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Volume 21, Issue 6

Spring

PLANNING GUIDE

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Planning your staycation
now is critical to having
it ready for the spring
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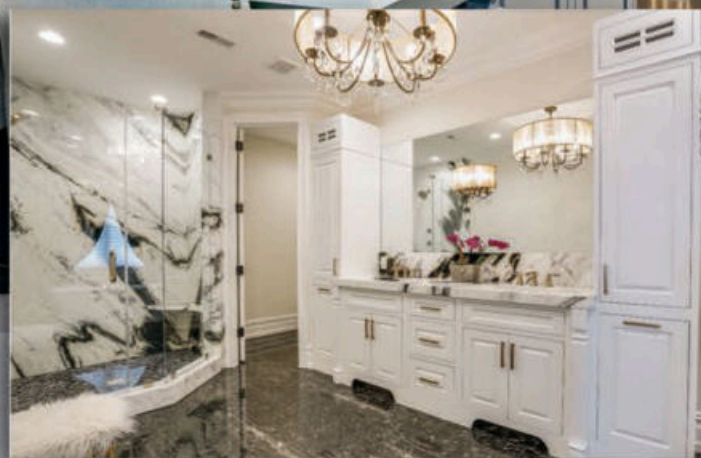
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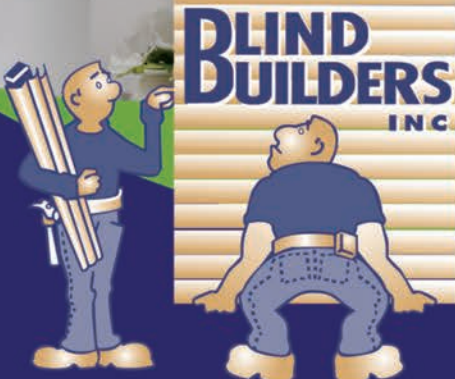


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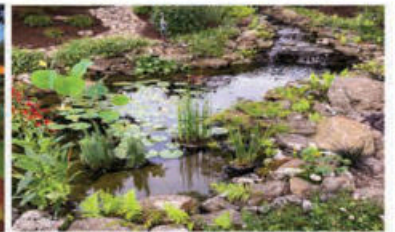


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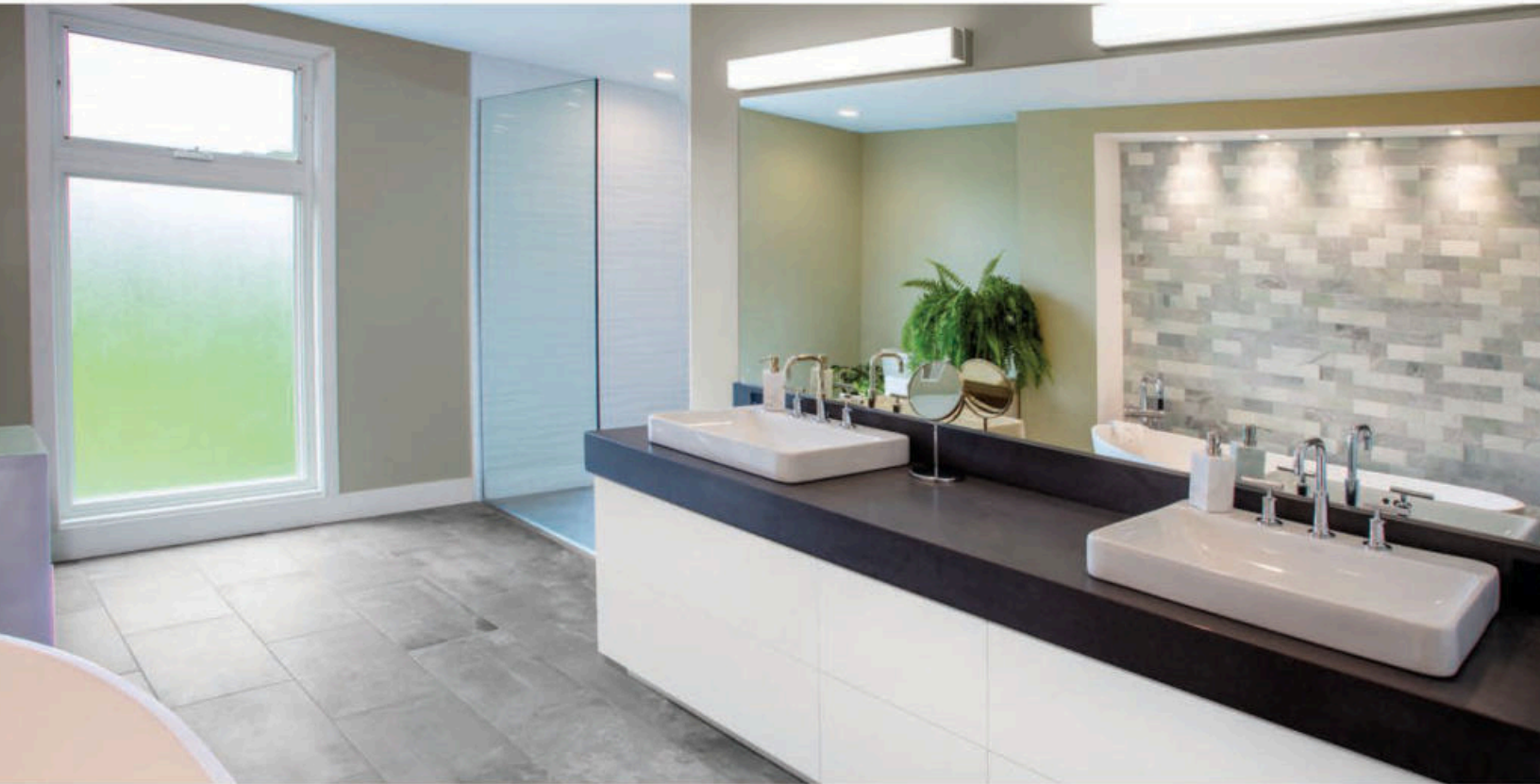
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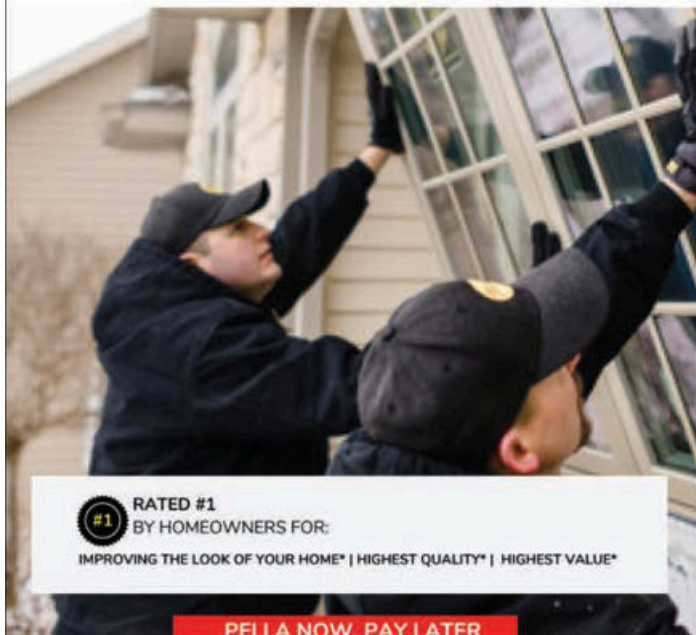


On the cover:

Architectural Concrete Design can enhance your home's exterior with a spectacular decorative concrete project. Turn to page 27 to find out why this material is so popular and why ACD's technique and innovation make them the premier company in the region.



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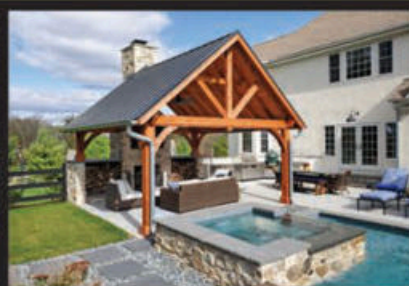
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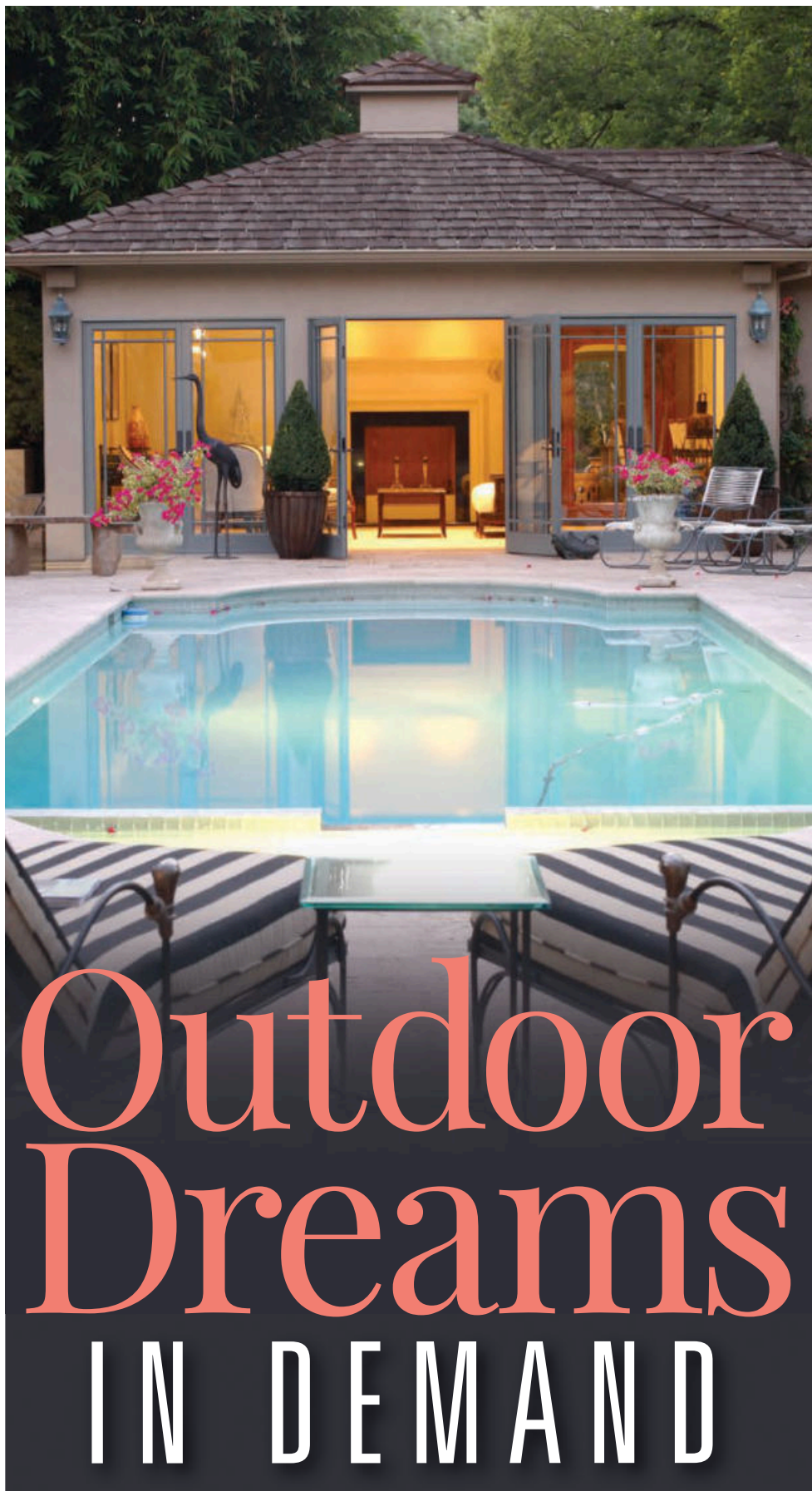
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Outdoor Dreams IN DEMAND

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

BY LIZ HUNTER

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Decks

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

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

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

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



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

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

Outdoor Dreams IN DEMAND

Pools

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

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

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



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

Additional enhancements

An outdoor living space is more than just decks and pools. There are



KEYSTONE CUSTOM DECKS

a bunch of details that add up to a completed environment, some of which can be incorporated in time for this summer.

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

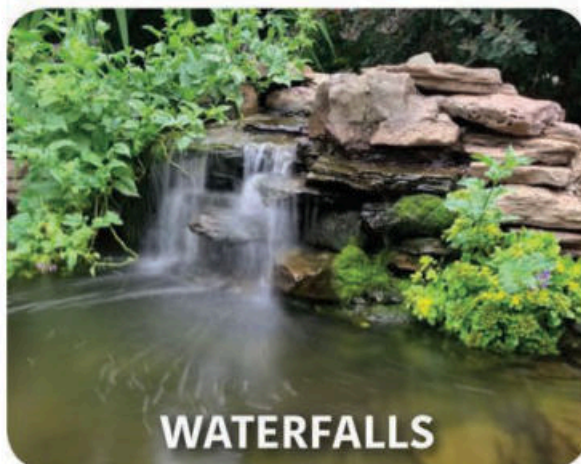
At-home entertaining can go up a notch too, he says, with the addition of a bocce ball court or horseshoe pit.



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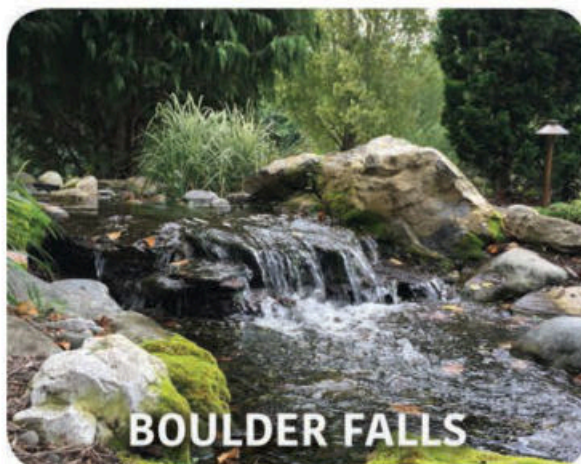
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Outdoor Dreams IN DEMAND

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

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

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

He says most features can be controlled via smartphone. “LED landscape lighting, outdoor audio, irrigation systems, infrared heaters can all be manipulated right from the palm of your hand. Unique Lighting offers LED Bluetooth color-changing bulbs which can be used to upgrade existing fixtures as well. Sonance manufactures outdoor audio systems with multiple speaker types and

configurations to deliver rich sound. Hunter Industries has irrigation controls which sync to local weather stations to only allow the system to operate when water is needed,” he continues.

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



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Just like many other specialties, there is a wide array of skilled contractors from which to choose. Finding the right fit the first time around can prove beneficial for years to come.

"This area is blessed with a lot of good contractors," says Dennis Gehman, MCR (Master Certified Remodeler). "There are some competitors of ours who I highly respect and some are small, one-man operations who can get the job done too. I recommend finding somebody you really feel good about and building a long-term relationship."

Gehman has been doing just that for more than 30 years as president of Gehman Design Remodeling, a company with a first-rate reputation. He spoke with us to share his tips with homeowners who are looking to hire the right contractor.



Dennis Gehman,
MCR, president of
Gehman Design
Remodeling

DO YOU FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A CERTAIN COMFORT LEVEL WITH YOUR CONTRACTOR?

I think that is super important. Price is somewhat important, but with most reputable contractors the numbers are going to be pretty close. I would tell people to find somebody you feel really comfortable

with. If issues come up, you want to make sure you have somebody you can talk to, you can be honest with and you can push back a little bit if you don't like the way something is going. God has made us with all different personalities and we've all run into people we just connect with right away, or other people where that doesn't happen. It doesn't mean anybody is a bad person; we're just different and it's better to respect that.

DO YOU JUST TRY TO BE YOURSELF IN THE INITIAL CONSULTATION?

Absolutely. I don't have anything to hide. I wish I could tell everybody we're perfect and we never make mistakes but they would know right up front that it's a lie. When something doesn't go right, if it's our fault we own up to it, we apologize and come up with a plan to get back on track.

SHOULD BUSINESS HISTORY BE A KEY FACTOR IN THE DECISION?

There are some younger guys doing good

work; I was young once too when we started out. But the projects we were doing back then weren't as large or detailed. Homeowners should try to find somebody with history and experience in the kind of project they want to do. I think longevity in business is important; 50% of remodeling home improvement contractors do not make it past the first year of business and 90% do not make it past five years. Most of that is not because they aren't good tradesmen but because they aren't good businesspeople.

DO YOU PROVIDE REFERENCES FOR CUSTOMERS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO SEEK OUT OTHER PROJECTS YOU HAVE COMPLETED?

We have a portfolio with a list of our credentials, the awards we've won, the certifications we hold and our business licenses. Then there's a sheet, front and back, with names of people we've done work for, and we encourage customers to call those people. It's easy for us to put names of customers whose jobs went well, but it doesn't always go well. To me, the tell-tale sign is how the contractor responds when things don't go right. I always tell new clients to ask past ones, "Was there something that didn't go as planned and how did they handle it?"

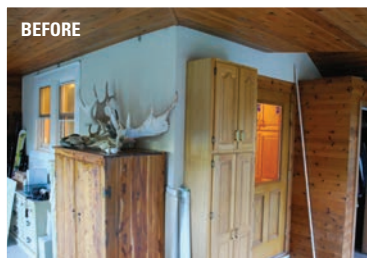
SHOULD THE CONTRACTOR HAVE A DESIGNATED PERSON TO LEAD THE PROJECT

WHO WILL BE ONSITE EACH DAY?

Yes. We give that person the title of project manager because they are managing the day-to-day aspects of the project from start to finish. They're in communication with us at the office about the needs they have and they're the key communicator with the homeowner as well as the suppliers and trade people we work with. The project manager is like the conductor of the orchestra. There are a lot of moving parts and things that have to come together in the right order.

IS THE CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING PERMITS AND SCHEDULING INSPECTIONS?

We apply for the permits and get them all in hand ahead of time and the project manager onsite will call for all of the various inspections that are needed along the way. That is not something the homeowner is doing every day and they don't want to deal with it. Pennsylvania is unique in that our permits are by municipality. They all have their little quirks about how they want the process to be done. **H&H**



BEFORE



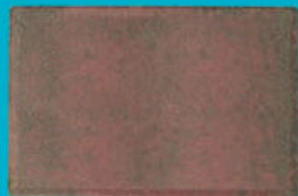
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Both Cambridge pavingstones shown above were installed in residential driveways in 2006. (Photos taken in January 2010).

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Outdoor Oasis

Nyce Crete and Landis Block & Concrete supplies all your hardscaping needs to create an amazing outdoor living space.

by **Julie Shannon**

SPRING IS ALMOST UPON US and homeowners are ready to get back outside for safe entertaining once again. The pandemic helped people appreciate outdoor living more than ever and there is always an opportunity to add amenities to the space, whether it's an outdoor kitchen or fire feature to enjoy year-round.

The first thing to check off your list when designing a project is choosing hardscaping materials, and Nyce Crete and Landis Block & Concrete is the one to help you make the best decisions. A third-generation, family-owned business with two locations in Lansdale and Souderton, they are the area's largest supplier of pavers, brick, stone products, flagstone and bluestone.

"In this strange year, people have relooked at their home space. Many are looking to give themselves a place to get away without leaving their home. We help people to determine how much they can or cannot do," says Vice President Jarrod Nyce. "They have time on their hands because of COVID-19. Imagination, space and budget are what can determine the project."

Outdoor kitchens made with stone veneer are popular, and from there you can add all the bells and whistles to make it the ideal entertaining space.

"Outdoor kitchens are so much fun and really add to your home," Nyce says. "Imagine entertaining outside without having to go back into your house. From a basic grill kit to a full-

blown kitchen with sink, ice maker and refrigerator, there are so many things that can be done in your own backyard.

"Time and time again we are seeing outdoor living spaces getting more like an oasis with waterfalls, sound systems, lighting and even outdoor TVs. Fire pits and fireplaces help to warm up areas with heat and light."

It's not too soon to think about installing a pool, and Nyce says there are many hardscaping options available for the pool deck.

"There are many options for pool areas from stamped concrete to pavers for your pool deck," he says. "Also, coping can be a fun area to explore different options, such as precast concrete and natural stone. We've also seen a lot of stacked stone being used for the natural look."

Nyce says patios are very similar to pool decks with many options for style and effect. "This versatility helps people turn a space into something very special," he says.

When it comes to retaining walls, Nyce says they are practical and have more than a few uses.

"Retaining walls sound boring but they're very useful," he says. "You can add areas to any project using a retaining wall to flatten out unusable ground. They can also be used for privacy or simple sitting walls."

Nyce says Cambridge Pavingstones with ArmorTec have proven to provide quality materials year after year.

"They continue to evolve with the times with new products and colors every year," he says. "Their line of retaining walls has also grown and evolved to adding new colors and styles. They have also maintained a steady lineup of tried and true products that have worked for over 15 years.

"We have a large supply of Pennsylvania bluestone and flagstone hearths. Natural stone never goes out of style."

Belgian Blocks, which are large blocks of stone, are used for many purposes. "They are made of granite and are very tough. They are mostly used for curbs or edging around gardens, but they can also be used for walkways or driveways," Nyce says.

Nyce says a recent trend he's been seeing is outdoor ceramic tiles. "These are just like the tile in your bathroom but a much larger format," he says. "They come in many different colors and styles and are safe for use in outside areas."

Like most companies, COVID-19 has had an impact on Nyce Crete, but when you've been in business for 77 years, you're accustomed to dealing with various challenges and obstacles. Nyce Crete has adapted during this uncertain time and still offers the highest quality of products and top-notch customer service, giving customers the outdoor experience they dreamed of and can enjoy for years to come.

"Our family has been able to change and adapt over the years, and we have always stood behind our products," Nyce says. "We pride ourselves to be a complete resource for any questions that may arise. We also understand our products, keep up with new trends and understand building codes to help people do their project the proper way. We also try our best to be honest, deliver on time and sell quality products that we would use personally. We treat people the way we would like to be treated." **H&H**

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Crucial Component

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

BY MATT COSENTINO

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

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



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

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

Damien Massa

Co-owner

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What are the benefits to going with custom cabinetry over a stock product?

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

Jonas Stoltzfus
Co-founder
Sweet Water Woodworks
Narvon, Pa.
(610) 273-1270
SWWoodworksLLC.com



Does custom cabinetry add significantly to the timeline of the project?

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

Dan Dilworth
Owner
Dilworth's Custom Design
Phoenixville, Pa.
(610) 917-9119
DilworthsCustomDesign.com

Q

What styles are trending in the industry right now?

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

Steve Matteo

Co-owner
Matteo Family Kitchens
& Flooring Inc.
Woodstown, N.J.
(856) 769-2490
MatteoKitchens.com



Q

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

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

Vaughn Hunsicker

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Crucial Component



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

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

Buddy Ralston

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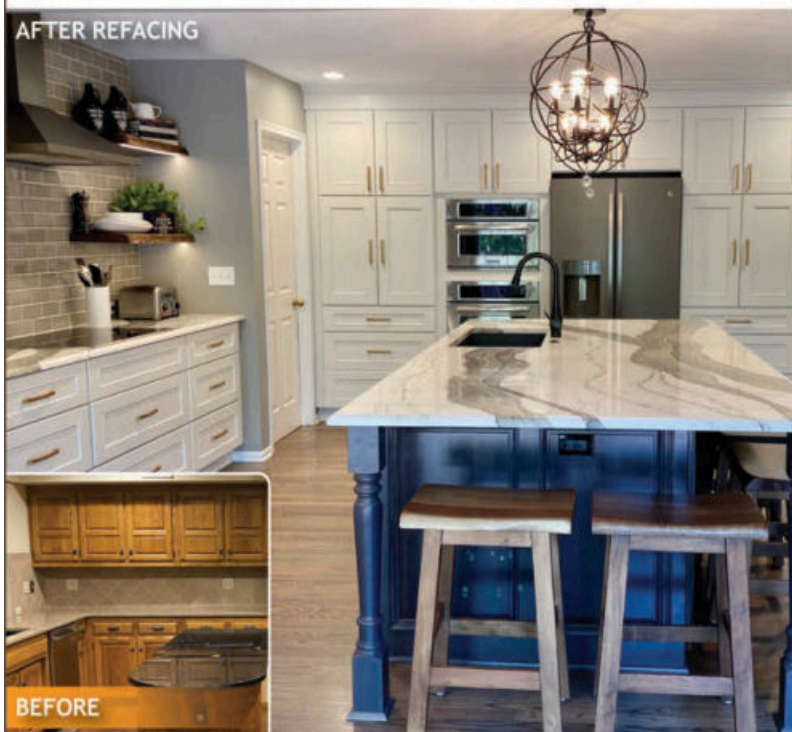
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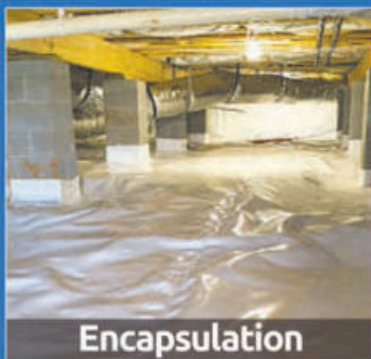
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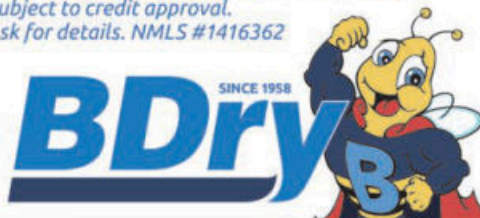
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Architectural Concrete Design can enhance your home's exterior with a spectacular decorative concrete project. *by* MATT COSENTINO

picture perfect

On the company website for Architectural Concrete Design—one of the East Coast's leaders in decorative stamped concrete for more than 20 years—there is a vast collection of photos from the thousands of residential jobs they have completed.

The portfolio of driveways, walkways, patios and pool decks is stunning to see, until founder and president Chris McMahon makes one very important observation. "Pictures don't do it justice," he says. "It looks even better in person."

McMahon made that discovery himself when he was introduced to stamped concrete while working in high-rise construction in San Francisco in the late 1980s. He immediately fell in love with the possibilities, and made up his mind to return home to the Philadelphia area to start his own company specializing in stamped concrete.

Architectural Concrete Design (ACD) was officially born in 1993 and has since become a staple in the industry.

"We are the go-to company for stamped concrete for all the major architects and big firms in the tri-state area," McMahon says. "We do all the heavy highway projects; in fact, we're working on the Pennsylvania Turnpike right now. We do all the malls, we do high schools and elementary schools and we've worked on every Philadelphia-area casino except one."

But the best part about ACD is that the same passion for the design and construction of those massive projects is applied to private residences in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and northeast Maryland to boost

curb appeal or spice up an outdoor living space. "So that experience and that level of expertise that is demanded by those other projects, you get at your home with the same crews," McMahon says.

Most of the crew members, as well as the designers and foremen, have been with ACD for almost two decades. Their craftsmanship and knowledge in the field are something you can't find everywhere.

"Our salespeople are landscape designers, so they'll come out and create the design for you," McMahon says. "They'll look at your home, your patio and your pool and give you ideas. When I do work at my home—and I consider myself a pretty good designer—I still have one of my designers come out just to see what his ideas are."

Stamped concrete is a popular option for homeowners because it can be made to look like a number of materials—including flagstone, brick, tile, slate, fieldstone, cobblestone and granite pavers—at a much better price. ACD offers an almost endless list of styles and colors.

"We can pretty much create any surface," McMahon says. "The product is used in theme parks throughout the world to mimic every material there is."

"It's more affordable [than natural stone], it's more durable and it doesn't chip or settle. Weeds don't grow through it and ants don't live in it like pavers. Natural stone requires a lot of maintenance, but with stamped concrete all you have to do is seal it every two or three years."

Bob Nonemaker is one of the founders of

Outerspaces Inc., a company in Glen Mills, Pa., that designs and builds high-end water features. He has used ACD for multiple projects and has always been more than satisfied with the results, including a large pool deck the company recently installed at a retirement community.

"The fact that they can produce thousands of square feet in a day with something that looks really, really good, that's pretty amazing," Nonemaker says. "Most masons are lucky to get down a hundred square feet of material in a day. Everybody is always being pushed in construction to get things done. These guys get it done, and they get it done well."

Of course, with that sterling reputation comes a great demand for ACD's services. That's why McMahon encourages homeowners to start the process now, during the winter, to make sure they can have that dazzling new patio or driveway in time for spring.

They won't be disappointed in the end result, Nonemaker promises.

"Concrete is one of those things where if everything doesn't go right, it can end up really wrong," he says. "But with Chris and his guys, it's like a ballet for them. They know exactly what they're doing and they have tremendous productivity. It's pretty much impossible to find a flaw. They're just really good at what they do." **H&H**

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Is your home
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SPRING REFRESH

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

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

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

in mind,” Parnes says.

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

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

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

“An often overlooked ‘refresh’ for your home is to get your roof into tip-top shape showing no

discoloration and no moss or mold—which causes uneven dark spots here and there,” he explains. “Your roof makes up over 30 percent of what one sees when viewing your property, so having a good-looking roof improves not only the appearance, but also the value of your home.”

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

“With Roof Maxx treatments, your roof will benefit in a number of ways,” says Cunningham. “First, before Roof Maxx treats your roof, they’ll repair any issues such as loose shingles, worn boots and unattached flashings. These conditions not only create poor roof appearance, but if left untreated, will lead to roof deterioration and leaks. Second, the Roof Maxx treatment restores the vitality of your shingles, helping them to perform as if they were new. Treated shingles will once again resist rain, wind, curling, cracking, breaking and loss of granules—the tiny beads you may

be finding in your downspouts and gutters as your shingles age. Third, the Roof Maxx treatment generally will restore shingles’ appearance, making them look more like when they were new. Of note, each Roof Maxx treatment provides a five-year transferable warranty.”

EXTERIOR TRENDS

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

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

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

by **Lindsey Getz**



that really “pops.”

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

REAPING THE BENEFITS

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

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

Lyons agrees exterior projects can have a strong ROI.

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

CREATING YOUR “HOME SWEET HOME”

By investing in your home’s exterior, you can create a place

that you’re truly proud to call “home.” This is perhaps one of the greatest benefits of all.

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

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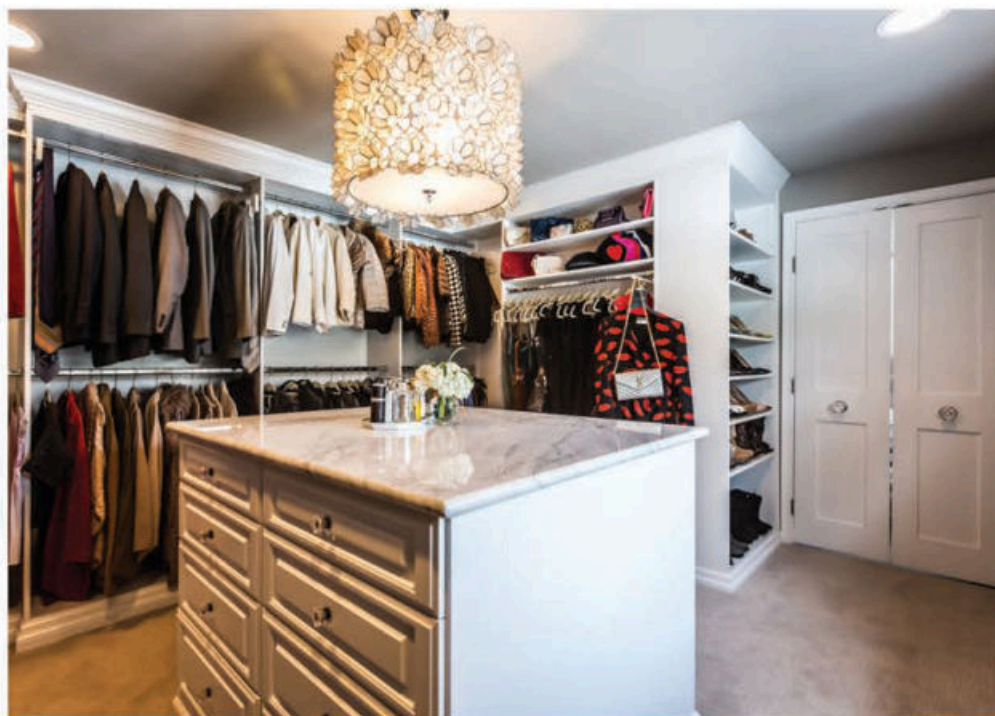
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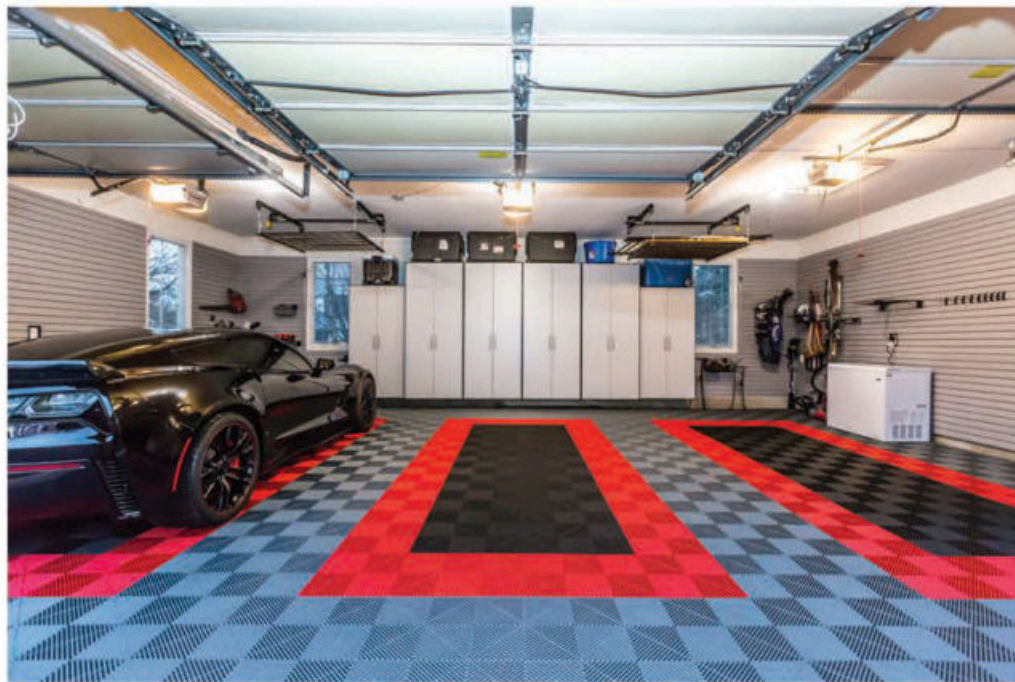
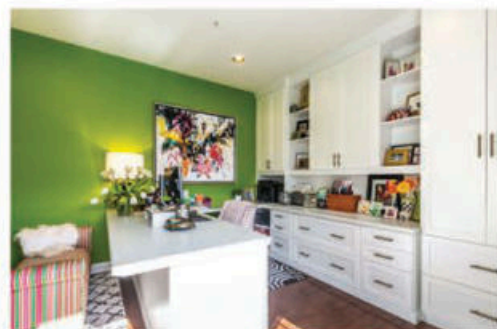
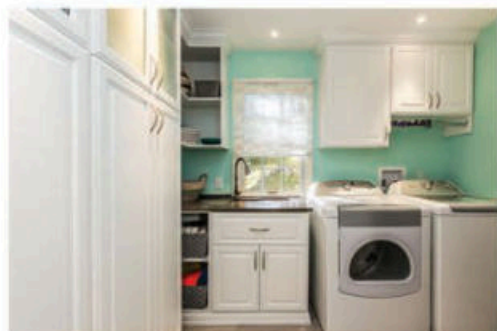
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