

# SHORE HOME

Volume 20, Issue 2

published by **HOUSE & HOME**

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*GILL'S  
LANDSCAPING*

Why client feedback is integral to a  
successful landscape design page 11

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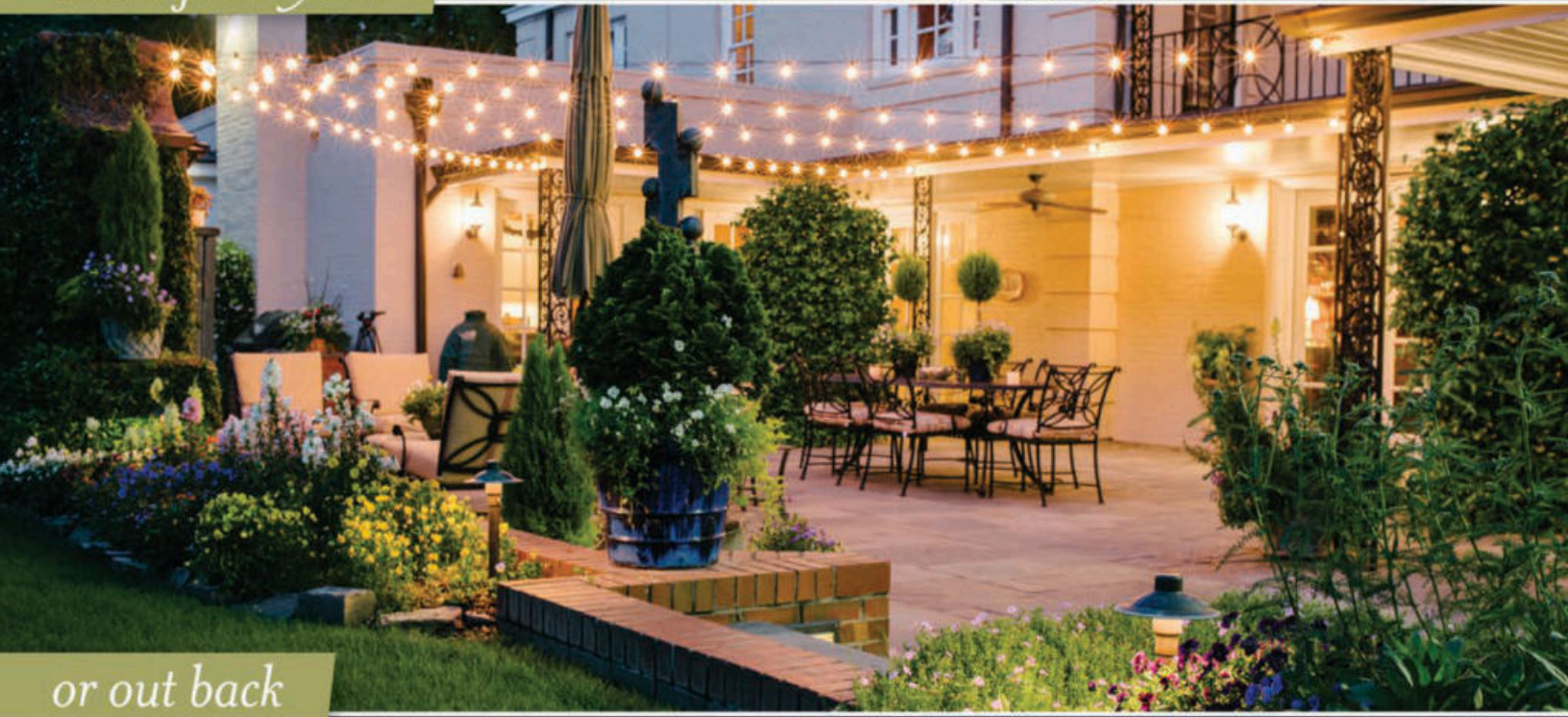
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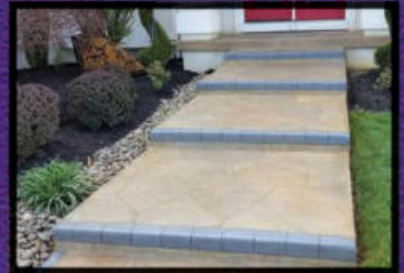
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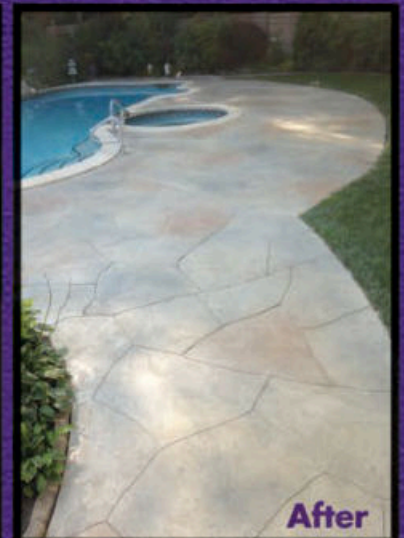
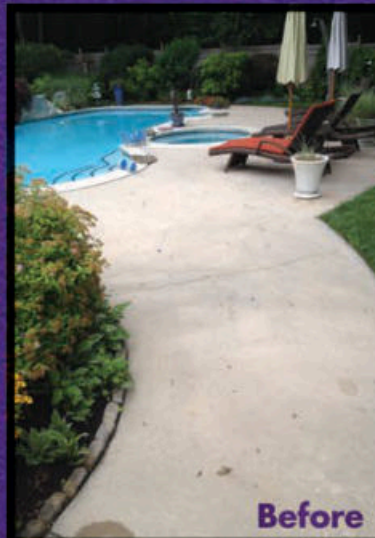
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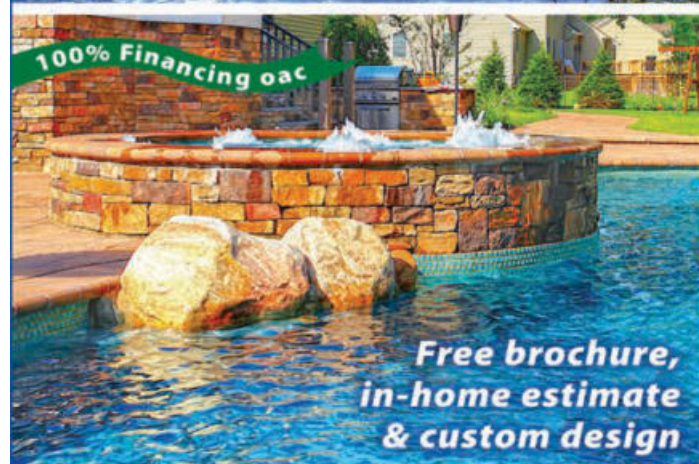
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**On the cover:**

Sitting on the bay in Ventnor, this stunning vacation home offers classic architectural accents with a sophisticated beach vibe. Turn to page 50 for a look at the living spaces that provide a comfortable respite for one happy family. Cover image by John DiMaio Photography, courtesy of interior designer Karen Givnish of The Great Room



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Peter Proko

## EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Liz Hunter

## ASSISTANT EDITORS

Matt Cosentino, Lauren Kubiak, Julie Shannon

## CONTRIBUTORS

Lindsey Getz, Daniel Sean Kaye, Brittany Ann Morrissey

## CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Hank Alspach

## PRODUCTION MANAGER

Brian Mikulski

## DESIGNERS

Nicole DiPace, Abby Lurty, Rachel MacCord, Dori Shields, Lisa Zollinger

## ACCOUNTING DIRECTOR

Darlene Versak

## SALES DIRECTOR

Lindsay Gonzalez

## SALES MANAGER

Jim Romano

## NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPER

Chuck McKane

## MARKETING CONSULTANTS

Rochelle Dodge, Gary Edelstein, Frank Liantonio, Jeff Mascaro,  
Susie Smith, Laramie Traina, Amy B. Weiss

## DIGITAL MEDIA DIRECTOR

Leigh Stuart

## PUBLISHER EMERITUS

Bob Doran

## EXECUTIVE PARTNERS

Gerry Haggerty, Edward P. McCartney

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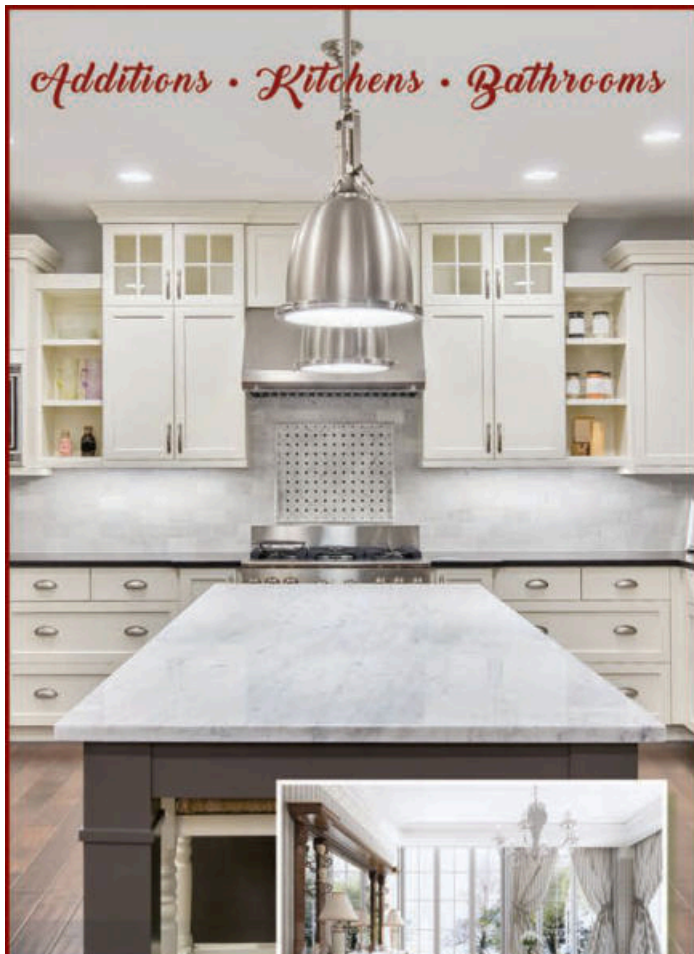
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# Gill's Landscaping

by **Liz Hunter**

**F**or more than 25 years, Gill's Landscaping has been providing South Jersey with landscaping and maintenance services. Yards have been transformed into lush landscapes with flowers in full bloom, accompanied by perfectly manicured trees and shrubs. The company also handles other features like ponds, accent lighting, hardscaping, irrigation and more.

Their reputation for quality and attention to detail has put them at the forefront of the industry, and garnered them recognition as Best of *House & Home* for Landscape Design. We sat down with sales manager Ed Swietanski to discuss what goes into planning the perfect landscape design with flowers and plants that will provide years of enjoyment and appeal to a home.

## What are the primary steps involved in planning a landscape design?

We first want to meet with the client at their home and walk through the property. We'll discuss their vision for the space and bounce around ideas. This initial meeting should not be one-sided. We want the customer's interaction. It's important to know what they like, and probably just as important to know what they don't like. We're here to solve a problem, which might be adding curb appeal or replacing plants that have not grown properly. We'll put together a plan with materials we know will do well on your particular property.

## How important is it for a client to have a budget?

We always try to get a budget beforehand. It helps us zone in on your priorities. We don't want to create a design only to find out it's outside your budget. We can still create something nice within the budget you give us. If you're



EXPERTISE: LANDSCAPE DESIGN



**Ed Swietanski, sales manager**

getting proposals from different companies, I recommend giving them all the same budget and then comparing estimates to see what you're getting for that money.

## What are some popular elements that can be incorporated into a design?

Our goal is to create visual interest throughout the year. We don't want to create a static landscape that never changes. We try to choose materials that will bloom at different times. You might have a rose bush blooming in the summer, but then in the fall something else is providing that life and color to the yard.

We're also doing a lot of hardscaping, replacing walkways with paver materials from Techobloc or EP Henry. LED night lighting is also another popular feature that is becoming more economical and adds visual interest at night.

## How important is continuing education for your staff?

This is critical. The state of New Jersey man-

dates landscapers take classes in order for us to hold our licenses. If you're applying pesticides or fertilizers or offering irrigation services—like we do—then you must have continuing education credits for the proper license. We make sure to maintain the integrity we have developed with the Gill's name.

## What does it mean to be recognized as a Best of House & Home winner?

Getting recognized like this helps qualify what we do. Landscaping is one of the biggest investments you can make besides your house, and a poorly designed and executed landscape can make even the best home look bad, but a home that needs a little TLC can achieve great curb appeal with a well-executed landscape design. We stress to our customers that you get what you pay for, and we really pride ourselves in the quality of materials we use, and the ability to put them together in a combination that will look nice and give the customer the result they want. Being chosen for this award by the readers is a big deal to us, and only makes us want to get better. **H&H**

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*Kitchens are often the focal point of a Shore home, but there are unique challenges from the beach atmosphere to remember before remodeling.*

# Center of Attention

BY MATT COSENTINO

**I**t is said that the kitchen is the heart of the home, and that is just as true in a Shore house as in a main residence, perhaps even more so. When on vacation, it is obviously a must to create a relaxing vibe in the kitchen, a place where family and guests regularly gather to make memories. A Shore kitchen has to be able to stand up to heavy traffic and sandy feet, but that does not mean style has to be sacrificed. We spoke to local professionals to find out some tips for remodeling a kitchen down the Shore.

● **Q:** *What factors go into choosing the right cabinetry for a Shore kitchen?*

● "Some of the important factors to consider when replacing cabinetry in a Shore kitchen are: function—how do you use your kitchen; style—what type of décor are you going for; and lighting—do you have a lot of natural light or none to make the color of the cabinets brighter? We do a lot of whites in Shore kitchens but also beach/cottage tones like blues. Storage solutions that we recommend are roll-out trays for easy access."

● **Joe DiCicco**

● **Owner**

● **The Cabinet Shop**

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Image courtesy of KraftMaid



● **Q:** *Why is cabinet refacing a good option for a Shore home?*

● “Cabinet refacing is a permanent kitchen remodeling solution and offers more benefits than just giving your vacation home a new beachy vibe. ... The refacing process transforms the kitchen, is complete in three to five days and saves the homeowner up to half the cost of replacement cabinets. They do this by laminating the cabinet boxes only in a new color and style, then installing all new doors and drawers to match. Voila, 80 percent of what you see in the kitchen is now new. If your Shore house is a rental unit, an updated kitchen will make it more desirable—getting new renters in a shorter time frame. Also, an updated kitchen with stone countertops will draw the right audience of renters for your unit plus justify a higher rental fee.”

● **Linda Fennessy**  
● **Public Relations**  
● **and Print Manager**  
● **Kitchen Magic**  
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Image courtesy of Kitchen Magic

**Q:** *What is the best option for the floor in a Shore kitchen?*

“The best option for durability and the maintenance aspect is LVT, which is luxury vinyl tile. It is extremely easy to clean with a Swiffer or vacuum to pick up any residue of sand. By installing that, you can still obtain the look of a hardwood floor or tile floor, but without any of the maintenance. The product is 100 percent waterproof, so you can hit it with a hose and it won’t swell or warp. It’s actually one of the most durable floors on the market today. This is a great product for style too. I can’t tell you how many kitchens, bathrooms, living rooms and bedrooms we’ve done with the LVT because it gives you the look of a wider plank hardwood floor, which is more of a timeless look and a style that is really trending right now.”

**Joseph Clymer**  
**Design/Build Specialist**  
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## Q: *What would you recommend for a countertop in a Shore kitchen?*

"Quartz has become the predominant countertop of choice. It's stain-resistant and heat-resistant—not to be confused with stainproof or heatproof—but you don't have to seal it and it's a relatively low-maintenance product. Over the last four to five years, the manufacturers have started putting out colors that are meant to mimic granite. For those reasons, and because of its durability, quartz has become more popular for the average homeowner. People at the Shore tend to use whiter patterns in their countertops as opposed to earth tones. It can apply to a contemporary kitchen or more like a Shore cottage type of look, so it appeals to a broad spectrum."

**Quinn Harbright**  
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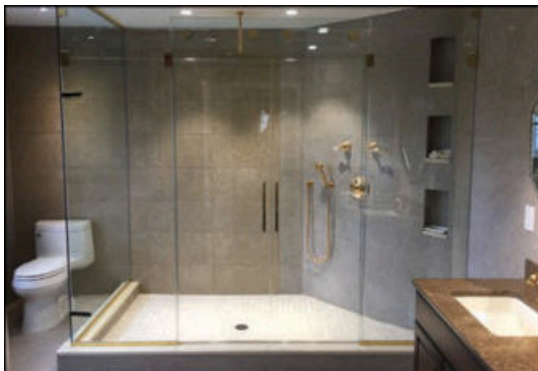
## Q: *What are some colors and finishes that would work well in a Shore kitchen?*

"Sixty-one percent of homeowners are choosing some form of white: satin white, frosty white or winter white. (Yes, they are all different). The classic shaker and mission styles are really trending right now and offer an authentic seashore motif. Distressed woods are coming back as well—barnwood grays and light 'wood tones' like maple offer the warmth of wood yet still create a bungalow look. Light pastels are starting to get popular too. About five years ago people were using grays, blues and greens as an accent island in a white kitchen. Fast forward five years, and homeowners are expanding grays and pastels to the whole kitchen, and these are great for the beach look. Light blue or green cabinetry is the very essence of a beach theme. For the door material, wood has taken a backseat to maintenance-free cabinet doors. While the frame is still wood, the exterior of the door is a vinyl-laminate composite that is baked onto the wood frame, resulting in a very hard surface. It is virtually maintenance-free and can withstand the harsh elements of the beach and kitchen itself: salt, heat and humidity. Just a wipe usually does the trick."

**Linda Fennessy**  
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• **Q:** What should homeowners know before installing a floor in their Shore home?

• "The Shore points are a great place to have a water-resistant/kidproof type of vinyl plank due to the higher humidity and moisture near the water sources. These types of floors do not expand and contract like real wood and are softer under feet for summer barefoot time. ... Different types of vinyl plank are made and stores are selling them to their customers without properly explaining the differences. There are WPC and SPC styles and there can be a huge difference in them and your perception if you don't know. WPC is the waterproof core that is made from wood plastic composite and this in most cases is a lighter center core that is softer under foot, not as hard to walk on and will be sound-deadening in a condo or townhouse situation where people walk above you. The SPC is made of stone plastic composite and is more stiff and rigid. These floors tend to be less money and harder to dent, but give you more of a clicking sound while walking on top of them. Both products click together and offer some type of padding built in under them."

• **Steve Matteo**  
 • **Co-owner**  
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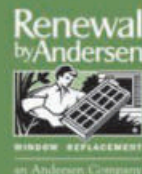
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# Smart Shore Storage

## Storage and organization in a home can sometimes be a difficult task.

It's easy to throw things in the garage and before you know it there isn't room to pull a car in anymore. Drawers in bedroom closets become overfilled to the point where they don't close all the way. These are just a few examples of improper storage and disorganization, but creating the right amount of storage space in a Shore home can be even more difficult with many extra items thrown into the mix—beach toys and other gear, storing luggage and having places for guests to hang their belongings when staying overnight. It's not just about creating the right amount of storage area—it's about having things organized properly where there are no headaches and everyone can have their own space.

*House & Home* spoke with experts who explained the right way to go about creating storage and organization for a Shore home, the options available for just about every room in the house and how it creates peace of mind for everyone in the household.

### CLOSETS

When walking into the homeowner's residence, Anthony Brinn of ABC Closets starts asking the necessary questions to understand exactly what they are looking for in their closets.

"Is it a rental, or is it only used by them and their family?"



Image at left courtesy of ABC Closets. Image at right courtesy of Closets by Design of Northern New Jersey.

Then I assess which closet or space they are most interested in organizing first. Then I assess their space and what it is used for depending on if it's an existing home or brand-new home. We make sure the space is customized for them," he says.

"It's about creating more real estate in your closet," says Nadine Holtz of Closets by Design of Northern NJ. "Closets are so big and our job is to create more storage space. A lot of times clients are surprised with the layout we present to them; they didn't even realize it was a storage area."

Brinn says the closet sizes are smaller in Shore homes, which creates the need for accessories.

"Most customers want to be organized because the typical closet space in Shore homes is not as large as they are used to," he says. "We offer customers closet accessories such as hampers, jewelry trays, shoe organizers, belt racks, valet rods, etc., to keep items compartmentalized and organized."

According to Brinn, a must-have in Shore homes is adjustable shelving or drawers in every closet to save space and/or eliminate the need for furniture. He also installs adjustable shelving in homes where homeowners want to have a secure and separate area for their things when guests stay over, in addition to having locks on closets.

"Adjustable shelving allows for flexibility to the space

depending on who is using it or what needs to be stored," he says.

While allowing flexibility to the space, Brinn is still able to make the closet a functional space.

"Designing the space specifically for the customer's needs is key. Together we discuss ideas and analyze the space and what it is used for," he says. "This allows us to design shelving and accessories to accommodate the customer."

## PANTRIES AND MUDROOMS

The same thought process goes into updating or creating kitchen pantries. "Using baskets for snacks is a key element for pantries, as well as adjustable shelving and countertop space in the pantry," Brinn says. "We design pantries to create visibility and reachability for more efficient and well-organized kitchen space. Open shelving for frequently used items and doors or drawers to hide the rest."

Mudrooms are a great option for families coming off the beach or coming from other activities, providing a dedicated space for sandy items as opposed to bringing them into the main areas of the house.

"We create a pathway where everyone walks and add plenty of storage for shoes and items you can hang vertically," says Brinn. "A key element in the mudroom is a bench to sit on along with hooks for towels



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A lot of times clients are surprised with the layout we present to them; they didn't even realize it was a storage area.”

**NADINE HOLTZ,**  
CLOSETS BY DESIGN OF  
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or sandy clothes and cubby space for shoes.”

### GARAGES

For most homes, the garage is an afterthought.

“The garage is just one big empty space basically. What tends to happen is it becomes a dumping ground for the house. People throw everything in there and

they leave cars outside to make it one big storage area,” says Joe Fay, owner of Encore Garage of New Jersey. “I walk into a pretty big mess all the time. I carry Band-Aids because I usually get cut on something.”

Fay offers simple, reasonable organization to custom projects. He first asks the homeowner what they are trying to accomplish

Top left image courtesy of Closets by Design of Northern New Jersey. Bottom left image courtesy of Encore Garage of New Jersey. Image at right courtesy of ABC Closets.

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in their beach home and gets a glimpse of what their lives are like at the Shore.

"I ask if they have any children and if so, what ages? And I'll ask what activities the family likes to do in case I can't see what they have," he says.

"If you organize [the garage] correctly, you can store everything," he says. "You can have

sporting equipment, boogie boards, patio furniture and cars in there."

To make sure each item has its own space, Fay offers options such as overhead storage and places to hang a multitude of things.

"Overhead storage, organizational grids and slat walls where you can hang things that can be

taken down with a ladder, like beach chairs, beach toys and bikes. You name it, we can hang it," he says. "Although it's a little more expensive, I really like slat-wall. It looks nicer because it covers the wall. On the other hand, I find organizational grids are less expensive and durable, you can't break it.

"If you have a spot for it, chances are it will go back in that place. My grandkids grab tennis balls or chalk, and they know exactly where to put it back."

Having organization in your home will give you peace of mind, save you time and frustration, allowing you to enjoy the Shore home the way it's intended. "Keeping things simple and organized allows more time to do the things you want to be doing, like going to the beach and spending time with family," Brinn says. **H&H**



## RESOURCES

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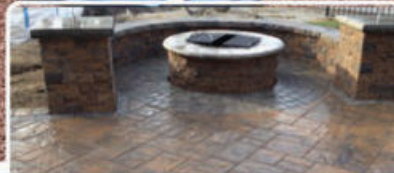
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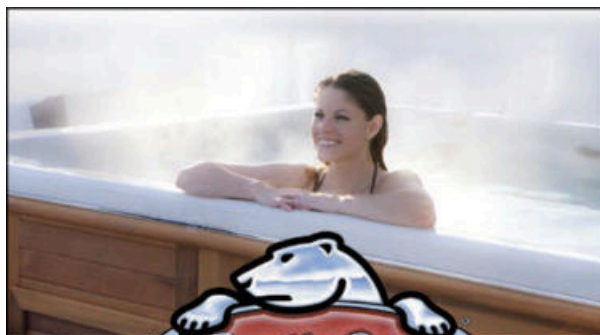
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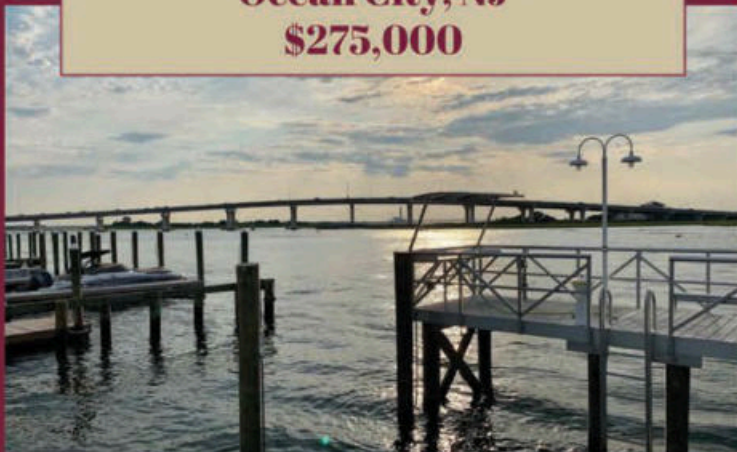
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# Trends

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# Reality

Building on your outdoor living space and other landscaping trends for 2020.

BY DANIEL SEAN KAYE

---

AS THE SUMMER SLOWS TO A HALT, our minds just naturally turn to next year. How will we change our landscape? What neat things can we try in the space? What should we be thinking of now so everything will be ready in the spring? This year's trends are leading to next year's realities, so *House & Home* wanted to find out what cool ideas the experts say will come into play for 2020.

---

## What's hot, what's not

"The outdoor living space has continued to grow each year," says Sam Waddell, owner of SLS Landscaping. "[Homeowners want] the multi-faceted patio with a kitchen (grill, sink, refrigerator), fireplace and landscape lighting and sound. People want the complete environment where they can have family and friends come to sit and relax and enjoy all of the amenities of the indoors outside. Our designers are continually challenged to develop stunning and functional spaces and landscapes to meet our clients' visions and create the 'wow' factor in the backyard."

Dean Johnston, owner and designer of Johnston & Associates, agrees that more outdoor entertaining is the biggest trend. "We are installing more outdoor kitchens than before. After that, fire features. We try to make outside spaces usable all throughout the year, so with our kitchens we're installing roofs or retractable awnings. We're



SLS LANDSCAPING



installing fireplaces or the traditional fire pits. We're also seeing more with fire and water features. These are either poolside features or worked into a pondless water feature that blends a fire ring that fits just above the water level. The effects are outstanding," he says.

For those clients who cannot afford everything at once, phase landscaping is popular. "We like to show what the space can look like and then show how we can install it in a few years as budgets allow. This gives the client the option to install their perfect space in steps," Johnston says.

"Technology will continue to emerge, making control of landscape lighting, irrigation systems and outdoor audio easier than it has ever been," says Michael Pasquarello, a degreed landscape architect with Elite Landscaping. "Color changing/brightness-controlled LED light fixtures, irrigation systems that sync to local weather stations and are totally WiFi driven, outdoor audio systems that would make any professional DJ jealous—all of these manipulated and controlled by the smartphone we all currently have."

Nick Nykorcuk, president of Creative Pavers, adds additional outdoor elements like outdoor TVs and covered roof lounging areas, built-in heating strips around the top of a pergola or pavilion or multiple dedicated gas lines to connect to portable patio heaters, shade structures or ceiling fans and screened-in portions to create a mostly bug-free experience can all be controlled via smart device.

For their mood benefits, water features will continue to be a popular request. "Pondless



waterfalls and fountains will continue to be popular due to their low-maintenance aspect," says Jason Turpin, owner of Turpin Landscape Design. Plus they are still able to provide the serene sounds and sights of moving water, which people really enjoy in the landscapes. "The trend seems to be moving away from formal ponds towards more natural-looking water features, including incorporating waterfalls and small streams with lots of natural stone, and winter hardy plantings," says Turpin.

West Coast trends are creeping into our area now. "Projects are getting larger and a seamless transition from indoors to outdoors is important. It seems like the Northeast has taken these design cues from what's been going on in California for decades," says Jeffrey Woehr, natural stone division manager with NJ Gravel & Sand.

He says flagstone—both naturally irregular shaped and dimensional cut squares and rectangles—is wanted for patios, walkways, pool decks, etc., and thicker versions are being used for step treads, pool copings, fireplace hearths and mantles. Bluestone is by far the most popular stone used for these purposes, but he also keeps many alternative stones from around the world in stock. "The ability to cut natural stone at a 1½-inch thickness, rather than the traditional 4- to 8-inch thickness has allowed designers and installers to consider stone veneer for more projects," he adds. "It's now easier and less expensive to get a great looking stone façade on your house, landscape wall or outdoor fireplace. These products allow natural stone veneer to compete more effectively with artificial stone veneer—a trend I expect will continue to grow."



“  
High-end design for outdoor living is trending away from concrete paver hardscapes to natural stone materials.”

**JEFFREY WOHR,**  
NATURAL STONE DIVISION MANAGER  
WITH NJ GRAVEL & SAND

“High-end design for outdoor living is trending away from concrete paver hardscapes to natural stone materials,” says Woehr. “I see porcelain taking a larger share of the concrete paver market in the future. Both concrete pavers and porcelain often try to imitate natural stone, but porcelain does a better job of it than concrete.”

Homeowners are moving away from the serpentine looks of the last decade and embracing sleek, tight lines, says Nykorczyk. “Smooth products in larger sizes are more desirable, since they keep with the clean look of the space. Some manufacturers have created pre-sealed hardscape products that have a built-in protection layer for the pavers, reducing the amount of maintenance and wear and tear,” he says.

## Emerging trends

In the future, there will be new ideas of how to extend the use of the space, says Nykorczyk. “With more elements being sought after, once you put all of these components together, the cost can get very high. So it becomes important in our region to plan something that can extend the number of months of use well into the cooler times of year.”



He sees more indoor/outdoor rooms (or “three-season rooms”) being created to serve as transitions between the home’s inside and the fully open backyard. “I also see homes being designed (or modified) to have more open access points with the outdoors to create a better flow and connection to the space,” he says. “We’ve seen larger homes have a single door leading to the backyard which creates a sort of bottleneck when going in and out. We’ve come up with designs that expand on the existing door and we have even added more doors along the back of the home that lead outside to give a much better connection to the outdoor space.”

While travertine for patios isn’t new, using it around pools will grow in popularity, says Johnston. “This is an imported stone. The nice thing about that is there is no or little iron in the stone, allowing for a cooler touch especially around pools that have a lot of bare feet and kids,” he says. “This is a

non- to low-slip material that looks great. It also allows us to recommend renovations to inside flooring that will blend the inside to the outside. We install a lot of this and its cost is comparable to pavers.”

“I think we’ll be seeing greater interest in swim ponds and natural recreational ponds,” says Turpin. To keep pond water quality high, the simple process of repeatedly turning the water over through the mechanical and biological filters is needed in order to create a naturally balanced, low-maintenance ecosystem pond. Add the remaining components of plants, aeration, rock and gravel, and you’ll find greater success in maintaining clean and clear pond water, he adds.

Waddell says more people will want the “one-stop shopping” opportunity for their total outdoor environment. “[Companies] will design the entire environment to include the swimming pool, cabana, patio/pool deck, fireplace and kitchen and landscaping,” he says. “When you have the perfect pool, patio and amenities, your home becomes the place your friends want to hang out. Whether the project is completed in one season or phased over a period of time, [clients will want] to work with one company and contact to see the entire project through to completion.” **H&H**



## RESOURCES

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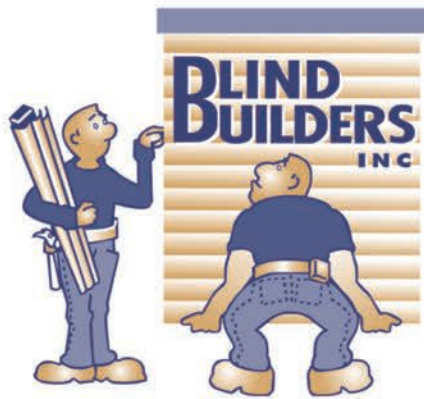


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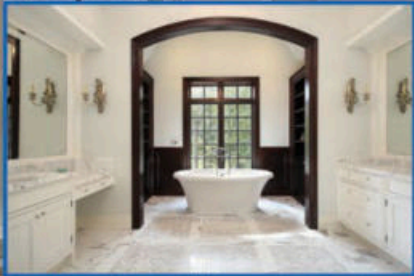
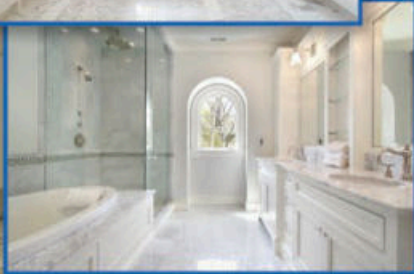
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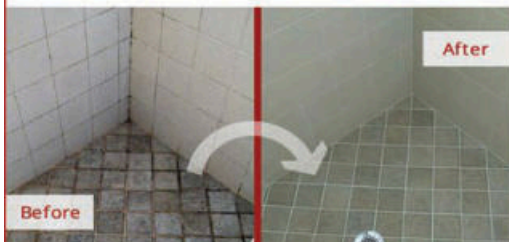
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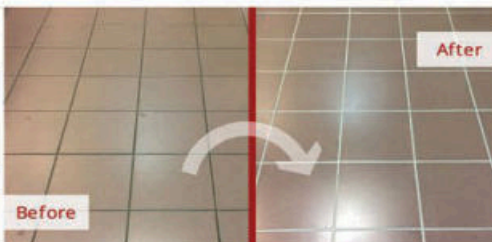



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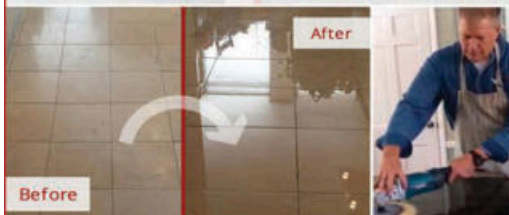
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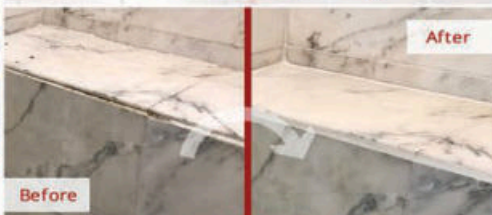
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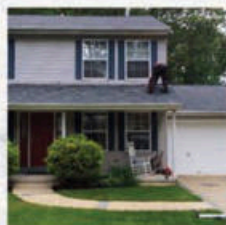
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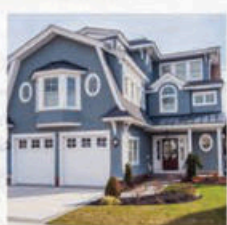
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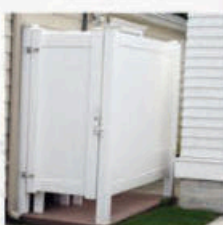
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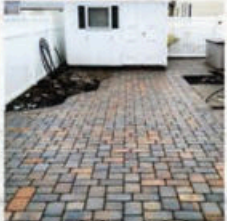
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# A New Deck by Next Summer

As the fall weather sets in, now is the time to start planning for that backyard deck.

**Summer is high season for outdoor decks, what with all the warm weather,** barbecue and backyard parties. But while the sunny season is perfect for enjoying a deck, it's not the only time of year to be thinking about how to enhance your backyard.

In fact, local deck builders say that if you've just missed the mark for a summer build, now is the time to start planning out your new deck or scheduling a refurbishment.

"This time of year, things are not as rushed," says Omar Stoltzfus of Deck Craft Plus. "You're not trying to get it done

quickly before your summer parties. So, you have more time for the homeowner and you have more time for the contractor to focus on your deck."

Joe Oakes, general manager for First State Building & Design, agrees.

"At this point, the time-frame has passed to try and fit in a backyard remodel project for this summer," he says, adding that people who contact a deck builder now can be scheduled for a fall or early winter build—giving you plenty of time before next year's high season.

## REPAIRING AN OLD DECK

If you've been staring out at your deck all summer thinking about when in the world you are going to get the old thing refurbished, now, with summer behind us, could be the time. The first step to see if you are a candidate for re-decking is the evaluation.

"The structural elements under the deck have to be assessed to make sure that we're not putting a large investment on top of a rotting understructure," says Juan Cardona, owner of Archadeck of Chester County. "The structures under the deck are reusable even 30 years later, 20 years later, as

long as they were properly built to begin with."

In general, getting a deck redone is less costly than a complete new build but it's not always a sure investment.

"Once a deck gets to a certain age, over 20 years, the material is just to the point to the end of its life," says Joseph Kalnas, general manager for My Deck. "And a lot of times we are recommending to the clients to just take it down and start fresh, because you're spending a lot of money on maintenance-free [materials]. So, it's good to have a foundation that is as new."

The other issue homeowners run into with refurbishing older decks is building codes that were not in place when the original

deck was built.

"Refurbishing an existing deck is a roll of the dice," Oakes says. "We abide by much stronger code when it comes to building in today's world."

Still, along with measures taken to make the deck code compliant, if the frame of your deck is solid, refurbishing can be an economical and practical solution for many homeowners.

## DESIGNING THE SPACE

Starting at the beginning of your deck design process? Well, one of the first questions you'll want to ask yourself is what you envision using your new deck for.

"Is there a large party event that you want to have space for?" says Keith Fry of Amazing Decks. "Or are you just looking for a small, quaint area for the husband and wife

using your deck can be sign that there is something missing.

"Sometimes [people] say they don't use [their deck] because there [are] too many bugs and then maybe you can talk to them about possibly screening it in for them," Cardona says.

## ADD-ONS

Besides screens, there are many other add-ons that can make a deck more enjoyable.

"We do a lot of fire pits—like sunken areas which are offset of the existing deck, which define an existing space," Kalnas says.

Other popular additions include pergolas, an outdoor sound system, bar tops and hot tubs. But one of the best ways to make a deck more pleasant is to add custom lighting, which will not only



to go sit on?"

Fry says other questions to think about include whether you plan to add a pool or hot tub in the future and if you want a roof structure for shade or a grilling area for cooking.

How often you will use your deck is another consideration.

"Some customers have a deck [and] they rarely use their deck," Cardona says. "But they want to have one. And with that thought in mind, you don't want to make a really large investment if you rarely use it for whatever the reason."

Although sometimes not

allow you to use it in the evening but can also be used to set a mood.

"LED lighting is really the only way to light up an outdoor space anymore," Kalnas says. "You can mount lighting underneath the railing as we do on a lot of our projects. ... You can do accent lighting in certain places and really create an atmosphere."

Outdoor kitchens are another feature that is often requested by homeowners.

"That's another item that we're beginning to see more and more people go for," Cardona says. "Rather than just a



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# Protecting your Deck from Pests



**D**ecks are a huge investment, and they can be susceptible to pests that could do damage from the inside out. Craig Sansig, technical services manager for Viking Pest Control, says decks are susceptible to insects even in the fall.

The most common species that infest decks includes carpenter bees, carpenter ants and termites. "They can get into untreated, unpainted areas, or into the area where the deck mounts to the house where debris and moisture gets trapped," he says. "Termites are active from spring to fall. It may

be warm enough during the day but at night they will stay active below ground."

Sealing a deck with sealant or polyurethane or paint is a good long-term solution, he says.

Keeping the area under a deck clean of debris is also important. "If yard debris is under a deck, it supports other species like cave crickets, rodents and centipedes," Sansig says. "We can work in conjunction with a landscaping service to maintain that area and apply insecticide and bait products to eliminate those species."

standard grill, they'll do a built-in kitchen area. So, a built-in grill, maybe a sink on the side."

## MAINTENANCE-FREE LIVING

When it comes to choosing the materials for your deck, products that offer maintenance-free living—PVC or composite decking—are all the rage.

"Your upfront cost is more

expensive but if you consider the fact that this product will last as long as you live there, unlike wood, which needs constant maintenance and may need to be replaced again in 10 to 20 years," Stoltzfus says, "it's just generally the best way to go if you can."

Cardona agrees and says about 85 percent of the work his company does is with composite materials.



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"You don't have to stain it every couple of years and you don't have to do a water repellent on the deck every year, which is what should be done to protect a wood deck," he says. "So, there's a lot of maintenance that is done with wood that is simply not there with a composite deck."

## DESIGN

"The designs we specialize in are curves," Fry says. "We're actually bending the product so it's not the straight lines. ... It adds a flair to the deck because everything is custom-made and custom-curved around certain landscape projects."

Multi-width decking is another way to give your deck a more dynamic look. Because these boards vary in width, they can be used to create variation.

"You still kind of create a pattern," Stoltzfus says. "But it's more to break up the monotony of it."

Bordering can also be used to break up the repetitiveness of a

deck design.

"Bordering in different tones [and] colors can give a real nice accent," Kalnas says. "When you're changing colors and texture, putting it together tastefully, it makes a project come together."

And intermixing stonework and custom metal into the design can help with adding texture.

"Modern mixed with rustic style is huge for us right now," Oakes says. "Stonework mixed with natural wood is always beautiful. Custom metal work that we can incorporate into the build is a specialty that we like to do."

Railings are another area where deck builders can get creative. One of the most popular types right now is cable railing.

"It's very thin, so it opens up the view quite a bit, Cardona says. "If you have a really nice view off of your deck, cable railing is a really nice option."

Cable rail can be horizontal or vertical, the latter of which is ideal for families who worry about their children climbing the railing.

## A WELL THOUGHT-OUT PLAN

With so many design options to choose from, it can be a bit overwhelming to have to make so many decisions at once. But if you begin the design and planning process as the fall season is rolling in, then trying to create your

dream deck before next summer can be a less stressful endeavor.

"It takes time," Fry says. "Don't rush into it. That way it is a well thought-out plan of what you're doing in your backyard to tie everything together."

**H&H**



## RESOURCES

### Amazing Decks

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Flemington, N.J.  
(215) 654-1886  
AnotherAmazingDeck.com

### Archadeck of Chester County

West Chester, Pa.  
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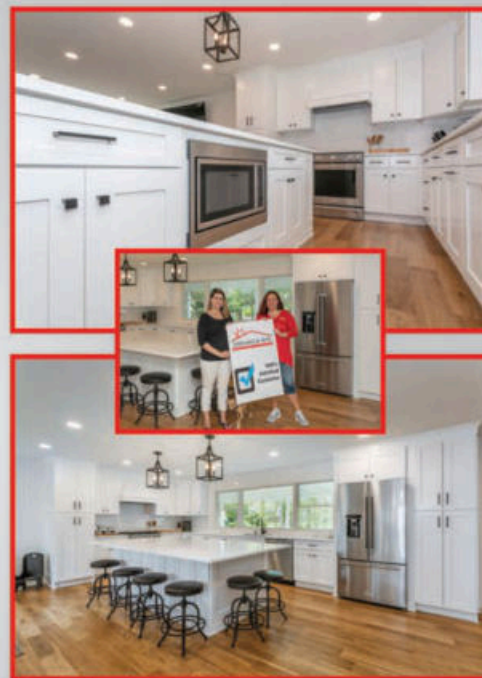
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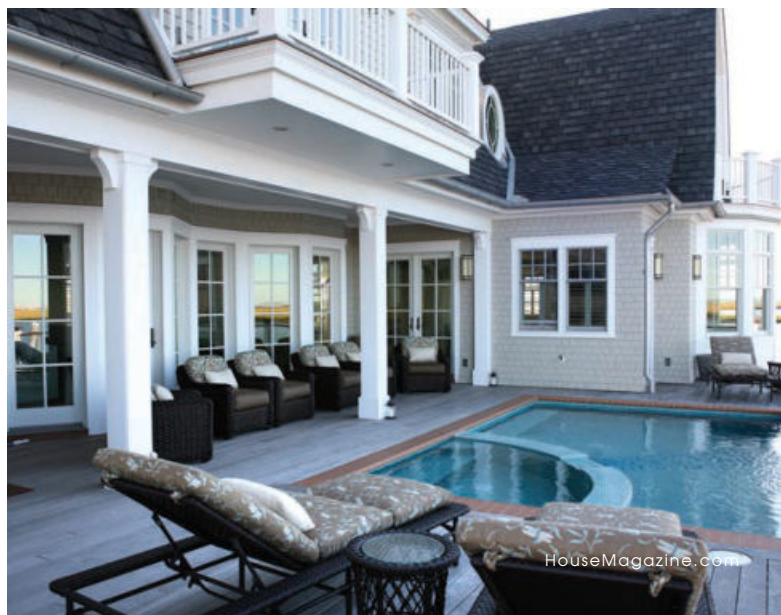
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*Although this home was built less than a decade ago, everything inside feels lived-in and comfortable. Situated on the bay in Ventnor and boasting a 270-degree view of the water, the 8,500-square-foot vacation home is used by the owners, their children, grandchildren and friends, and designer Karen Givnish made sure to incorporate family-friendly elements throughout. Architectural details contribute to a classic and traditional exterior reminiscent of the Hamptons, which are carried through to the sophisticated and warm interior. The soft blues, greens and sand colors throughout give a nod to the seashore surroundings, and accents and accessories offer a beachy vibe, while the furnishings are transitional, clean and timeless. The two-tiered kitchen island offers prep and seating space for everyone to gather beneath pendant lights that dazzle like ocean gems. Cozy nooks around the home offer the chance to get away for a nap or quiet conversation. At the heart of it all is family, pulled into focus by the photos on display, providing a reminder of what a home is all about.*



# Kitchens Are Where A Family's Best Memories Are Made



**K**itchens are where many of our memories take place. Even the simplest kitchen will host some of our best times and the warmest memories of friends and family. Here is a story written by my mother who passed away this fall about the simplest of kitchens and the happiness that she remembered there:

*Our first apartment was a small, old but affordable, walk-up. Although it left much to be desired, as newlyweds, we were satisfied and even excited about moving in – except for the kitchen! It contained only one cabinet which was situated above the sink and its exposed pipes. We improvised by buying a large standing cabinet and sewing a floral fabric to elastic and wrapping it around the sink. The area under the sink could now be used as storage space for cleaning products, pots and pans, etc.*

*When our first baby began toddling around, it became his favorite destination. He enjoyed crashing through the curtain, playing with the pots and pans and eating the soap powder. I could not wait to escape from this hazardous kitchen. Eventually we converted the space to a toy area where he sat playing with his cars, trucks and blocks. In fact, that's where he said his first word, which was "car".*

*One night, my husband arrived home from work with a bottle of champagne and wonderful news. He had just received a big promotion and a very substantial salary increase. While eating dinner at our little*

*kitchen table with the baby next to us in his high chair, we toasted to his new job and our new house.*

*It is now more than 50 years later and I still remember that antiquated kitchen and the joy and happiness we experienced in it.*

Jean McAlary passed away in October, but the little boy under the sink still loves kitchens and is of course the founder of Main Line Kitchen Design.

Hoping all our kitchens bring our customers the kind of joyful memories my mother's 1960 kitchen brought her.

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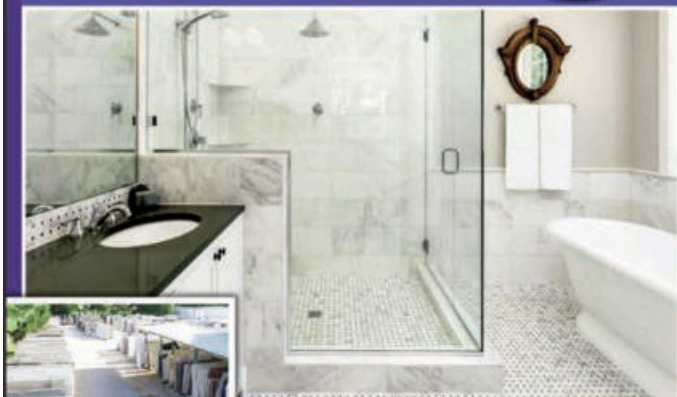
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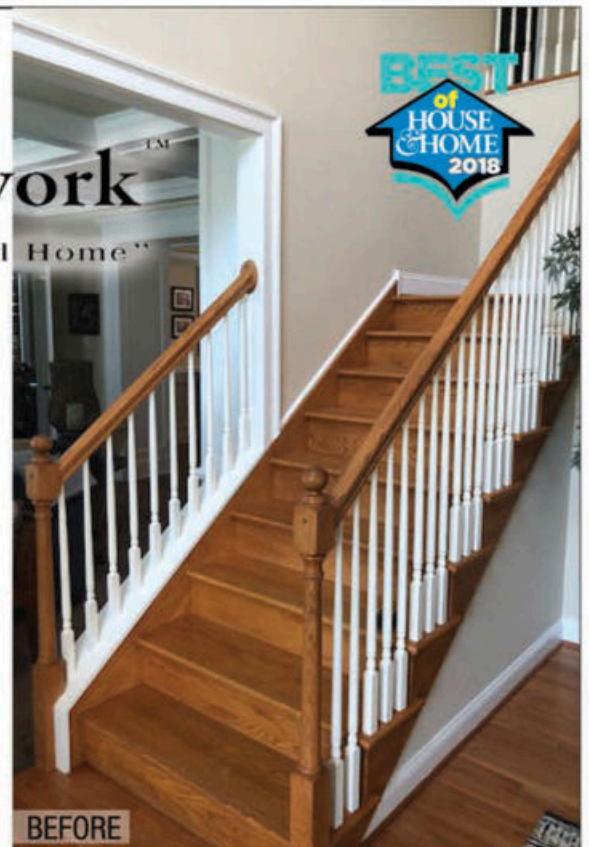
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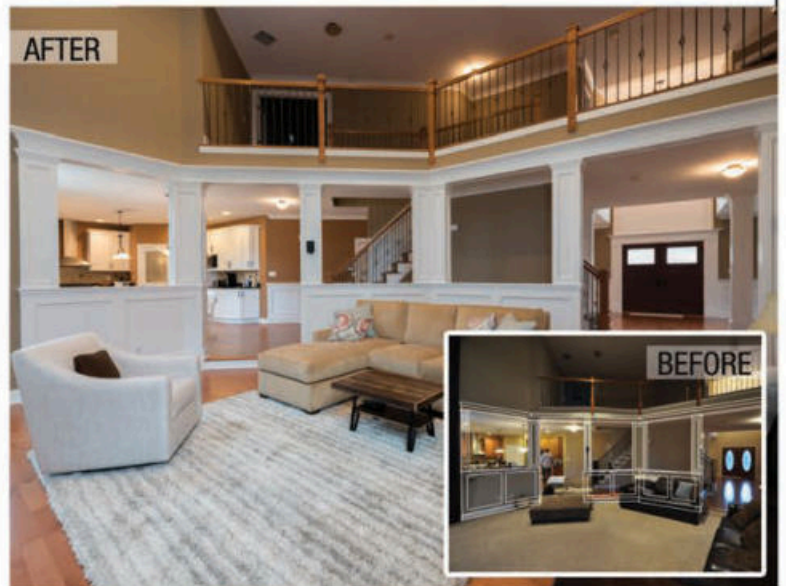
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