An outdoor kitchen gives the grill a home and gives the host a bigger serving area. … For fireplaces or fire pits, you have to think about size, safety and budget and what you're looking for."

In the end, Tarleton says homeowners should be open to change in their plan. "You're not stuck to what's on the paper. The person you hire does this for a living and may make suggestions on what might work better. Generally they are leading you in the right direction." H&H

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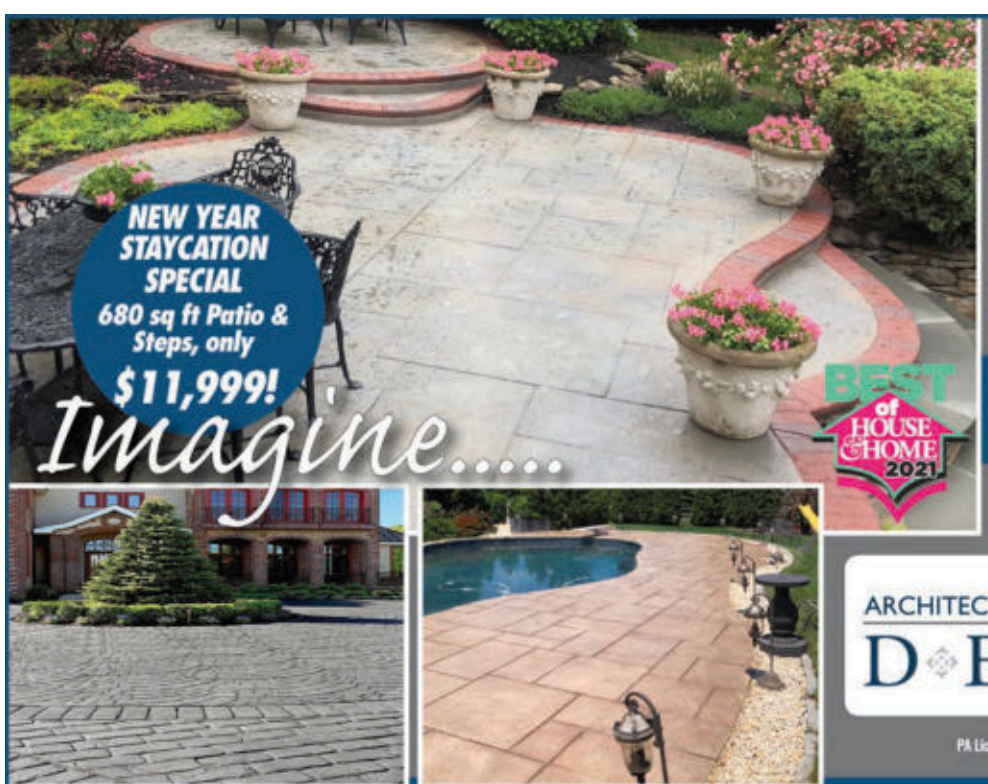
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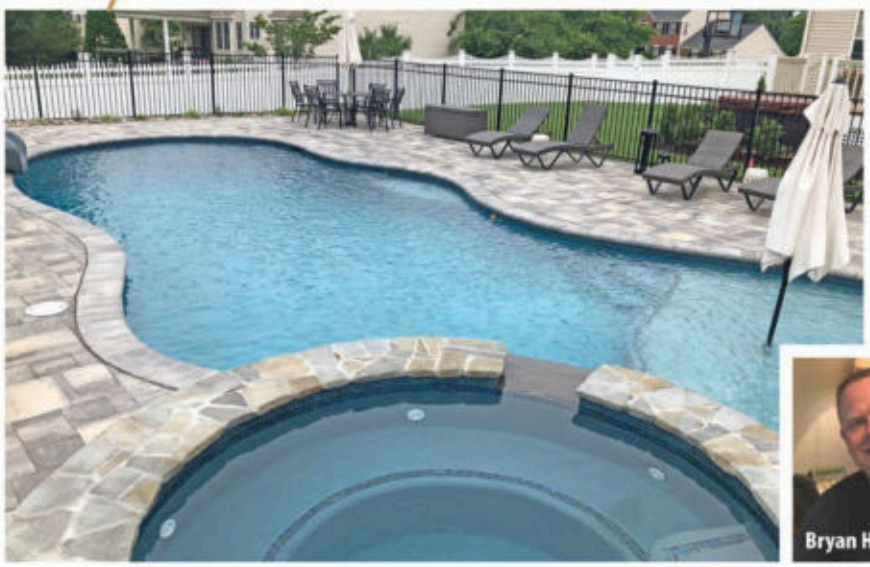
What keeps you motivated every day to do the work that you do?
What we do is fun! There are always cool new things being developed and we are like big kids in a candy store.

What do you find most rewarding about this industry?
Smiles. When we complete a project and give our clients a review of their home's new technology and how easy it is to use, we get smiles. The sense of pride I have for my teams and what we accomplish on each and every project is profound. That is what is truly rewarding to me.

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How many years have you been in business or in this industry?
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What makes you the best in your industry while separating you from your competitors?
We are a family business and we always put the customer first.

How does it feel to be recognized among *House & Home*'s Best of Winners?
House & Home magazine has a great reputation & we are glad to be part of them.

What keeps you motivated every day to do the work you do?
The challenge and working with the customers are very rewarding.

What do you find most rewarding about this industry?
To create a new project or backyard dream for customers.

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BEST of HOUSE&HOME in: Cabinetry



How many years have you been in business or in this industry?
I started in the cabinet business in 1968. The Cabinet Shop was established in 1990.

What makes you the best in your industry while separating you from competitors?
Many years of experience, expert design team, excellent customer service and having the area's largest showroom, which is constantly being updated.

How does it feel to be recognized among *House & Home*'s Best of Winners?
I am very honored that all of the time and energy spent not only by myself but also my employees has been recognized.

What keeps you motivated every day to do the work you do?
Seventy percent of our crew is family, the other 30 percent is our extended family. I work every day in a pleasant atmosphere where everyone's goal is to keep The Cabinet Shop successful not only now, but also in the future.

What do you find most rewarding about this industry?
The kitchen is the hub of the house. It is not only used for cooking, but also has become the gathering place for family and friends. It is rewarding to be involved with the area that makes a house a home.

the cabinet shop

Joe DiCicco, Owner
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BEST of HOUSE&HOME in: Interior Design



Erica Gordon, NCIDQ

How many years have you been in this industry?
I have been an interior designer for 24 years. I graduated with an interior design degree from the Art Institute of Philadelphia in 1998. After passing the NCIDQ Exam in 2006, I became licensed in the state of New Jersey as a Professional Interior Designer. Shortly thereafter, in 2007, I started Associated Design Studio, LLC.

What makes you the best in your industry?
Our spaces must *work* for our clients before anything else. We do not move past the initial phase of space planning until all of the requirements are met. Our clients must be comfortable with the flow and efficiency of all of their home's spaces. At Associated Design Studio, LLC, we implement innovative lighting techniques to create dynamic light effects that showcase architectural/decorative elements. These lighting schemes create evolving, organic, light experiences and scenes throughout the day.

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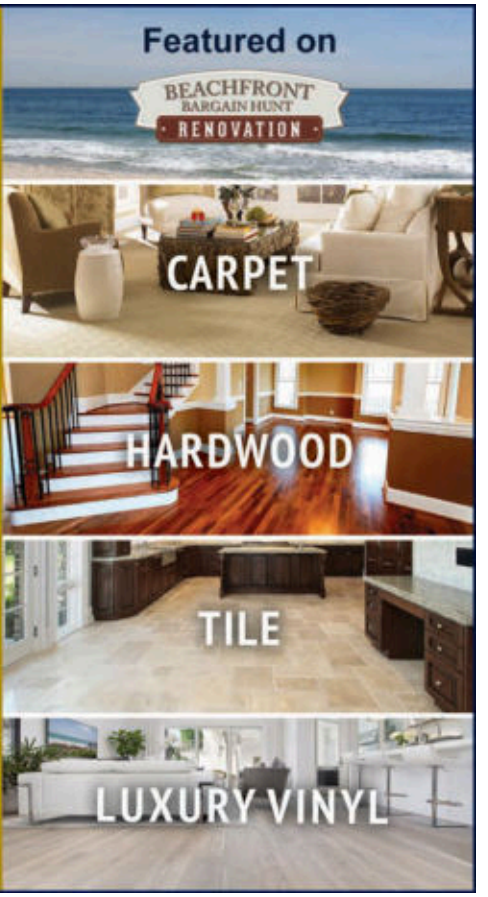
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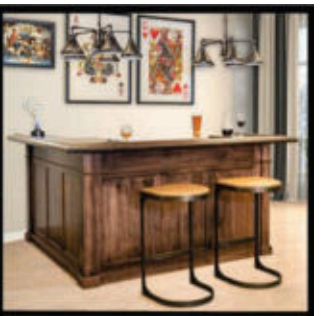


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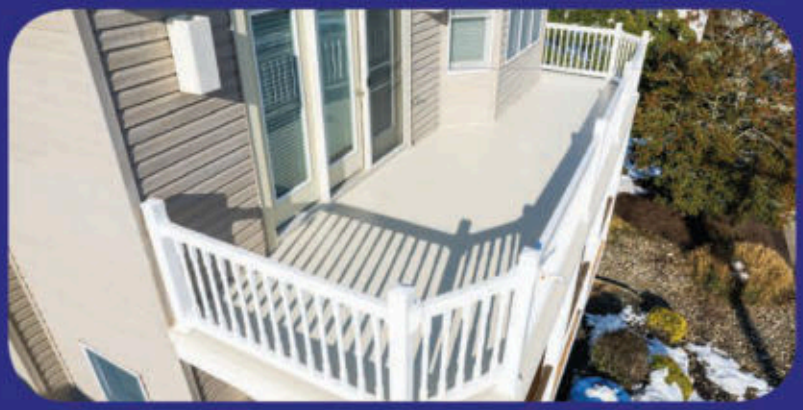
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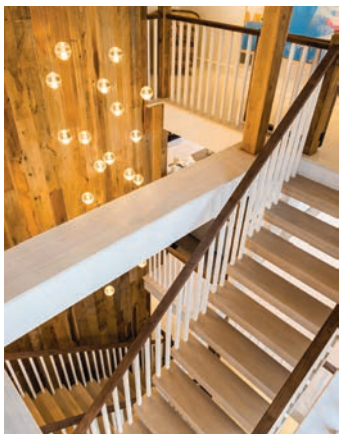
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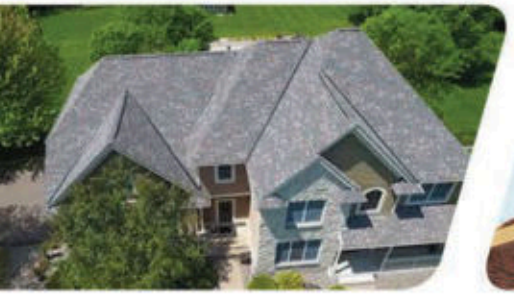
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H&H SHOWCASE by **Lindsey Getz**

Generating Peace of Mind

Colonial Generators helps homeowners and businesses eliminate the stress, inconvenience and cost associated with losing power.



Photography courtesy of Colonial Generators

Almost every aspect of American life depends on uninterrupted power. When the power goes out, even for a short time, it can be incredibly inconvenient, unnerving and even dangerous.

For a young mother of twins in Delaware County, a power outage that lasted four days following a severe storm left her feeling helpless and stressed. At the time, her twin girls were only newborns. After that experience, she began looking into options for whole-home power generators. She felt fortunate to have found Colonial Generators. Having recently moved, she says she is planning to have Colonial install a home generator once again. She simply cannot imagine living without one anymore.

"In the area that we previously lived, we lost power frequently—as often as two or three times each month, largely because of all the trees around us," says the homeowner, who asked to remain anonymous. "Even if it was just a few hours, it was hard with new babies. Heating formula or even just keeping the house warm were suddenly stressors I had to think about."

After having the home generator installed, the homeowner says she never even noticed when the power went out in her area. Backup power would kick on so quickly, so it seemed as though nothing had even happened.

That's exactly what a whole-home generator is meant to do, according to Nikos Papadopoulos, president of Colonial Generators. When a home loses power, an automatic transfer switch shifts immediately to the standby generator. Only a few seconds pass between the power going off and then kicking back on—like a "quick blip," Papadopoulos says.

Although Papadopoulos says the trend toward whole-home generators remains in its infancy—approximately 5% of homes have full backup power, he estimates—the need continues to increase. The COVID-19 pandemic, in which people spent more time than ever at home, has made this need quite clear. When unnerved homeowners were stuck home with no power, Colonial Generators received a significant uptick in calls and requests for price quotes.

"As people experienced power outages in the midst of being stuck at home during this pandemic, I think the need to have power at all times really emerged," Papadopoulos says. "Homeowners were stocking up on food and had freezers full of meat. There was a lot to be lost if the power went out for too long."

Likewise, generators have equipped many businesses with essential backup power. Local restaurants are a fine example. Restaurateurs who were already coping with razor-thin margins even prior to the pandemic certainly cannot afford to throw away any food due to power outages and other preventable disruptions.

With the need rising, Papadopoulos believes home generators will become an increasingly important part of America's future. He equates it to the comforts of heating and air conditioning, once considered an indulgence that has become a necessity most people cannot imagine doing without.

"We believe in the not-too-distant future that whole-home generators are going to become a standard part of homeowners' lifestyles," he adds. "There are many different benefits to having backup power, and we all want to have life uninterrupted. With people at home more than ever, the need will only grow."

Of course, he suggests homeowners should carefully vet providers when selecting a professional to install and maintain their generator. With the "newness" surrounding this market, some inexperienced providers have jumped into the fray. The benefit to choosing a provider such as Colonial Generators is that the company focuses solely on generators.

Worth the Investment

Colonial Generators has the specialized expertise needed to sell, install and service generators for homes and businesses. Papadopoulos considers this an important point, adding that no one can afford to be left "in limbo" if something goes wrong and no one is available to fix the problem.

"For some people, especially the elderly or those with medical needs, losing power is more than an inconvenience," he says. "For some, losing power can be really serious. It's important you get a whole-home generator from a reputable company that can also service their work."

To his point, the decision often comes down to peace of mind. Going without power for any amount of time can be frustrating. And for the young Delaware County mother referenced earlier in this story, having babies at home without power has the potential to cause unwanted stress. Now, she considers a whole-house generator nothing less than a necessity.

"It's an investment, but it's worth it," she says. "While they have small generators that you can buy yourself and will give you some power, once you've experienced whole-house power like this, it's really hard to imagine living without it."

Papadopoulos says he's thrilled to be able to make this service available to homeowners and business owners. Also, because Colonial Generators offers financing plans, whole-home generators are more affordable than ever.

"As an owner, I'm just really excited about what whole-home generators can do for people," he adds. "It's a solution for homeowners who not only want to avoid inconveniences to their lifestyle but who want to have comfort knowing that they won't lose food or heat or even medical supplies or baby formula that needs refrigeration.

"This is a solution that will give people peace of mind," he continues. "And for many, that's invaluable." H&H

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H&H TECHNOLOGY

by Liz Hunter

Manufacturers are responding to the demand for automation around the home with innovative products that make like easier.



SMARTER THAN YOUR AVERAGE HOME

Kids these days don't know how good they have it. Thanks to the prevalence of smart technology, they can just shout out the name of a song and voila, a nearby smart speaker starts playing it. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Thermostats, blinds and shades, doorbells and even faucets are among the latest products to get "smart" as manufacturers respond to the never-ending demand for automation around the home, and with more millennials becoming homeowners, they will likely drive this exposure higher.

"If you can dream it, we can make it smart," says Andrew Sherman of Sound Advice & Video. "More and more devices are becoming available within this smart home ecosystem; everything from dishwashers to coffee machines to doorbells and locks are smart ready. You can now control all these devices via an app on your phone or even by your voice."

We asked some local professionals to highlight a few of the best items to make "smarter" around your home.

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Believe it or not, motorized window treatments have been around for over two decades. "When I first came into the industry over 20 years ago, motorized window treatments were a very forward-thinking option," says Laura Hawley, president and owner of Ambiance Design Window Treatments. "I served in a role that was focused on those options."

However, the technology has come a long way. "It was expensive and mostly infrared with a clunky, unreliable remote control," she says. "Now they are tied to a smartphone and can even be set to a specific schedule to open with your morning alarm or, based on the temperature in the house, closed to help conserve energy."

Opening and closing window treatments with the touch of a button has its advantages for those with dexterity issues, whether related to aging or a disease. Hawley knows of a client with ALS who says the smart functionality of motorized window treatments has changed her life. "There are also some safety concerns around traditional blinds with strings and children. Motorization removes those hazards," she adds.

Ambiance Design offers Hunter Douglas products, and Hawley says every product, including shutters, can be motorized. "Hunter Douglas is a leader in the design world and well-known for their beautiful products that meet homeowners' sophisticated needs and functionality."

FAUCETS

Kitchens and baths have seen a big technological jump recently and Moen is one brand embracing the smart trend, says Matt Mann, of Bellmawr Plumbing Supply. "Moen has several products—smart faucets, shower systems and the Moen Flo water monitoring system—that are going to become more popular in the coming years," he says.

First, the Moen Flo is a device installed off your water main and connected to your phone's Bluetooth. "It monitors the water pressure throughout the house and if there is a leak or sign of a drop in water pressure, the system sends a message to your phone and shuts off the water from the main so the leak stops. It's a nice security feature if you're on vacation or for your vacation home so you can rest assured your house isn't flooding," he says. "It can also save money on homeowners' insurance because they will see less of a threat from water damage."

When it comes to smart faucets, Mann feels Moen's products are the nicest. "Moen took the idea of Siri from Apple and incorporated it into the faucet so it's completely operable by voice. You can ask it to dispense exactly 8 ounces or whatever amount you need, and at an exact temperature," he says. For example, any parent would appreciate being able to fill a baby's bottle with the perfect temperature of water and completely take out the step of warming a bottle of formula.

On some of Moen's smart faucets, there is even an option for handwashing in which


MOEN

the water shuts off for 20 seconds while the person lathers up before automatically turning back on for rinsing.

Mann also says Moen's smart shower system can preheat the water so it's ready to go when you wake up in the morning, and it can be programmed for different users not only for preferred temperature but also for the shower head functions and sprays.

In five to 10 years, Mann believes these products will be the norm in kitchen and bath design. "In the future for my industry, I see every appliance—washers, dryers, dishwashers, stoves—all being controlled by phone app. Individual companies are starting to do it, but I think it will all be integrated," he says. "Eventually we're not going to need to touch anything with our hands around the home."

SECURITY

Whether for your primary home home or a vacation property, some level of security is necessary. "Our market is full of secondary homeowners, so we see a lot of requests regarding HVAC control as well as surveillance. By incorporating smart thermostats and video doorbells our clients can now control their heat and AC as well as check the front door for any package deliveries," says Sherman.

It can also come in handy for those forgetful moments. "Most smart home devices come with a compatible app which allows for push notifications and two-way feedback/control. Gone are the days of worrying about if you locked the front door. Now you can open up your app, check to see if the door is locked or lock if necessary. Notifications work in a similar way, when someone unlocks the door, or turns off the security system you will receive a notification to your device of this change."

These systems might seem DIY-friendly, but there are benefits to having them professionally installed, he continues.

"It's always beneficial to look at contracting a smart home installer compared to DIY. Not only do we have experience and an understanding of the products and their set-up needs, we are always just a phone call away for tech support or troubleshooting. When a DIY system goes down you are often required to contact the tech support department of said device which can relate to hours of time spent on hold or waiting for the correct specialist. Whereas we are a quick phone call with the ability to send a tech for an onsite visit," says Sherman. H&H

RESOURCES

Ambiance Design
Blue Bell, Pa.
(267) 898-0200
AmbianceDesign.biz

Bellmawr Plumbing Supply
Bellmawr, N.J.
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H&H SHOWCASE

Premier Partnership

Global Home Improvement is pairing up with Infinity Windows and Doors from Marvin to bring their best products to your home.



When Global Home Improvement was founded 20 years ago, the company set out to work with only the best manufacturers in the industry. Whether homeowners are investing in roofing, windows, siding or gutters, they can rest assured that Global Home Improvement stands behind the products they install.

Over the course of two decades, one manufacturer has stood above the rest: Marvin Windows and Doors. Global Home Improvement is the area's premier installer of Infinity Fiberglass Windows and Doors from Marvin. The company has been hand-selected by Marvin Windows and Doors to handle their absolute best-looking and best-performing window, says Adam Parnes, marketing director.

"Infinity Fiberglass Windows from Marvin are custom-built using Ultrex® fiberglass, which allows us to measure and order your windows to the exact size. We believe in accuracy from appointment to install," he continues.

Shopping replacement windows can be a confusing and at times frustrating process but this partnership with Infinity Windows from Marvin aims to simplify things for every homeowner. "Our consultants are here to help you break through the clutter and confusion so you can focus on the window solution that best fits your needs," Parnes says.

Because Global Home Improvement offers a full range of exterior home remodeling solutions such as metal roofing, James Hardie Siding and Infinity Windows from Marvin, they can handle your entire renovation from start to finish. "Every project is assigned a dedicated project manager and our in-home consultants are also there to help with accurate pricing, design and ideas without the high pressure tactics of other companies," he says.

If your home is due for exterior renovations, Parnes advises not to delay. "Planning your renovation ahead of time is always the way to go." **H&H**

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Why Infinity Fiberglass Windows and Doors?

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Some exciting new products and trends:

EBONY EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR COLOR OPTIONS: Black window frames are emerging as a go-to trend for decorators and homeowners throughout the country. Not only are they an exciting change from a traditional white window frame, but they can offer your home contrast and elegance with a modern aesthetic.

BIFOLD DOORS: Infinity from Marvin's Ultrex® Bifold Doors open a home to true indoor/outdoor living, with panels that fold open and closed like an accordion.

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Builders/ Remodelers/ Contractors
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Closets By Design
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866-650-DECK (3325)
sequoiaoutback.com

Disinfecting/Sanitizing
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germnixllc.com

Elevators
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Superior Fence & Railing
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ocfiberglass.com

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ajcarpet.com

Filling Marble and Tile
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fillingmarble.com

Matteo Family Kitchens & Flooring
856-769-2490
matteokitchens.com

South Jersey Hardwood
609-305-5047
southjerseyhardwood.com

Foundation Repair
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58foundations.com

Dry Guys
844-641-1315|
dryguys.com

Hale Built Group
732-202-6207
halebuilt.com

Furniture/ Accessories
Hibernate Bedding
908-766-5450
hibernatebedding.com

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

Viking Casual Furniture
856-486-1880
vikingcasual.com

Garage Floor Coatings
Transylvania Concrete Coatings
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Garage Organization/ Flooring
ABC Closets
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Colonial Generators
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skgranite.com

The Cabinet Shop
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Kitchen Cabinet Renovation

Kitchen Magic
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kitchenmagic.com

Landscaping Design/ Water Features

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Environmental Landscape Associates
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elaoutdoorliving.com

Gill's Landscaping
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gillslandscaping.com

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856-210-6843

Marble/Granite/Tile

AAA Hellenic Marble
610-344-7700
aaamarble.com

Coast Tile & Marble Supply
609-646-9346
coasttile.net

Colonial Marble & Granite
866-307-6200
colonialmarble.net

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Imperial Marble & Granite, Inc.
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imgstone.net

The Cabinet Shop
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Mobility Scooters

Allrite Mobility
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allritemobility.com

Outdoor Furniture

Barlow Tyrie Outdoor Furniture
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Oskar Huber Furniture and Design
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barncoamishbuilders.com

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973-729-2125
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Brush Masters XP
856-899-9183
brushmastersxp.com

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shoreglassanddoor.com

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Stone Veneer

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shorecans.com

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Coastal Reflections
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Doyle Window Tinting
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doylewindowtinting.com

Eastern Solar Glass
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800-734-6527
easternsolarglass.com

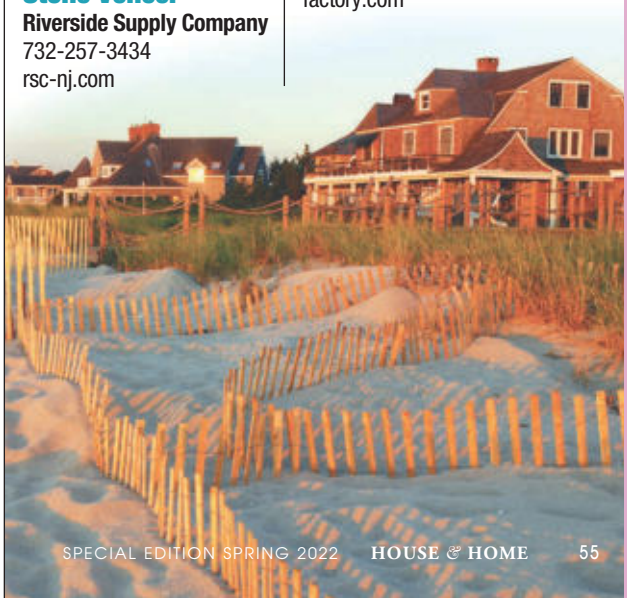
Jersey Shore Window Tinting
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jerseyshorewindowtinting.com

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

Window Treatments

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