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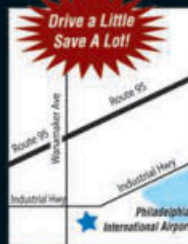
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Kitchen Tune up



On the cover:

Outdoor kitchen designs can take on many forms and functions and professionals know how to tailor them to each individual client. From large spaces with cabinets, fridge, beer tap and a roof, to more intimate setups with a grill and bar seating, outdoor kitchens allow any host to stay involved in the party. Turn to page 2-3 for advice from industry experts on the trends and must-have add-ons.

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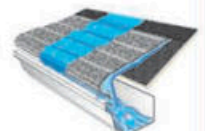
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National Sales Office:

HOUSE & HOME Magazine, LLC

700 E. Main St.

Norristown, PA 19401

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

Email: info@housemagazine.com

Regional Editions:

Bucks County HOUSE & HOME - PA

Central Jersey HOUSE & HOME - NJ

Delaware HOUSE & HOME - DE

DelChester/Main Line West HOUSE & HOME - PA

Montco/Main Line East HOUSE & HOME - PA

Northern Jersey HOUSE & HOME - NJ

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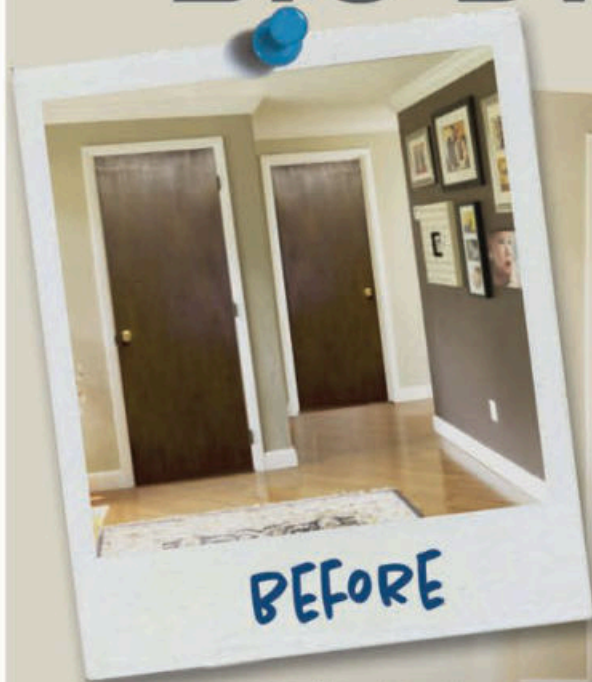
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Salter's Fireplace Patio Grill provides design expertise and quality products for your outdoor oasis.



A Warm Welcome

When you walk into Salter's Fireplace Patio Grill, it's immediately clear that their knowledge and product selection goes beyond anything found at a mass merchant.

Salter's has been a well-known name in the region since 1974, when the original owners began with a hardware store before branching out into fireplaces, stoves and later outdoor furniture and grills. Jay Stong has been involved in the business since the '90s and bought the company in 2000. Recently, Stong acquired Barto Pool and Spa in Phoenixville, adding to Salter's Fireplace other two locations in Hatfield and Eagleville.

While the Hatfield and Eagleville locations showcase and sell fireplaces, stoves and grills, the new Eagleville location at 3076 Ridge Pike includes an Outdoor Oasis showroom—7,500 square feet featuring everything homeowners need to design and equip their outdoor living room. Displays include a full outdoor kitchen, an indoor/outdoor see-through fireplace, patio furniture with deep seating, bar-height dining, fireplaces and electric space heaters, to name a few. And now that Barto Pool and Spa is part of the Salter's Fireplace family, spas are also on display and available for purchase, truly making Salter's a complete outdoor design destination.

There are several advantages homeowners have when coming into Salter's new Eagleville

showroom. "One of the biggest is being able to see, touch and feel the products," he says. "And unlike mass merchants that lock you into one or two color combinations for furniture and cushions, we have a range of 15 different frame colors and fabrics, and most of ours come with warranties between five and 15 years while theirs might only be one year."

The quality is also beyond anything you'll find at a large retailer. Aluminum-woven outdoor furniture is currently popular. However, Salter's furniture has an aluminum framework, not steel like the box stores, so it won't rust from the inside out. No need to be concerned about maintaining cushions either. "Our deep seating patio furniture has a solution-dyed, acrylic fabric so the water wicks off. Unless there was a dominant rain, homeowners can enjoy the cushions within an hour of drying in the sun," says Stong. "Also, our Sunbrella brand cushions are thicker than what you'll find at mass merchants, but the typical consumer might not recognize the difference this makes just sitting on it in the store. They will appreciate the cushions at the end of an evening and for years to come." Stong adds, "Our experienced sales designers will consult and educate customers on the difference in the quality and the warranty they receive from our manufacturers."

That knowledge is something shoppers can

tap into at Salter's Fireplace Patio Grill, especially when it comes to designing an outdoor living space. When homeowners walk in and browse Salter's Outdoor Oasis showroom, they will realize that Salter's also offers a wide range of outdoor fire features including portable fire pit tables, tempest torches for ambiance around a pool or patio, and even an outdoor wood or gas fireplace to complement their new patio furniture.

"We can truly help them figure out how to design an outdoor living space so it flows with function," says Stong. "For example, when designing an outdoor kitchen, there are some key questions and factors to consider such as how many people they cook for regularly—this would determine how large the grill should be—if they are right- or left-handed, and where the sun is during the day. Our customers comment that Salter's is different from the mass merchants because questions like these aren't asked of them."

Salter's also understands that most people have a budget. "We can do things in stages, giving you the elements that are in your budget now and preparing for the things to add in the future, whether it's next year or over five years," Stong says. "If a customer is starting a new outdoor project, we'll ask for a wish list. Drawing that out of them is one of the biggest components so we can help them determine the best products that will achieve their desired end result."

Stong has the utmost confidence in Salter's products and staff. "I would put my staff against any other company doing similar business," he says. "Everything we do from sales to design and installation to service, is with in-house staff who are trained in industry standards and our own company training. We have a great team who can help bring a customer's project from concept to reality, and if we can't, we're not afraid to tell them. Our goal is to provide safe, reliable products they can enjoy in their home for years to come." **H&H**



Salter's Fireplace Patio Grill

Two convenient locations: Hatfield, Pa.

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COOKING

Al Fresco

Transform your backyard into a culinary oasis with an outdoor kitchen.

 BY LIZ HUNTER 

Barbecues have become more than just throwing some burgers and dogs on the grill. Now, they are full-day affairs with several courses to keep the party going, and hosts don't want to miss out on socializing with guests, which has fueled the popularity of outdoor kitchens. With countertop space, cabinets, refrigeration and accessories like pizza ovens and beer taps, outdoor kitchens have all the practical elements of an indoor kitchen, but the laid-back vibe that only grilling provides. We wanted to find out how to design the best outdoor kitchen, so we went right to the professionals. With their help, your backyard will be the neighborhood's No. 1 restaurant in no time.



Q: What hardscaping materials do you recommend for the construction of an outdoor kitchen and what works well for the ground surface?

“One of the most important aspects of any outdoor project is the materials used. Using paver materials from Techo-Bloc or EP Henry will enhance your outdoor kitchen/patio while having many different interlocking patterns to choose from. Here at Gill’s we will review with you a library of samples from which to model your personalized hardscaping area. With so many accent colors and shapes from which to choose, we can achieve the look that is a perfect complement to your landscaping. Your outdoor kitchen area should blend in with the rest of your home’s landscaping.”

Brian Gill, *Owner*
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Q: What cabinet materials do you recommend for outdoor kitchens in our region?

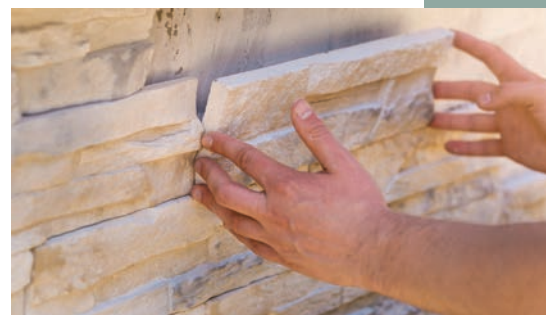
“At Airy Kitchens we offer outdoor cabinets built from wood, stainless steel and composite materials. On our wood cabinets (pictured) we use ipe wood which is extremely dense and heavy. Hard woods are very durable, but need to be oiled yearly to keep their rich color. Wood cabinets are more expensive than composite, but cheaper than stainless steel. Stainless steel offers a contemporary look with no maintenance, making them the most durable option. However, steel cabinets are expensive, easier to dent than wood or composite and they get hot in full sun. Composites are essentially plastic, but good brands are built with solid material to avoid cracking or warping. Composites are offered in many colors and some have a wood grain look, so they can work with different styles. Composites are the most affordable option, but keep in mind that durable outdoor cabinets are always going to cost more than interior ones.”

Sean Lewis, *Senior Designer*
AIRY KITCHENS
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Q: Are stone veneers a good option for outdoor kitchens?

“Stone veneers are great for people who want a stone look without needing to involve a real stone mason.

Natural stone is bigger, heavier and requires more effort for installation, including a mason. Veneers are thinner, lighter, easier to install—some could even DIY it. They are manmade and come in a variety of colors—every one under the rainbow—and all emulate natural stone. We see a lot of maroon and charcoal gray or light tan colors. If it’s done well, you can’t tell it’s not real stone. It’s also more economical compared to real stone.”



Jarrod Nyce, *Vice President*
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Q: What is a grill island and what makes this a reasonable alternative to a full-blown outdoor kitchen?

"Grill islands are a great addition to almost any outdoor space and might be more conceivable than you think. Some homeowners may not have the budget or the space for a full scale outdoor kitchen, or do not want the added maintenance that comes along with more amenities, like an outdoor sink that needs winterizing each year. Grill islands add value, depth and structure to your landscape, providing an outdoor cooking station that is pleasing to the eye from all angles. Unlike a standalone grill, which many times seems awkward or like it is cluttering up space, a permanent island can blend in beautifully with the landscaping around your home. We usually design grill islands in close proximity to the access points of the home, so that it's a short, convenient walk from the kitchen inside to the outdoor cooking space. There are a plethora of materials that a grill island can be constructed out of. Stone veneer probably has the most classic or timeless look, and there are many manufactured concrete products that mimic natural stone's texture and color. Islands can be framed and clad with wood or composite materials also. These kinds of grill structures require a non-combustible jacket to be built around the grill for safety."

Cameron Kennedy, *Project Manager/Lead Designer*
GROUNDTEC, INC.
 Colmar, Pa. | (215) 322-7669
GroundTecInc.com

Q: Are pizza ovens worth adding to an outdoor kitchen and what are the different types available?

"Pizza ovens are great fun for parties. Kids and guests can get involved in making their own. Pizza ovens are not only for pizza, they provide a much hotter cooking method similar to restaurants. Seared steaks and chicken on cast-iron grill plates is fantastic. Seafood, steamed clams—the possibilities are endless. There are many manufacturers, but Chicago Brick Oven is a brand that I would recommend. It is delivered as a stone shell and we can set the shell on stone and surround with stone, and also incorporate your grill, wood boxes, cabinets and any other amenities you may want. We can also build custom countertops for seating as well as preparation. We have gotten great feedback from our customers about the fun and mostly about the quality of the cooking it provides."

Chris DeMato, *Owner*
ROCK BOTTOM LANDSCAPING & FENCING
 (732) 873-6780
RockBottomLandscaping.net



Q: What do you recommend for cooking—gas or wood-fired grills?

"It's not uncommon for us to install a wood-fired Kamado grill in the same segment as a gas grill. There are advantages to both. People prefer gas grills for convenience, but the taste of food on a wood-fired product is unmatched. There's an amazing difference with cooking on a natural wood product. A

Kamado-style grill or pizza oven can be added as an extra component to the gas grill. The Kamado Primo or Big Green Egg are two major brands, and they are flexible. You can smoke, grill and make pizzas on them.

"For gas grills, people are all about adding features. Griddles have become popular as well as charcoal baskets which allow you to drop it in and give food the flavor of wood. Another component is a power burner with a high BTU—15K to 65K—for big pots or a wok. It adds flexibility to the cooking space."

Jay Stong, *Co-owner*
SALTER'S FIREPLACE PATIO GRILL
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SaltersFireplace.com

Q: What must you know about a client/homeowner in order to design the best outdoor kitchen for their lifestyle?

"Outdoor kitchens are an extension of your home. They become spots for entertaining and relaxing with friends and family and enjoying what your beautiful backyard has to offer. Finding out what a client's wants and needs are for the space is a top priority. We start by making a list of the functions they need to accommodate in the space. Outdoor kitchens can contain a multitude of appliances and accessories and choosing the right ones based on your client's needs is the best way to create their dream space."

Gianna Sweet, *Certified Designer*
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Q: *What do you recommend to provide shade and protection over an outdoor kitchen?*

"We always think about what will look better with the space. If you have a historic home with an English garden, you don't want to use a structure with shingles. A standing seam roof is forgiving and can blend into any scenario. Cedar shakes are a nice look, and a thatch roof can look a bit like a Tiki hut, but it has its place if that's the look you want. Pergolas provide shade but you're not getting waterproofing over the cooking area. There are ways to incorporate a combo pergola with a flat top green roof. The more greenery the better on a pergola. Species like kiwi vine, honeysuckle, wisteria and hydrangea climbing vine will grow up the structure and really make it feel like a true retreat."

Chad Turpin, *Owner*

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Q: *What factors determine the best location and layout of an outdoor kitchen?*

"The size depends on the number of appliances you want to include. Typically we build the straight [galley] style around 10 feet long with bar seating, or L shape with bar seating. We always try to lay them out with a cooking area and a food prep area, and include a raised section for bar stools. The most important thing is to have the outdoor kitchen placed ergonomically to the rear door of the house because you are going in and out with food, you want it close. Finally, we'd recommend covering it with a roof to get more year-round use out of it."



Keith Frederick, *President and CEO*

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Cabinetry and workbenches offer functional ways to stay organized and free up space. Slat wall is a wonderful solution to organize tight spaces and create the perfect way to organize tools, hoses, ladders, you name it.”

—Christine Kazigian, marketing manager for Closets By Design
Southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware

Untapped Potential



Images courtesy of Closets By Design and EncoreGarage

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THE GARAGE IS OFTEN A “CATCH-ALL” FOR LIFE. From tools to toys to seasonal décor—and even that stuff you haven’t touched in 10 years—the garage often ends up being the place where everything is stored. And around all that, most homeowners want to fit their car in there, too. If your garage is leaving you feeling like your life is more in chaos than in order, then it just may be time for a garage makeover.

There are a number of reasons why homeowners decide to transform their garage, but Joe Fay, owner of EncoreGarage of NJ, says that storage definitely remains one of the most important.



By LINDSEY GETZ

Untapped Potential

“With so many people moving to 55-plus communities or downsizing to smaller homes, they are more committed than ever to maximizing the space they have,” Fay says. “Nothing is worse than having to pay for a storage unit just so you have enough space to keep all of the items you want to store.”

Aaron Lewis, owner of Closets for Less of Bucks, agrees and says many of his clients are also downsizing or moving to senior living communities and they need more storage space for items they’re just not ready to part with.

“Downsizing often presents homeowners with the challenge of finding more space for their belongings,” Lewis says. “Naturally, they turn to the garage. But since so many people also use their garage as a main entrance to their home, they don’t want it to be a mess.”

Garage Makeover Benefits

Of course, getting organized and creating more storage has many benefits including improved mental health to even boosted home value.

“The garage is almost always the main point of entry and exit from the home,” says Paul Greskovich, owner of Garage Craft Interiors. “It’s how you see yourself in the morning and how you see yourself when you come home. You really don’t want to start and end your day on bad notes because you’ve turned your garage into a debris field that you have to walk through whenever coming or going from the home.”

A garage makeover can also be a wise investment in terms of home value, as well. It’s a desired feature for homebuyers.

“If you’re ever thinking of selling your home down the road, organizing and finishing the garage has been one of the top five ways to increase marketability and value of a

home,” says Les Hutton of GarageTek of North and Central New Jersey. “When potential buyers see a nice home, they also have an expectation for what they want the house to include—and a nice garage is part of that.”

Hutton says that some homeowners even use the garage for purposes beyond storage or parking the car. He has had homeowners who want the garage space to double as a play area for the kids, as an art or pottery studio, as a mudroom or as a dog kennel—among other uses.

“Sometimes these are dedicated spaces but oftentimes homeowners want the garage to be multi-purpose so that it can store a car and their items but it can also serve other purposes when they need it to,” Hutton explains. “One of the hallmarks of our system is the flexibility so you can adapt and change it as needed, allowing you to create a custom space based on your needs. It’s not just a bunch of closet systems bolted to the wall that are immovable and can’t be adapted to your needs.”

Lewis says he’s even had a few clients turn their garage into a man cave where they have a bar and television—a place where they can go watch the game when friends come over.

A Place for Everything

With these feelings in mind, many homeowners are looking for solutions to their clutter challenges. The garage experts all say it’s about finding a “place for everything.” That includes creating a variety of storage possibilities and using the garage space to its fullest.

“Cabinets, overhead storage, grids and slat walls with hooks for everything will give everything a place,” says Fay. “And once you do that, it suddenly becomes easier to stay organized. Once you give that beach

chair or that bike its own space it tends to always go back in that space so it stays organized. When you have no organization solutions, you just put stuff anywhere and you can’t find it.”

Lewis agrees that finding a “home” for everything is key.

“We can add cabinetry so that items can be neatly tucked away—out of sight instead of looking cluttered,” Lewis says. “We can also add slat walls to hang tools, garden equipment, ladders, and more. The idea is to get things up and off the floor. Some homeowners want bike racks that will come down from the ceiling so that their bikes are put away.”

Greskovich also says that he installs quite a bit of overhead storage including a unique system that involves a platform that can be cranked up and out of the way when not needed.

“It’s about getting things up and out of the way by making use of overhead storage,” Greskovich says.

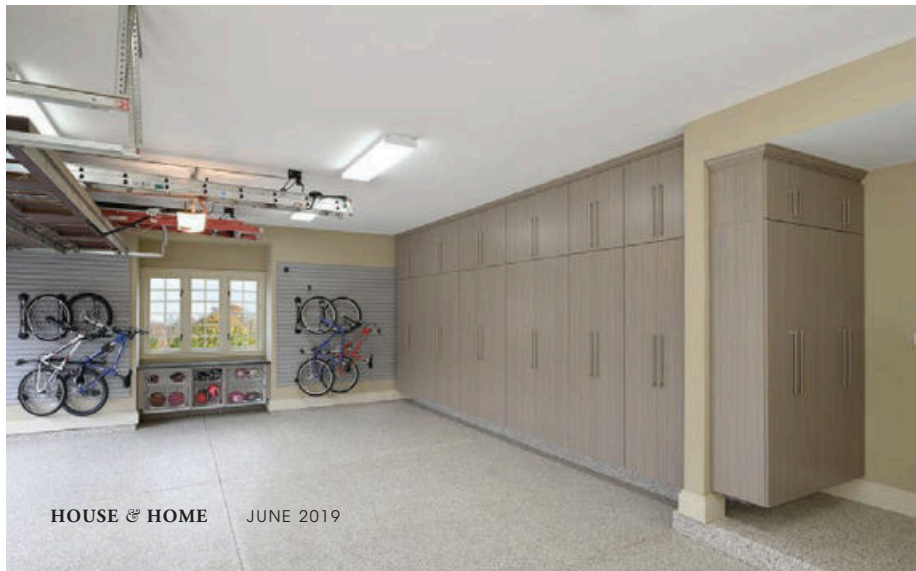
“Cabinetry and workbenches offer functional ways to stay organized and free up space,” adds Christine Kazigian, marketing manager for Closets By Design Southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware. “A slat wall is a wonderful solution to organize tight spaces and create the perfect way to organize tools, hoses, ladders, you name it. Closets By Design has accessories for your garage needs. Utilizing these garage accessories will allow for more floor space and a garage that your neighbors will envy.”

A Garage Door that Wows

When you’re going through a garage makeover, you don’t want to overlook the door. Tom Rooney, general manager of Door Works, points out that the garage door is the largest moving item of your house—and the first thing that people see when they pull up to (or drive by) your home. Being such a large visual aspect of your home, you want to make sure it “wows.”

“The color black is popular for garage doors,” says Rooney. “We’re also seeing an increase in the number of full glass and aluminum doors in different styles and materials to choose from, making them a versatile choice. Carriage doors have been around for a long time but continue to be popular with homeowners. They offer many different styles and materials to choose from.”

Rooney says that many homeowners also don’t realize just how many finish colors



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Untapped Potential

they have to choose from. People can have the doors painted by the manufacturers in a wide variety of colors from a paint chart, and also match the garage door to the front entrance door style in design and glass, says Rooney.

Beneath the Feet

When it comes to renovating the garage, the floor matters, too. After all, when going to all this trouble to get the garage in order and make it a more useable space, it makes sense to complete the look with a new floor.

At EverStone Floors, the use of an epoxy stone floor surface with natural river stone epoxy overlay is a very unique look for a garage. Jason Larsen, president of EverStone Floors of NEPA, says that the best choice for your garage flooring depends upon the current condition of your floor and how you're using your garage.

"If the floor is in really bad shape with numerous cracks and uneven concrete, then EverStone may be a great option—you can remedy the issues in most situations and the product is slip resistant," Larsen explains. "If the floor has cracks but is even, you have a few options. You can install an epoxy flake floor that is available in numerous colors, is slip resistant and is resistant to most chemicals. Epoxy flake is great for a garage that you store belongings in and park vehicles. If you're looking to use the garage to not just park your vehicles but also work on them, epoxy quartz is the way to go. Quartz is extremely durable and can withstand a car being jacked up without damaging it."

Closets By Design Southeastern Pennsylvania and Delaware also has floor options.

"Traxtile is an amazing product that sits on top of your existing garage floor," explains Shelley Steel, one of the company's senior designers. "It is anti-skid and prevents water and de-

bris build-up by allowing it to drain properly. It can also be easily cleaned or vacuumed. It expands and contracts with climate changes and is the perfect solution for a seamless and beautiful garage surface."

Making a Wise Choice

In the end, no matter which organization solutions you choose, you want to be confident that your garage makeover is completed the way you want it. By choosing to work with a garage professional, you can ensure that you have the garage you've been dreaming of and that fully meets all of your needs. **H&H**



RESOURCES

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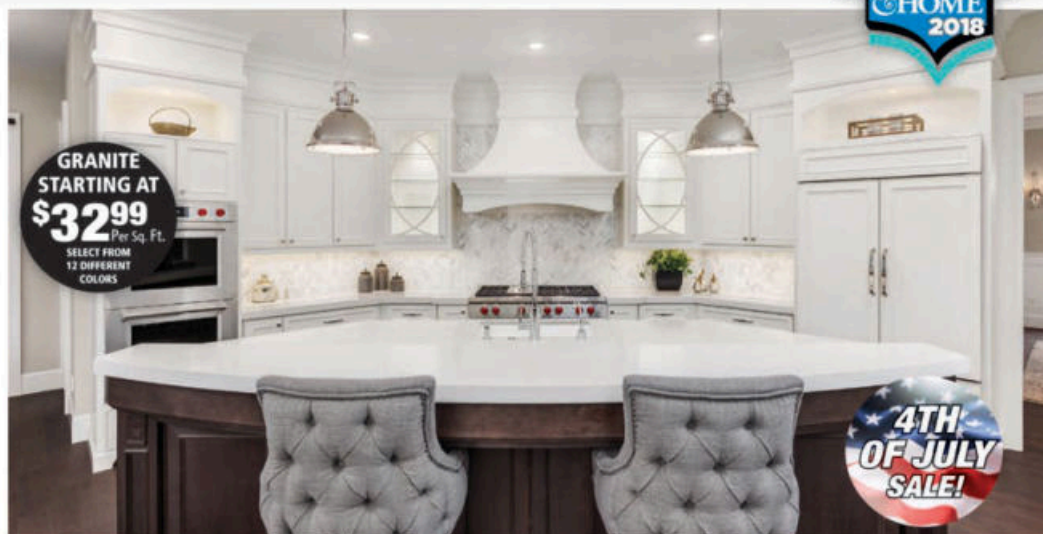
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What made you want to start or be part of this business?

Being mechanically inclined and working at a sheet metal shop in high school made me think I wanted to do something in this line of work. However, after the service (Vietnam War) I went to school in Philadelphia for heating and air conditioning. Also, after a few years of working for a company, I knew I wanted to work for myself. Back in the '60s and early '70s the idea of everyone having air conditioning was becoming more apparent.

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What are some challenges you've faced working with family members?

Everyone has their individual talents and works independently with no animosity. When we need each other's advice we confer with each other and really work out each problem together. That's where total trust and transparency come into effect.



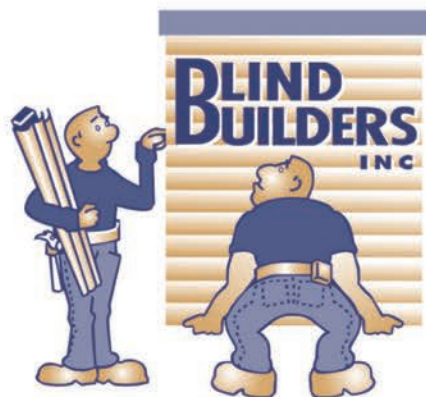
What are the advantages and/or what do you find rewarding about working with family members?

Total and complete honesty and trust. Many family businesses don't always have this type of relationship, but I can assure you after 45-plus years in business, it makes all the difference in the world.

What is your favorite thing to do together as a family outside of work?

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What the Paint Pros Know

The best tips and hints on how to get the most out of your exterior painting refresh.

While it might be easy to know when certain items around your house need to be fixed or replaced, it's not always so simple to make the same call about your home's exterior paint job. And even when you are certain, you also have to be informed about the best way to make sure the new work lasts. There are many things to keep in mind, so here are some ideas to get you on the best path for your home.

IS IT TIME TO REPAINT?

"Visible signs to look for when it's time to repaint your exterior can include peeling and blistering paint, splintering of siding, severe fading and rotted or damaged areas of siding depending upon the surface," says Greg Parkhill, owner, Brush Masters XP. "The length of time in between painting your exterior will solely depend upon doing the job properly. The best way to ensure a beautiful,

long-lasting finish is to not cut corners on the preparation of surfaces being painted."

A good indicator that it might be time for a new paint job is when you notice the paint yellowing, flaking or peeling, says Valerie Traore, owner/president of Fresh Coat Painters of Burlington-Camden.

"These indicators should be addressed quickly or the scope of the work can increase significantly

over time, leading to a more costly paint job down the road," says Greg Johnson, franchise partner for Wow 1 Day Painting in Chester County. He says there's no exact timeline for when a house needs to be repainted, since every home is different. You need to consider climate, weather, the quality of the previous paint job, type and quality of paint used, how many coats applied, and even the color selection.

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO REPAINT?

"There are only two techniques when painting an exterior property—the traditional brush-and-roll method or by utilizing spray equipment. When done properly, both can deliver the same long-lasting results. Certain homes may require one method over the other depending on surroundings, complexity or siding type," says Parkhill.

He says all exterior painting should include a professional pressure-washer rinse to remove surface debris, stains and mold to ensure proper adhesion of the paint. Sanding enhances adhesion and promotes durability of the new finish.

Traore says that a bad DIY job can mess up your home's curb appeal and can leave you needing a costly fix. The best idea is to hire a professional, she says. "Sanding is not always necessary unless you have flaking which is corrected by using a scraper. But power-washing is always recommended as it removes any dirt, dust, insects, bird poop and other debris that you don't want to paint over as it will not have a smooth finish," she says.

After washing your home with low pressure and a detergent to remove any dirt and organic growth, do all necessary sanding, scraping and filling of holes, says Christian Militello, president, Militello Painting & Powerwashing, who then recommends two coats of a high-quality paint which has some self-priming attributes. Applying just a refresher coat is possible but only in a few limited scenarios. He says powerwashing can destroy the surface of siding or put water in places you do not want it, so be careful. "We have specialized equipment, chemicals and soaps to help wash homes and prepare them for paint," he says.

Johnson reiterates all this through a three-step process: 1. Powerwash a few days before starting the project. 2. Prepare

the surfaces for painting, scraping, sanding and priming areas where paint is failing or bare wood is showing. Patch holes/cracks and caulk gaps to prevent moisture. 3. Paint, starting at the top and working your way down.

"Also pay close attention to the weather and season," he says. "It's always best to paint on days that are dry and relatively mild, with an ideal temperature being 50-90 degrees. This is why spring and summer are the best times to paint the exterior of your home in most markets."



THE "RIGHT" PAINT

There are many options for exterior paints and all vary by cost, coverage and durability, says Parkhill. "Take into consideration the existing paint, as priming may be necessary to ensure proper adhesion of a new paint." A professional painter can help you explore your options.

"Simple rule: always use exterior paint for exterior work. And if you value your home, don't go cheap on the paint either. It really makes a difference in the finished product," says Traore.

Militello explains the different terminology on paint cans and how it might affect the finished product. "Sheen: The more shine, the more dirt that can be repelled from the surface and more protection you will get because of that. High Gloss: generally used on exterior trim. Satin/Eggshell: Is in between flat

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“Higher quality paints have great features that will ensure the best protection and coverage for your home while also lasting longer than cheaper paints. Spending a few hundred dollars more on better paint will ensure you get the best return on investment on your project.”

Greg Johnson, Wow 1 Day Painting

and gloss, generally used on the body of the home but is becoming more popular to use on trim. Flat: No shine and is used on the body of the home. Because of the volatile organic compounds (VOC) laws, oil-based paint is generally being phased out. If you have it on your house already, you'll need to prime with an oil-based primer before adding two coats of latex paint. Oil and water don't mix and will cost a lot to repair down the road,” he says.

While in the past many favored oil paint because it was more durable, the last few years have brought improvements in latex

paint technology. Now it's more widely used because it offers the same benefits but is easier to work with and safer for the environment, says Johnson. As for what paint to use, he says, “Higher quality paints have great features that will ensure the best protection and coverage for your home while also lasting longer than cheaper paints. Spending a few hundred dollars more on better paint will ensure you get the best return on investment on your project.”

Johnson adds that when deciding between paint and stain, remember that “stain protects and preserves the beauty of your wood compared to paint, which covers and hides it.” The decision rests

with what type of surface you're painting, the climate and what was on the surface previously.

YOUR COLOR PALETTE & YOUR PAINTER

When deciding on what color palette to work with, Parkhill suggests speaking with a certified color designer who will take into consideration the area you live in and will incorporate the flow of your neighborhood since you want your home to complement the rest. When it comes to selecting a painting contractor, make sure it's a comfortable fit. “Some companies are more suitable for your needs than others. Be sure to check all licenses,

insurances and other background information prior to awarding your project. Always remember it's your home, money and vision—not the contractor's.”

“If you live in a development with an active homeowners association (HOA), you are restricted to certain palettes so be sure to check. If not, then let your imagination run wild,” advises Traore. “I've seen some colors of homes that will simply amaze you with beauty, and then other colors... well... let's say beauty is in the eye of the beholder.”

Militello says that the easiest way to consider your palette is to walk around your neighborhood. “See what your neighbors are using. If you don't have an eye for color, hire a professional. Choosing the right color can make all the difference.” He says the best way to decide on the right painting company is to decide what is important to you and then make sure the one you hire reflects that.

A note on comparing painters and quotes, by Johnson: “Not



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all quotes are created equal. If you're getting multiple estimates you should review them closely to see if you're comparing apples to apples." Differences in price mean different paint quality, prep standards and number of coats

of paint—each of which can significantly impact the price and quality of the paint job. "The cheapest bid is rarely the best option. It likely means less labor is being put into your project or incorrect processes are being fol-

lowed which may compromise the quality and longevity of the job. You're better to pick the reasonable price to ensure your job is done right and lasts as long as possible so that you don't need to repaint sooner." **H&H**

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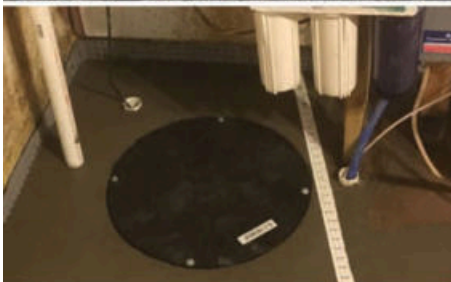
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Kitchen Tune-Up

by **Matt Cosentino**

There is no question that the kitchen is the heart of the home, as it is the place where guests flock during a party, the family gathers for nightly dinner or spouses meet to discuss their day with each other.

Because of its significance, kitchen renovations remain popular as homeowners look to incorporate the latest styles or increase the functionality of the space. But hiring the right company to handle such an important job is critical.

Kitchen Tune-Up in Malvern—the locally owned franchise of a national organization with more than 150 locations—specializes in kitchen remodels of all sizes and strives to give its customers the highest quality in a timely and affordable manner.

“We provide all of the options, including full-scale renovation projects,” owner Jeff Toren says. “But we also believe you don’t have to spend a fortune or be displaced from your home for weeks to get the space you’ve always wanted.

“We believe in doing everything in the best possible way, with integrity, care and efficiency. We take the time to listen to our clients, and we take the time to do things right.”

We recently sat down with Toren to learn more about Kitchen Tune-Up and the options available, from wood restoration to cabinet refacing and brand-new custom cabinetry.

Who is the ideal candidate for the services you provide?

Our customers range from those living in a small condo to those in a large home, so there is no ideal candidate. It can be anyone;



EXPERTISE: CABINETRY/KITCHEN REMODELING

Jeff and Penny Toren, Owners

it just depends on your kitchen and what you’re trying to achieve.

For example, some customers are changing the layout so significantly that they’re knocking walls down and the whole function of the kitchen is changing. You also want new cabinets when your cabinets are low quality and the boxes are falling apart; refacing those boxes is not a good investment. In those cases, getting new cabinets makes sense. Otherwise, we can save you time, money and mess by refacing them and giving you the look of a completely new kitchen at half or a third of the price in three to five days. We also offer the “original tune-up,” which will restore your cabinets if you have stained wood cabinets, but they just tend to be a little tired, have lost their finish and are looking like they need to be brought back to their former glory.

How does the process differ between restoration and refacing?

In restoration you’re keeping everything. We’re basically coming in and doing a deep clean on the cabinets, repairing scratches, doing color repair and putting new finish coats on. With refacing you get new doors and we reface the actual boxes with new end panels, new molding and veneer on the face that matches the doors. So it’s a pretty big difference because you’re adding new parts instead of just making it look better.

Tell me about your custom cabinetry if someone decides to go with a full renovation.

We have a full-time designer on staff who

works closely with our clients to help choose the look, style and functionality to help provide the perfect design for your needs. We don’t sell mass-produced cabinets; we measure and configure the cabinets to exactly fit that kitchen. Our designer will lay your kitchen out in a design software so you can see exactly what your new kitchen will look like before you place an order.

Why is your recently opened showroom beneficial for customers?

We opened our showroom last year and as far as I know we’re the only one of our competitors who has a showroom like this. We have hundreds of doors; we have tiles for backsplash; we have hundreds of countertop options, from granite to quartz; we can show refacing and new cabinets. This allows us to work with our customers so they can physically see all of the material and make selections to fit their style.

Why should someone choose Kitchen Tune-Up over a general contractor?

We stand by our work and we have extensive reviews from our customers. We don’t play games in the sales process and we don’t employ high-pressure tactics. And I think the biggest difference over anyone else in the market is that we’re a national franchise with over 150 locations, but I’m a local owner, so you have the best of both worlds. The national franchise allows us to have very strong buying power, so our product quality is incredible but at a price below a big box store or a lot of our competitors. We offer a really good value and the attention of a local ownership group. I’m involved in every project and very hands-on throughout the process. **H&H**

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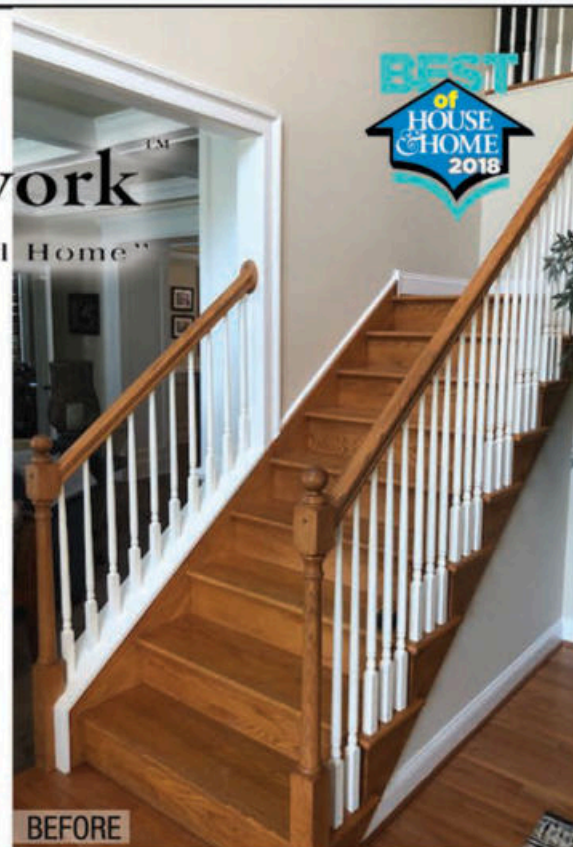
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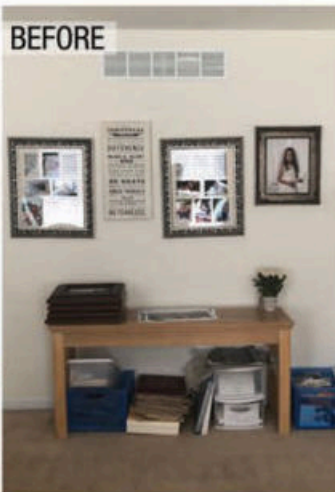


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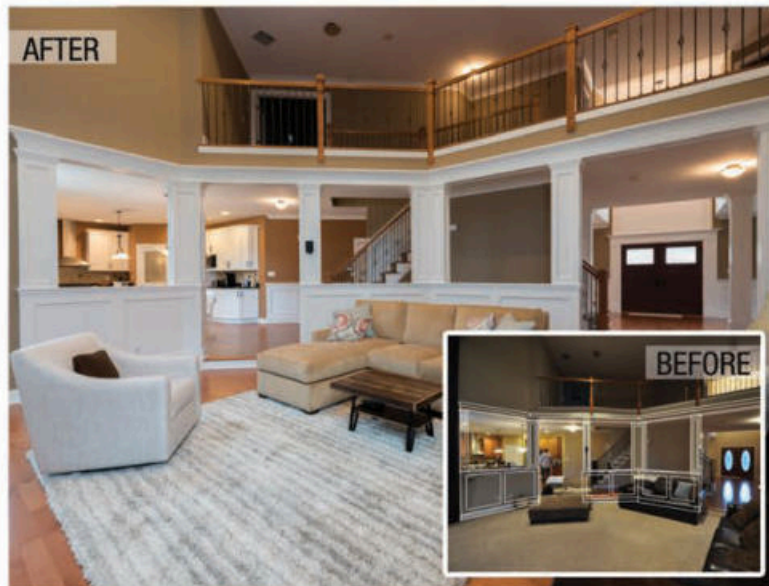
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