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North Jersey

Your #1 Resource and Design Magazine

Volume 24, Issue 4



CLC Landscape Design

Creating beautiful, award-winning pools *page 19*

INSIDE: OUR ANNUAL LANDSCAPE, POOL, PATIO AND DECK DIRECTORY

Page 20

Around the Pool

The latest trends and expert advice

Dynamic Decks

How to create the ultimate outdoor gathering spot

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Sequoia Out Back

Inspiring homeowners to create their outdoor oasis page 26

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Window Works

Continuing its decades-long tradition *page 7*

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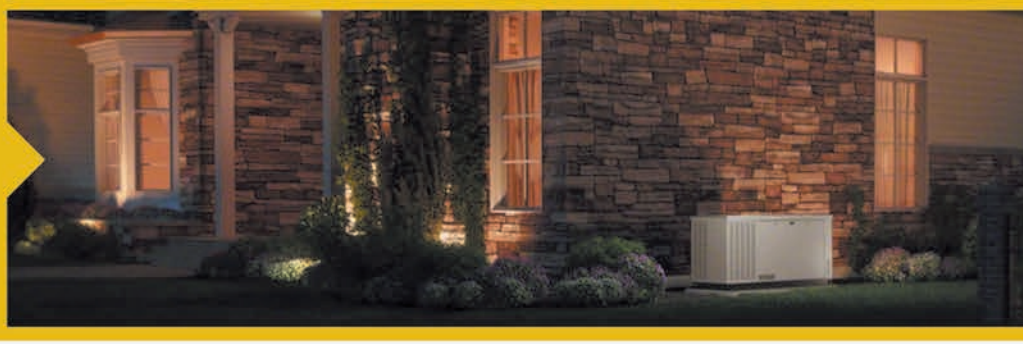
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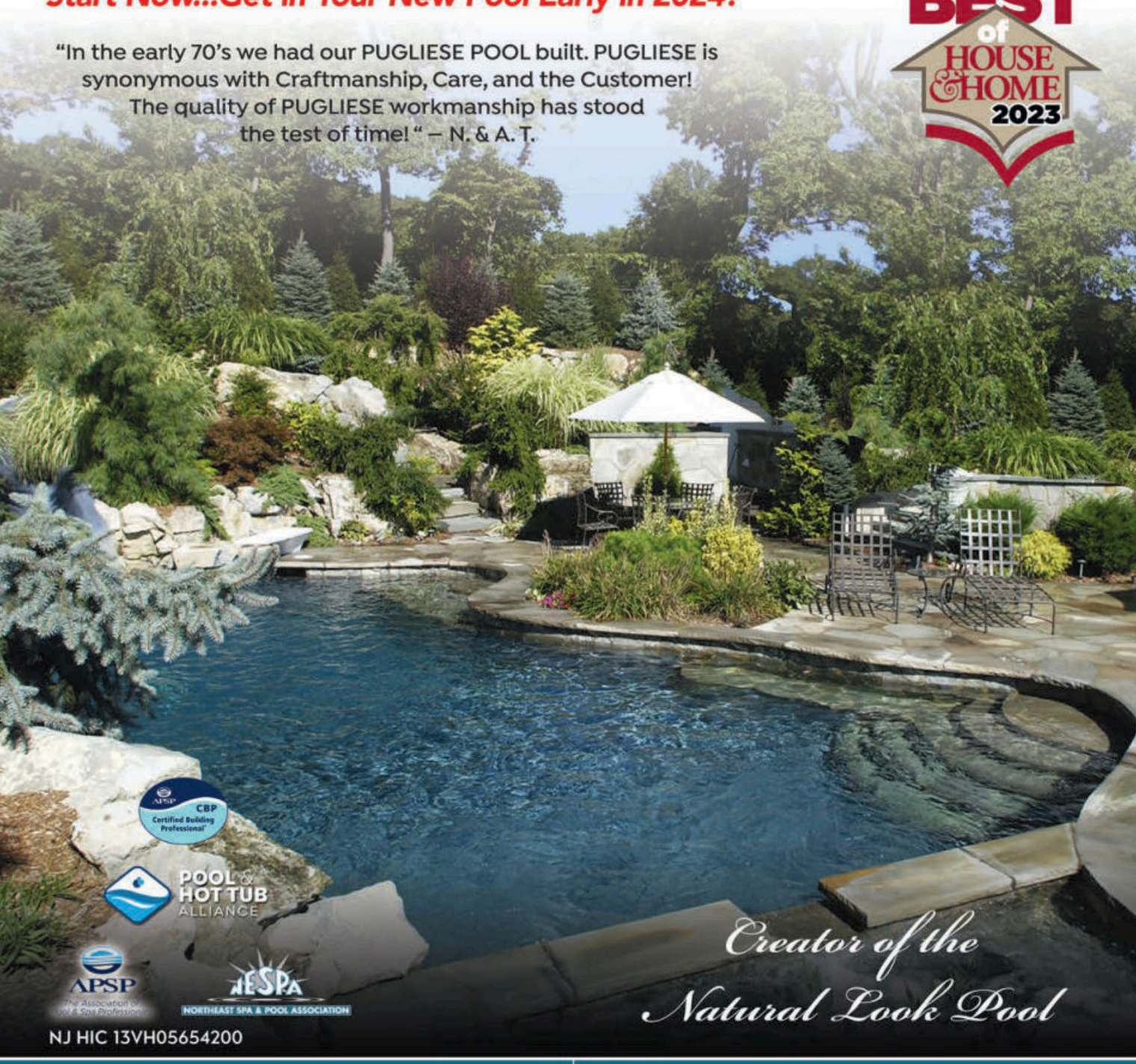
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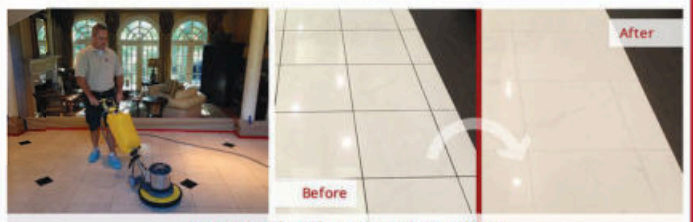
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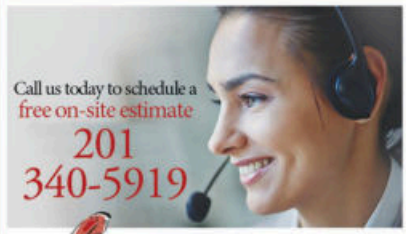
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In Good Hands

Now in its second generation of family ownership, Window Works continues to provide the highest level of customer service it's been well known for since 1982.

by **Matt Cosentino**

When founders Vince and LuAnn Nigara stepped back from the day-to-day responsibilities of running Window Works last year, they knew they wanted the next owners to embody the same honesty, integrity and commitment to their clients that they had in the previous four decades. It turned out the perfect successors, who believed wholeheartedly in those core values, were right under their noses.

JC Rocha and his wife Christie, Vince and LuAnn's daughter, stepped up and assumed ownership to keep the company in the family. Since 1982, Window Works has served homeowners across New Jersey with a wide selection of window treatments and exterior shade solutions. Thanks to the example the Nigaras set for their daughter and son-in-law, the transition has been seamless.

"Vince and LuAnn taught us the importance of customer service, the ability to connect with people, provide for their needs and the magic that happens when customers become family," JC Rocha says. "I can't tell you how many people have told us that their mother or father worked with Window Works for interior window fashions or exterior awnings, and now they're working with us too. Since taking over, customer service has remained a top priority and our whole team takes pride in continuing that legacy."

Rocha started at Window Works in 2017 as an awning and window treatment specialist, and although his wife grew up around the business, taking it over was not in their initial plans. Eventually, however, the pride and excitement that grew around continuing what her parents started took center stage in their lives. They are joined on the ownership team by Bill Campesi—Vince's cousin who has been with the company for 40 years—and by longtime, dedicated team members Kim Serafim and Carlos Martins.

"Originally, my wife and I had completely different career paths—both in customer service, but neither in the design industry," Rocha says. "But thankfully we're joined by a team of seasoned veterans who are now also partners. Through all of the connections we have and our dedication to improvement, we have something really special here."

The current team has more than 150 years of combined installation experience and Window Works boasts an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau. The company provides free measurements and a reliable timeline for delivery and installation after an order is placed, and offers one of the best warranties in the industry.

"We're not a fly-by-night company," Rocha says. "Unlike most of our competitors who only offer a six-to-12-month labor warranty, we proudly offer a three-year labor warranty. It's important for our customers to know that if something goes wrong or a finished product is not up to their standards, that we will make the necessary adjustments until it's done right."

Window treatments are so much more than a finishing touch on a room, they really add a wow factor. Window Works offers a wide variety of custom products such as draperies, shutters, shades and motorized products.

"Our products provide energy efficiency, privacy and beauty," Rocha says. "Window treatments make rooms pop and help tell the story of your home.

"The beauty of our company is that we have the experience and bandwidth to cater to experienced designers who know exactly what they want, and to first-time homebuyers who don't yet have experience with window treatments. Our sales reps do so much more than sell— they are eager to design, create and partner with clients to choose colors, patterns and products they will be very happy with for years and years to come."

With warmer weather approaching, homeowners will also be seeking ways to stay protected from the sun in their outdoor spaces, and Window Works can help with that as well.

"Our customers invest into their decks, pools and patios, but are not able to use these wonderful spaces because of heat, sun, and other weather-related concerns," Rocha says. "We offer everything from stationary and retractable awnings to louvered roofs, retractable roofs, umbrellas and sun shades. There are solutions for sun, wind and rain, and some products even have integrated gutters, lighting and heating systems. Our exterior options are often what takes a beautiful outdoor space and transforms it into a complete package. Our clients are more comfortable and make greater use of their outdoors all year long."

Known by the entire team and reiterated by Rocha, Window Works' longstanding core beliefs can be summed up as experience, expertise and excellence. Since the company's inception, providing quality interior window coverings and innovative exterior products, while delivering top-notch customer service, has and always will remain forefront.

"We have definitely upheld the focus on customer service, attention to detail and overall excellence," Rocha says. "And Vince and Lu are still on as consultants to support and guide us every step of the way." **H&H**

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Elevating Homes

Magnolia Home Remodeling Group is transforming spaces and enriching lives.

In the realm of home improvement, where craftsmanship meets creativity, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group stands tall as a beacon of excellence. With a steadfast commitment to quality, innovation and customer satisfaction, this family-owned and -operated company has carved a niche for itself in the competitive landscape of the remodeling industry.

A Legacy of Craftsmanship

Magnolia Home Remodeling Group began its journey 30 years ago with a singular vision: to redefine the art of home improvement through uncompromising quality and unparalleled craftsmanship. From its humble beginnings, the company has grown steadily as a family-owned business, earning the trust and admiration of homeowners across the tri-state area.

At the core of Magnolia's success lies its unwavering commitment to excellence in every aspect of its operations. From the initial consultation to the final reveal, the company prioritizes superior craftsmanship, attention to detail and customer satisfaction above all else.

Craftsmanship Redefined

Magnolia Home Remodeling Group takes pride in its team of highly skilled craftsmen who are passionate about their work. With years of experience and a keen eye for detail, these professionals bring visions to life, transforming ordinary spaces into extraordinary havens.

Owner Vic Fiore shares, "For the past 30 years, we've transformed countless New Jersey homes inside and out. Our team does just about every kind of renovation project, from new bathrooms and kitchens to siding, windows, decks, porches, patios and more. With every project, our goal is to build a strong, lasting relationship with the homeowner."

Whether it's a kitchen renovation, bathroom remodel or full-scale home makeover, Magnolia approaches each project with the same level of dedication and precision. From concept to completion, the company collaborates closely with clients to understand their needs, preferences and lifestyles, ensuring that every detail is tailored to perfection.

"When you work with us, you can expect the highest quality of workmanship and professionalism. We provide each customer with a detailed scope of work, budget and timeline for your project, and you can expect us to stick to that budget and timeline. If we can't, you'll know exactly why," Fiore says.

Above all and most importantly, you can expect a high level of communication, no matter how big or small your project is. "We answer the phone when you call. We reply to your emails, and we check in with you regularly," says Fiore.

Innovative Solutions

In an ever-evolving industry, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group remains at the forefront of innovation. By staying abreast of the latest trends, technologies and design concepts, the company continually pushes the boundaries of creativity and craftsmanship.

From smart-home integration to eco-friendly solutions, Magnolia embraces innovation to deliver cutting-edge remodeling solutions that not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of a space but also improve its functionality and efficiency. Whether it's incorporating sustainable materials or implementing state-of-the-art technology, Magnolia ensures that each project is as sustainable as it is stylish.

Customer-Centric Approach

At Magnolia Home Remodeling, the client always comes first. The company understands that remodeling can be a daunting endeavor, and strives to make the process as seamless and stress-free as possible for its clients.

"You're our priority. We promise to treat your home as if it's our own," shares Fiore.

From the initial consultation to the final walkthrough, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group fosters open communication and collaboration, keeping clients informed and involved every step of the way. Whether it's providing design recommendations, addressing concerns or accommodating special requests, the company goes above and beyond to ensure that each client's vision is brought to life with precision and excellence.

Looking Ahead

As Magnolia Home Remodeling looks to the future, its commitment to excellence, innovation and customer satisfaction remains unwavering. With a legacy built on craftsmanship and integrity, the company is poised to continue its upward trajectory, shaping the homes and communities of tomorrow. Additionally, Magnolia started offering financing for those large ticket projects. "There's no reason to delay enjoying your home," Fiore says. "We have great financing options for those who want to get started right away."

All in all, Magnolia Home Remodeling Group stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through a steadfast commitment to quality, innovation and customer-centric values. As the company continues to elevate spaces and enrich lives, its legacy of excellence will undoubtedly endure for generations to come. H&H



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Elevated Exteriors

Exploring the plethora of effective decking options takes an outdoor living space—and the entire home—to new heights.

BY CARLY MURRAY

A stylish and functional deck can be the centerpiece of a memorable summer, and the modern, multifaceted approach to decking allows for an expansion of the home. Traditionally a place of outdoor observation, gathering and relaxation, decks in 2024 often include the additional features of outdoor kitchens, pergolas, gazebos, screens, fireplaces and more. The consistently growing trend of creative customization is no longer limited to interior design or landscaping, enhancing both a space and residents' quality of life.



Deck Aesthetics

Home renovation projects have the best results when they are coordinated with each element of the home, culminating in a harmonious structure with every detail taken into account. When it comes to decking, one should be mindful of the adjacent interior space, the outdoor living space surrounding it and the exterior elements of a home. A property can be like a blank canvas, completely restructured for optimal personalization, but it can also act as a starting point to inspire a deck's look and utility

"Two factors dictate what your new deck should look like—it must be in proportion with the house and property, and it must be built large enough to accommodate the people using the deck," says Jerry Jerminski of Get Decked.

Colonial-style houses are characteristic of the Delaware Valley region, and that built-in historical charm allows for a guideline to help match a deck to the exterior. This is not to say that the preferred aesthetics are exclusively vintage, but rather timeless. When renovating or remodeling a deck, experts and homeowners strive to fuse contemporary and classic elements.

"A few years back, a lot of what we saw were modern looks. It seems that it has changed a little bit more to traditional, classic looks with a modern touch. [For] example, sleek rails, black railings—but still the classic wood look on the deck. So, it seems like the style is slowly moving toward a modern-classical look," says Ephraim Stoltzfus, designer at Deck Craft Plus.

Bold and bright colors aren't very common, so the general process is to opt for a complementary neutral color for the base and to style it with finishes or other parts of the accompanying outdoor living space. With all of the options available, one can pick the exact shade variation with undertones that are congruent with the rest of the space.

"They've developed a few colors that can fit in with the older architectural stone, and then the beige will come out. A gray will come out if you want to hit that modern farmhouse with a gray. They have colors that will satisfy both at the same time—pretty ingenious," explains Bill Wilson, co-owner of Amazing Decks.

Gray seems to be the top choice, according to decking experts in the region. It is the perfect amalgamation of sleek and futuristic tones with an evergreen and adaptable quality. Warmer and cooler colored accessory pieces further influence the look of the deck as a whole.

"I think gray decking is very popular right now. AZEK has about three or four different gray colors, and it seems like we sell a ton of those. Powder-coated aluminum railing mimicking the old, wrought-iron railing style is [also] super popular right now," adds Ray Ebersol, marketing manager of Decks R Us.

Similar to a primary gray color, black adornments are versatile enough to work well with a multitude of colors and styles. The neutral color also gives more freedom to play around with designs without appearing over the top.

"Our most popular railing color now is the bold, black-on-black design—black cross rails and black Deckorators balusters," affirms Jerminski



Elevated Exteriors


DECKS R US

As every piece is essential to the fully finished project, the base of the deck may influence railing and step options, and steps and railing can impact the inclusion of lighting. Aesthetics can encompass visual and tactile appeal with materials, patterns and colors, but to take it up a notch, consider creating movement. Illuminate chosen visuals by intertwining lighting and guiding the eye to a designated focal point.

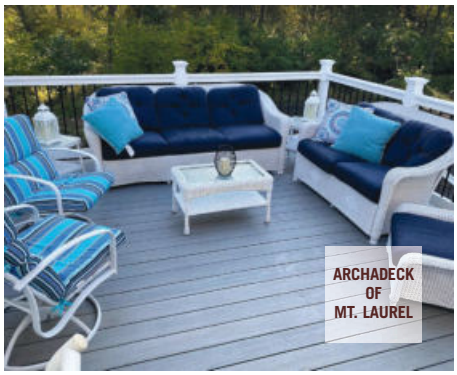
Deck Lighting

Lighting beautifies decking to a new level, and can range from practical to whimsical. Robert Lascelle, owner of My Deck, explains that colored lighting is called RGB lights, and they are increasingly gaining popularity with newer projects. However, practical lighting can still create an ethereal effect with the variety of options and cognizance of placement.

"Our viewpoint on lighting for a high-quality job…Your eyes should not focus on light fixtures, you're looking at the light the fixtures put out and that's what makes quality light jobs," says Lascelle. "Recessed under-rail lights [and] recessed under-stair riser lights are two examples "

Of course, any type of lighting will always require some sort of electrical accommodation. As with any home improvement project, careful planning is not just encouraged—it's a prerequisite. Jarrod Coburn, co-owner and production manager of Archadeck Outdoor Living of Mount Laurel, explains that the most common deck lighting—stair riser lights and rail post cap lights—does not require an electrician to install, but rather utilizes landscape wiring and a transformer with a solar sensor.

"When doing a new deck project or a complete demo and new deck replacement, it's best to decide on your lighting and under deck/skirting options before you start," Coburn says. "Running low voltage wiring to your stair risers and/or rail caps is much easier and cleaner if done before the decking is installed."


ARCHADECK OF MT. LAUREL

Add-Ons

The decision to make a deck an extension of the home demands cohesiveness, but that forethought in the design process is well worth the effort. Expanding the space also expands the realm of lifestyle possibilities. Personalizing a deck for each unique household's lifestyle guarantees that it will be where cherished memories are made.

"Imagine a perfect place for prom or wedding pictures. The multi-level decks cascade around the house towards their backyard with a gorgeous lake view," says Coburn, as he describes one of his most memorable projects.

Whether it is designing a platform ideal for family photographs above a stunning backyard oasis or considering architectural durability for a household with small children, the lifestyle needs of a home's residents are at the forefront. Many of these decisions equate to the idea of accessibility: making sure getting into the house via the deck does not require excessive effort with steep hills or unaligned entrances and adding features that are functional.

Exterior kitchens have made major traction in recent years, as they are highly customizable and add efficiency to the cooking process. When entertaining, a deck can give guests a maximized place to hang out without getting in the way of the food's preparation, and it can also allow for multitasking if cooking multiple dishes.

"You could have 150 people at your house, but they'll all hang out in the kitchen area. We call it the heart of the house. … It's very important that we make our deck an extension of that heart of the house," says Wilson.

Full outdoor kitchens contain almost everything one would expect in an indoor kitchen: sinks, pull-out garbage, refrigerators, drawers and cabinets. Lascelle explains that the main focus is usually a standard grill, but he has witnessed the emergence of outdoor pizza ovens and hibachi-style grills.

"We're doing a ton of exterior kitchens, they're a really big feature that we put on a lot of decks now that people really enjoy," he says. "You can have a full kitchen outside

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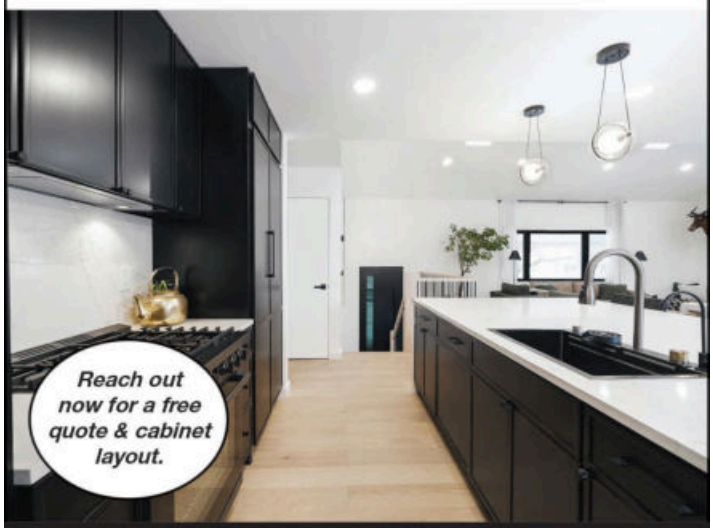
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equipped with almost every feature an interior gourmet kitchen may have."

Taking in nature and fresh air is paradisiacal—with the exception of a few factors. Gazebos, pergolas and screens are other common deck embellishments that provide a picturesque quality as well as factors to ensure an optimal outdoor experience. This includes staying shaded, warm or cool in varied weather, and protection from bugs.

"Gazebos are a great way to screen in an area, to spend more time outdoors. Obviously, if it's bug free, this will enhance the experience ... [and] makes it more pleasant on hot days to sit inside of the gazebo rather than out in the open, in the sun," says Ebersol.

Regardless of any potential qualms about an outdoor living space, there is typically an inventive solution that can be built into a deck. For example, gazebos can have outlets, fans and tinted windows installed. Additionally, working with the railing and underside of a deck can best maximize the area. Stoltzfus exemplifies this problem-solving approach while discussing a unique project that he worked on last summer: a second-story deck with a fully custom outdoor kitchen and bar underneath.

"We put a dry space underneath, outfitted with lights of course and some ceiling fans. We put stone columns from the ground to railing height, and we put screens in around the bottom of that deck. ... The face screens were all electrical screens, and we put a double-sided fireplace under the deck as well," he recounts.

A desired vision is a major first step toward the deck of one's dreams, and previously inconceivable attributes are more accessible than ever. Consulting an expert can traverse imaginative ideals and conceptualize them into reality, guaranteeing a deck you and your family will love. H&H

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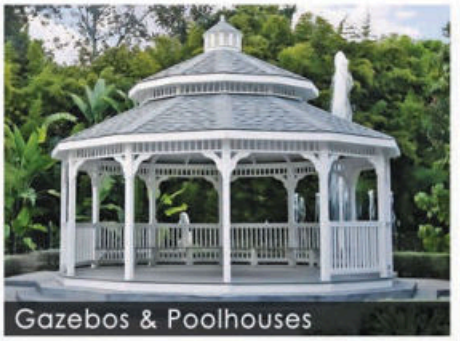
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The client's aspiration was to craft a versatile backyard retreat and accommodate year-round enjoyment. The Montville Makeover features a freeform pool and expansive patio, artfully landscaped surroundings, a series of rockeries and framing garden beds, fire pits and the soothing presence of bubbling fountains to enhance the overall ambiance.



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This client came to us wanting to enhance the curb appeal of her home, by creating new garden beds. The outcome was a front yard that not only captivates the eye but also imbues a sense of pride in the homeowners, ensuring that every return home is met with a gratifying smile of contentment.

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CLC is a leader in the landscape design/build field, designing endless jaw-dropping landscapes, of all sizes. Here, we spotlight some of the company's 2023 award-winning projects. **H&H**

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THE WOODCLIFF LAKE ESCAPE

This ambitious project encompassed a comprehensive array of elements to ensure year-round enjoyment: a pool for summer days, a hot tub to provide warmth and comfort during the chilly evenings, multiple fire features for the cozy ambiance, an outdoor kitchen for grilling season, a pavilion for shade and entertainment purposes, and a thoughtfully designed deck.

Landscape Directory 2024



WITH SPRING IN BLOOM, homeowners across the country are preparing to spend the coming months in their own backyards, and chances are they would like to invest in some updates. Our annual landscape directory connects our readers with local resources to consult on any project related to the outdoors. This comprehensive list includes companies that can create an oasis with a pool, patio or deck, not to mention hardscaping, water features and shade elements; or professionals who maintain landscaping, provide furniture or install fences and much more. No matter what you need, your outdoor space is in good hands.



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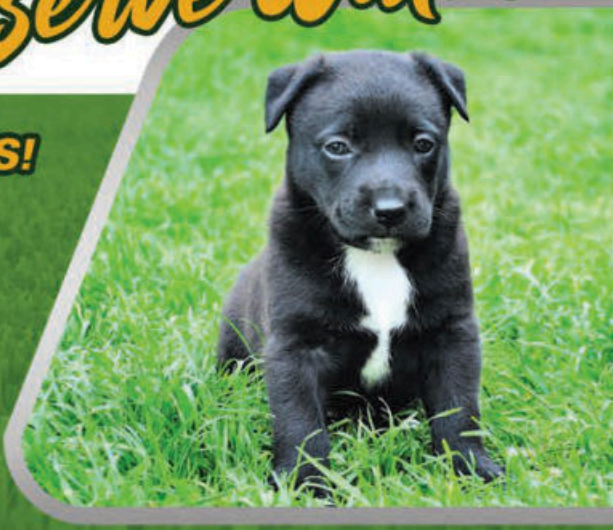
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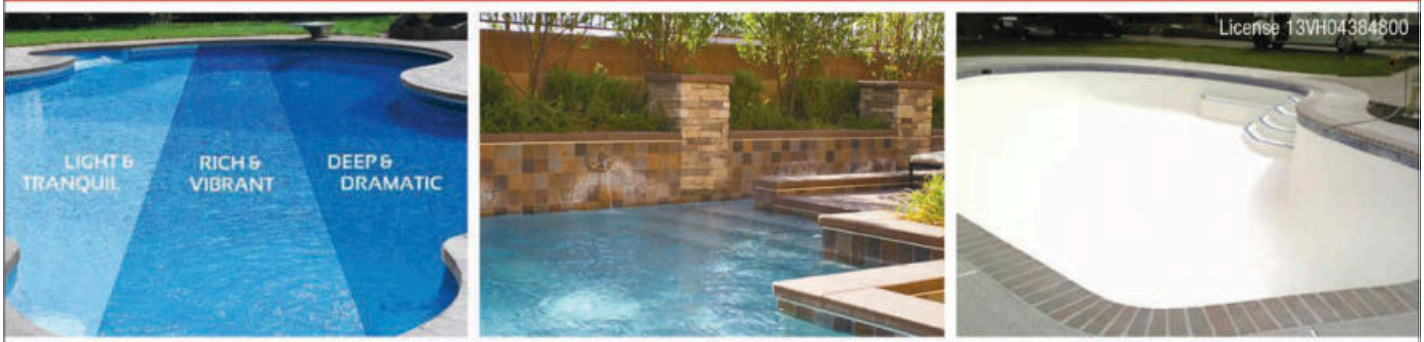
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charliespavinginc.com

Ted Weiland Construction
201-488-1886
201-391-0502
tedweilandconstruction@gmail.com

POOL DESIGN/INSTALLATION

Blue Haven Pools & Spas NE by Calvitti
800-219-2141
bluehaven.com

CLC Landscape Design
973-839-6026
clcdesign.com

DEL VAL POOLS & SPAS

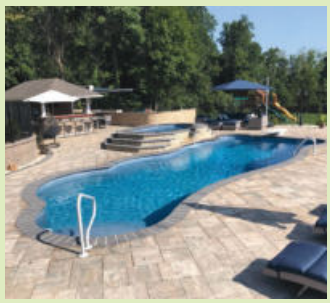


Del Val Pools & Spas is one of the leading custom pool builders in southern New Jersey serving the tri-state area and excels in bringing a client's vision to reality. Del Val provides custom in-ground gunite pool construction, above-ground pools, renovation, service and retail needs with three locations in Turnersville, Mantua, and Elmer, NJ. Frequently consulted by municipalities for technical and engineering expertise, Del Val's finished products have been featured in a number of publications, brochures and articles. Del Val Pools & Spas maintains an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau and has received "Best of" Awards in a variety of southern New Jersey publications.
856-629-2999
delvalpoolsandspas.com

D. Panetta Contracting, LLC
973-659-9374
dpanettacontracting.com

Environmental Landscape Associates
215-794-2400
elaoutdoorliving.com

POOL DESIGNS



They specialize in fiberglass in-ground swimming pools and spas. They are here to assist you in the installation of your inground swimming pool and or spa design and will also offer you their experience in creating the ambience and finishing touches that fit in your budget.
609-257-2279 | poolinaday.com

Pugliese Pools & Landscape
800-428-7946 | pugliesepools.com

Stardust Pools
732-254-3330 | stardust-pools.com

Swim-Mor Pools & Spas
856-270-6571 | 609-755-3046
732-422-5314 | swimmor.com

POOL SERVICE/POOL LEVELING/REPAIRS/ COVERS/ACCESSORIES

The Mudjacking Guy
856-767-2269
themudjackingguy.com

POLYLEVEL CONCRETE

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215-989-4188
basementsbybq.com

Stardust Pools
732-254-3330 | stardust-pools.com

by Lindsey Getz



Set Up Your Space for Summer

At **Sequoia Out Back**, customers can find endless inspiration for their outdoor dreams.



It's safe to say that the pandemic has taught us to appreciate the outdoors even more. While backyard outdoor living areas have been soaring in popularity for years now, for many, the stay-at-home orders and the experience of being stuck indoors for so long have made homeowners absolutely crave these spaces more than ever. They are truly a must-have—a fact that's been increasingly evident at Sequoia Out Back, where owner John Keller says that he's seeing even more people come into the showroom than ever before.

From the moment that homeowners walk through Sequoia Out Back's front doors, the experience is really unlike any other. The 30,000-square-foot showroom has everything you could want for your personal oasis on display so that you can envision it in your own backyard.

When you walk through a typical patio store or a big-box store, items aren't usually set up or paired together the way they would be in your backyard so it can be difficult to visualize your finished space. At Sequoia, you can see an entire outdoor living space the way that you might set it up on your own patio. It inspires so many ideas.

The goal of the showroom has always been to make homeowners feel like they're stepping into a real-life outdoor space. This helps homeowners to make the best choices when it comes to furniture and decking supplies that will work for their own projects.

Pair these gorgeous displays with the knowledgeable and helpful team members who are ready to assist—and homeowners can really appreciate the showroom visit



At Sequoia, you can see an entire outdoor living space the way that you might set it up on your own patio. It inspires so many ideas.

experience. Customers always leave Sequoia with a lot of great ideas and information.

Of course, in general, inventory has been a major issue since the start of the pandemic. Homeowners who have tried to purchase furniture and decking may have noticed limited stock. But Sequoia Out Back has been fortunate to be able to keep a lot of inventory in stock thanks to its relationship with manufacturers and its purchasing power, as well as having a large quantity from the start. Even so, with so many people coming through the doors, now is the time to start planning for the spring while inventory is still available.

After all, before you know it, the weather will be consistently warm, and we'll all be spending even more time outdoors. Homeowners want to make sure their space is ready now!

"The sooner you can start planning, the better," urges Keller. "The number of visitors coming to the store right now is higher than ever for this time of year. It's definitely not too early to start thinking about setting up your outdoor space."

As you start planning, Sequoia Out Back has all of the amenities that you might want to consider. This includes fire pits, patio furniture and all of the material supplies including decking and railing and hardscaping. Sequoia works with all of the leading manufacturers including TimberTech, Wolf, Trex, Zuri and Fiberon—all of whom continue to offer innovative products.

Whether you're a do-it-yourselfer or someone who was sent by their contractor to look for materials, Sequoia's showroom can accommodate everyone.

It's all about making the experience as easy and as enjoyable as possible for homeowners. As the true outdoor living experts, Sequoia and its team are ready to help make homeowners' backyard dreams come true.

"Outdoor living has been a trend for a long time but it's hotter than ever," Keller sums up. "I think we're all ready to start spending more time outside." **H&H**

Sequoia Out Back

2420 Bethlehem Pike, Route 309 | Hatfield, Pa. | **(866) 650-DECK** | **DeckSupplies.com**





DIVE RIGHT IN

From the lifetime of memories it can provide to increasing property value and more, the benefits of installing and maintaining a pool are innumerable.

by **Chelsea Valcourt**

In recent years, the backyard has become the focal point of many homes. With quarantine limiting travel, folks were left in the confines of their homes—leaving many with plenty of time and reasons to finally conquer their long-desired home improvement projects. For many homeowners, desperate to regain some semblance of normalcy and life outside their four walls, these projects focused on making their backyards places of happiness, beauty and relaxation. People wanted a way to vacation without leaving the house, a way to exercise without going to the gym and eventually, a place to host guests once the pandemic sub-





sided. The solution? Pools.

From installing new and improving existing pools to building up the space around their pools with hardscaping and landscaping, homeowners have taken a renewed interest in elevating their space. After all, who wouldn't want to watch the sunset by the pool after a long, hot day?

With new customization options and rising design trends, it's easier than ever to achieve the pool space of your dreams. Working with experienced pool professionals can even help to combine both design and cost-saving measures—making those dreams a reality while keeping costs to a minimum.

House & Home spoke with some of the area's leading pool companies to solicit their advice on the best way to start the process, to maintain your pool and to turn your simple pool into a hosting space everyone will love.

When is the best time to get started on a pool project for it to be summer-ready?

"The best time to get started on a pool project is in the fall or winter, since the permit process could take four to six months with engineering and zoning. If the customer is installing something other than a fiberglass pool, which can be installed in one day, the customer can plan for a two-to-six-month installation, which would eliminate the entire swimming season. If a customer began the process now, and purchased a fiberglass pool, it is still possible to have the pool in toward the middle of the summer."

— Derek Blasker, president, Pool Designs

"It's best to start as soon as possible. Like any home improvement project it takes time to plan, design and build. Coming up with a design plan and then finding the best contractor to make that vision happen is a process. You have to give yourself ample time to research, interview prospective contractors and allow for a realistic time frame to accomplish the work."

— H.P. Wertman, director of operations, Premier Pool Renovations

When is the best time to open a pool?

"If a pool owner has a gas heater for their pool, they can open the pool as early as they are ready, but the size of the gas bill may prohibit such early openings. The pool owner should generally plan for at least two to four weeks to get the pool in swimmable shape, but a good closing and cover can cut down on this time frame. If the pool owner has a solid or tightly woven mesh safety cover, it is likely that little to no debris will be in the pool and the water quality will be substantially better than a standard mesh safety cover or tarp cover."

— Derek Blasker, Pool Designs

How can design elements come together to make your pool feel like part of the yard?

"This all starts with the design process. The placement of the swimming pool, terrace and the different features of the project are imagined by our architects and designers to create an amazing and functional outdoor space."

— Sam Waddell, president, SLS Landscaping

"Swimming pools used to be a separate item in your yard, completely disconnected in most cases from the design elements of the house. Now, many people want a pool and surrounding area that is used for entertaining and is completely integrated with the home itself. Continuity is easily maintained by choosing materials and elements that flow from the pool to the outdoor entertaining areas and even to the home itself. This is best achieved by utilizing similar surfaces, color palette, design elements, lighting and finishes throughout which will make the pool area seem very connected to the home. If your goal is to have your outdoor entertaining spaces and pool area feel very warm and inviting, then they need to be an extension of your particular design taste."

— H.P. Wertman, Premier Pool Renovations

What are some of the more unique pool elements folks could incorporate to take their pool space to the next level?

"We have created many unique and amazing swimming pools and environments over the years—

Image top left courtesy of Premier Pool Renovations. Image far left courtesy of Pool Designs. Image at left courtesy of SLS Landscaping





Images courtesy of Stardust Pools

including elements such as fire bowls, waterfalls and sheer descents, grottos and spas, and swim-up bars, to name a few.

— Sam Waddell, SLS Landscaping

"A lot of people are going with sun shelves where it's 18 inches deep and you can put chairs in there. LED lighting allows people to change colors for ambiance and has become very popular. In addition, a lot of people are going over to salt generators for sanitation. Installing a salt generator means your chlorine is always the same and you never have to buy pool shock or anything ever again, so it's a money saver."

— Walter Beyer, owner, Stardust Pools

What are the best ways to take care of your pool?

"The best way to take care of your pool always starts with maintaining your water chemistry. If your pH is off balance or your sanitizer is low, the water will turn quickly and you will spend your free time testing, balancing, retesting, rebalancing, and testing again. Similarly, alkalinity and calcium hardness need to be balanced to not only maintain water quality, but the quality of your pool surface. In addition to balancing your water, pool owners need to be diligent with cleaning the pool floor and walls. If you leave debris on the floor for prolonged periods of time it can lead to stains that may not come out easily or may be permanent. If the pool owner has the financial capability to afford a robotic cleaner for their pool, it will greatly reduce the amount of work required to keep the pool surface clean and the filter on the robot will also aid in cleaning the water."

— Derek Blasker, Pool Designs

How can pool owners transform their space to accommodate for hosting?

"A pool and surrounding area is a great place to lounge or relax with guests but it needs to be so much more. This is achieved by having seating areas that have plenty of shade and protection from the ele-





ments; large market umbrellas, pergolas and pavilions are great at accomplishing that. Having fire pits, fire tables and fireplaces is key in having inviting areas that can be used at night and even when the pool season is over.

Outdoor kitchens, grill areas and pizza ovens are a big trend in outdoor entertaining. Much like the kitchen is the main congregation point in the home, this can be the same outside.

Gaming areas are also now a huge element in the outdoor entertaining space. Having designated areas for games such as cornhole, horseshoes and ring toss is a great way to get adults and children alike participating in fun activities. Music is a huge part of any entertaining space and now with ever-improving technology there are more choices than ever to make this happen anywhere in your yard. Wireless speakers, or even waterproof underwater speakers in the pool are all great ways to get the music anywhere you are active."

— H.P. Wertman, Premier Pool Renovations

What are some things pool owners should be mindful of?

"When somebody's going to shop for a pool, they should see how long the company has been in business, if they're registered with the National Pool and Spa Institute and check with the Better Business Bureau. They need to do their homework these days because times are different. There's a lot of companies opening up and working out of their garages with no insurance. You want somebody that's been around a long time, has plenty of references and is abiding by all of the National Pool and Spa Institute rules that are out there."

— Walter Beyer, Stardust Pools H&H

RESOURCES

Pool Designs
Yardville, N.J.
(609) 257-2279
PoolDesignsInc.com

Premier Pool Renovations
Doylestown, Pa.
(610) 825-8808
PremierRenovations.com

SLS Landscaping
Lumberton, N.J.
(609) 518-5263
SLSLandscape.com

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East Brunswick, N.J.
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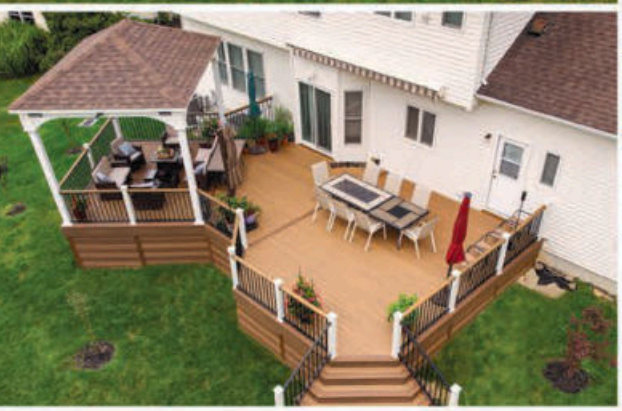
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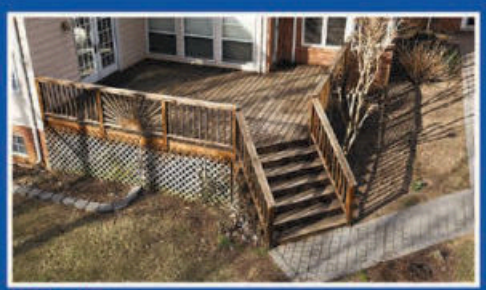




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