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Volume 22, Issue 4

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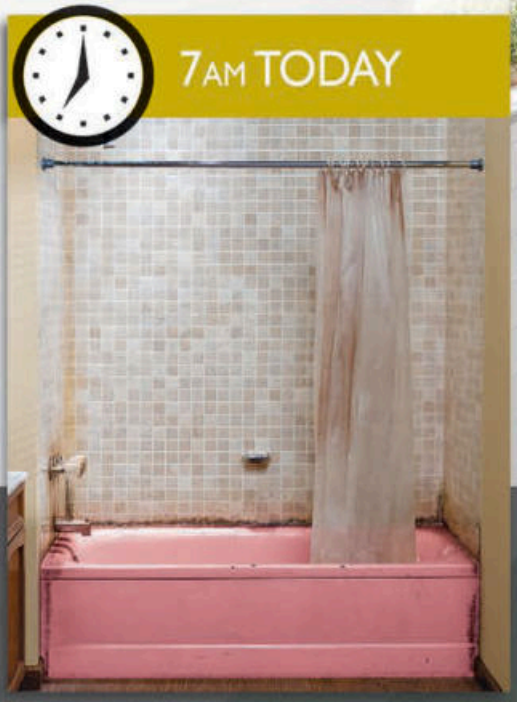
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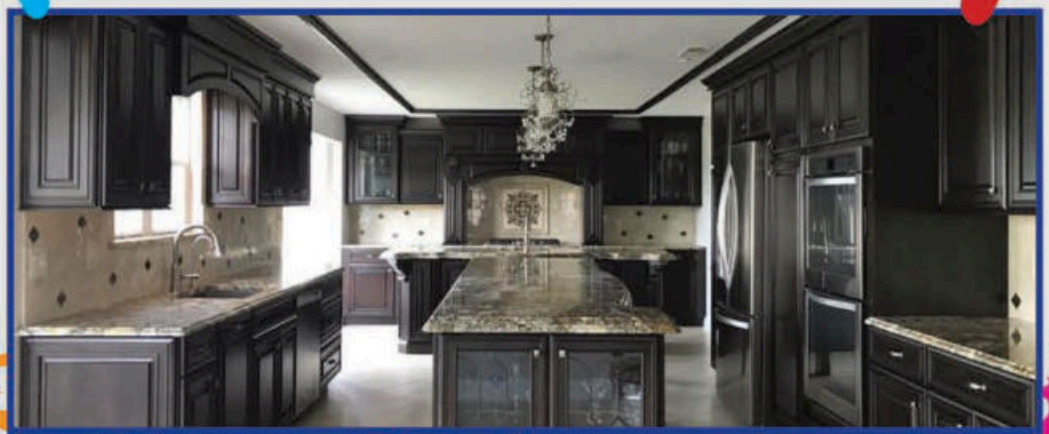
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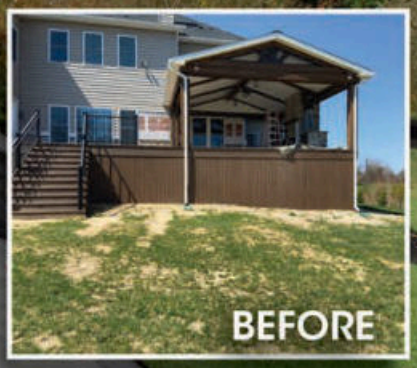
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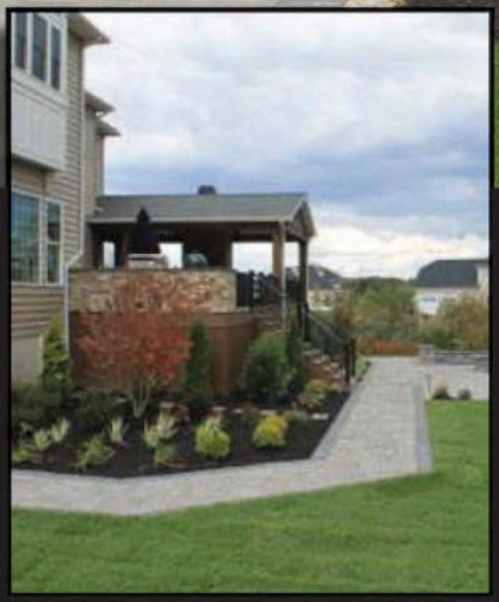
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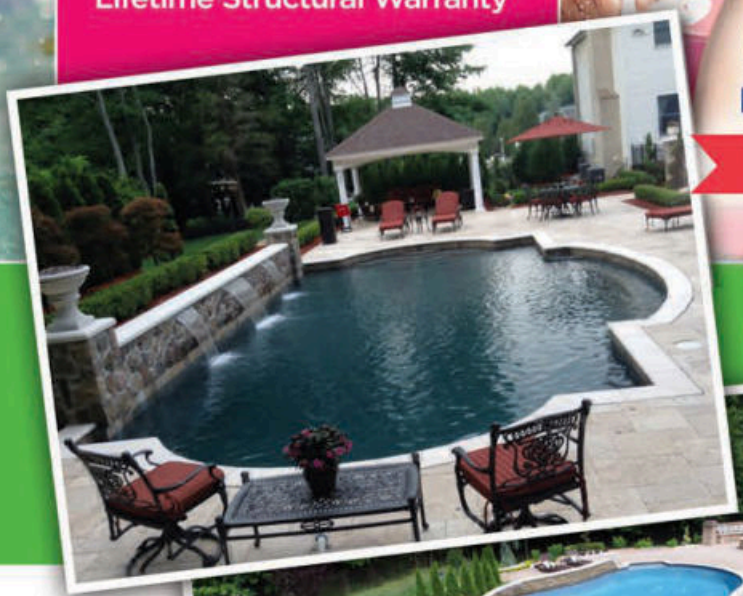
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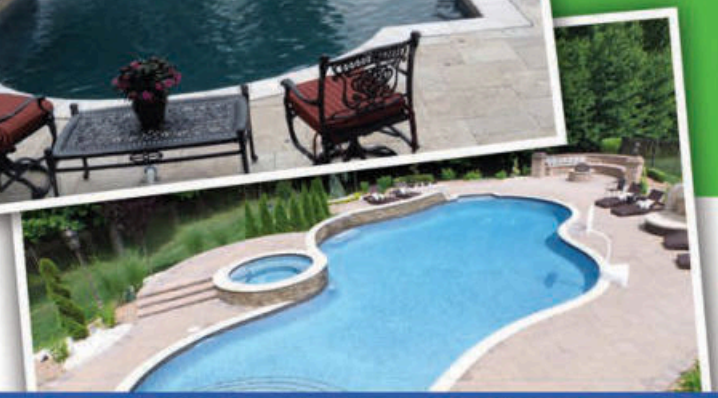
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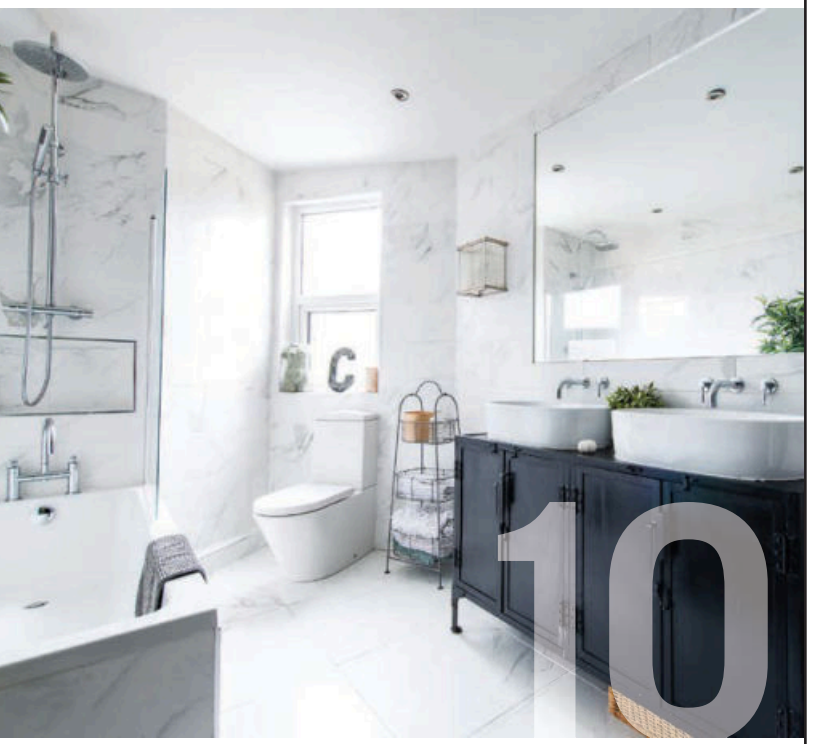
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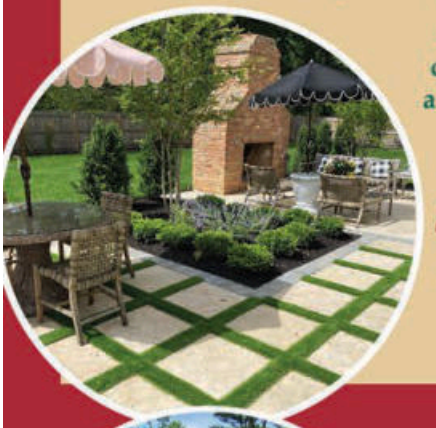
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Peter Proko

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Liz Hunter

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Matt Cosentino, Madeleine Maccar

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Leigh Stuart, Erica Young

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Hank Alspach

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Brian Mikulski

DESIGNERS
Abby Lurty, Dori Shields, Lisa Zollinger

ACCOUNTING DIRECTOR
Darlene Versak

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ALWAYS IN

While some industries ebb and flow with the seasons, **kitchen and bathroom remodels** remain a leading area of home improvement all year long.



DEMAND

BY MATT COSENTINO



Photo courtesy of Amiano & Son Design-Build

When the ground is frozen and snow is in the forecast every other week, it makes it difficult for contractors to be building an outdoor living space or working on a pool installation. Conversely, the middle of summer isn't an ideal time to be replacing a roof given the extreme temperatures. Certain industries inevitably have their down times throughout the year, but there are two particular home improvement projects that never seem to come to a halt: kitchen and bathroom renovations.

"We dip down a little bit during the holiday season, typically mid-December to mid-January, but this year that dip was just around Christmas—it picked right back up in the new year," says Linda Fennessy of Kitchen Magic. "We've been seeing it continuously. We have a lot of work and our backlog is as big as it's ever been. The orders are there and we're working to get them installed as quickly as possible."

Increased time at home as a result of the pandemic has led to even more remodeling than normal, and kitchens and baths have lived up to their reputation as the most popular rooms to refresh.

"Now more than ever, kitchens and bathrooms … are a large part of our business," says Vic Fiore of Magnolia Home Remodeling Group. "It's a 12-month, steady flow of people looking to get prices, ideas and consultations."

The planning phase remains crucial to the process, and an experienced firm can assist greatly in setting the budget and expectations. *House & Home* spoke to several local professionals to get their tips and find out what trends to look for in 2022.

DEVISING A PLAN

Homeowners taking the leap to renovate a kitchen or bathroom have plenty of options, but finding a company that provides both design and construction services can make life a lot easier. That is especially true when it comes to a complete makeover of the space.

"A major kitchen remodel is not a straight A to B path," says David Cerami of HomeTech Renovations. "You need a plan and someone who can integrate everything into a fluid design and help you personalize it."

Sophia Amiano of Amiano & Son Design-Build believes education is an important part of the initial meeting with a customer. The average homeowner is not aware, for example, of the expenses involved when compiling a wish list for their new kitchen or master bathroom.

"Everybody goes into a project already having an amount in mind," she says. "We show them what we can do for the project and the work scope within that investment amount. We simply inform them on the market, on certain product costs, maybe how we can help keep costs down, just so that they're getting more realistic information. Sometimes Google can be very inaccurate and that will be a homeowner's first go-to when looking for information."

Fiore's first priority when meeting with a client is establishing a framework for pricing, which of course will ultimately be dependent upon their material selections. He also gets to know the customer's vision for the space.

"We always ask people what their needs and wants are, if they have any inspiration, pictures or examples of things they know they want or don't want," he says. "We put together a plan taking into account their feedback but also really what we think will work best. Then we work with the homeowner to fine-tune the plan, make sure it's their own and what they want."

"[The first appointment is] basically a fact-finding meeting," Fennessy adds. "We ask how they use the kitchen, are there multiple cooks, how big is their family, do they find it functional, what are the challenges, do they like the color, how long have they been in the home and how long do they plan on staying. Then we make our solutions

based on their budget. We have them pick colors and styles and give them a price quote."

Amiano wonders how any project could get accomplished without detailed planning in place. Her family's company follows long-held procedures for every job, to help prevent hidden costs or anticipate issues that may arise.

"The reason we've built our process to the way we have over the years is for that exact reason, because if you don't properly plan and put a project together from the get-go before jumping into construction, hiccups are bound to happen," she says. "Construction is already a process as it is and it's never 100% perfect, no matter how much upfront legwork you do, especially in today's day and age when you have delays. If we didn't do all that work in the beginning, I don't even know how you would get a project together.

"We pick out all the materials up front, we design the space as close to the measurements as we can get, we even do an onsite visit prior to signing the contract just to verify those measurements and that the layout is going to work properly. … We take pride as a company that we do those steps and we really limit those hidden costs that can happen in construction."

BUILDING THE DREAM KITCHEN

One of the most important decisions in a kitchen remodel centers on cabinetry. White kitchens have been popular for years and although color has been introduced more lately, Fennessy does not anticipate white going away.

"I opened up a Houzz 2022 report [recently] and it definitely mimicked what we're seeing: People are still choosing our whites—antique white, frosty white and satin white—and those are our most popular colors," she says. "While I hear the woods are coming back, I don't see it yet, only in our older demographics. Flat color is popular; we do sell a lot of colonial blue. Gray is second and we've just added a moss green to our offering, and that is by customer demand. Our in-house designer said we absolutely had to add it to our offering because it's everywhere and it's going to be very popular. But whites are still king."

Amiano saw a great push for colored cabinetry in 2021, particularly in the blue family. But the trend has not lasted long, at least with her clients.

"In this new year with all of the jobs we have coming in, we have a lot of people who want natural elements," she says. "I've done some research on it and that's where they're predicting everything to go. In the last couple of years more people have been working from home and they've been in the house more, so people want that natural and organic feel. I have people who want wood tones and soft gray cabinets, and natural or sage colors for the wall. I see it falling more in that direction than going too bold with color."

Color can be used in a way where it does not dominate the entire room, however.

"We're doing color for islands," Fiore says. "Some people will do the perimeter in one color and the island in another, or they'll do different colors for the upper and lower [cabinets], which is becoming more popular. … We're also doing a lot of open shelving. Is it here to stay? I don't know, but you can incorporate open shelving into a traditional design and it works nicely. It breaks up a wall of all cabinets."

Amiano suggests that stacked cabinetry can have the same effect. "Maybe you have a 36-inch cabinet on the bottom with a 12-inch cabinet on top. It looks super elegant," she says. "A lot of people will make the top cabinet glass for a decorative design feature; I've had quite a few kitchens where we've done that."

For those looking to keep costs down, Cerami and Fennessy agree there are many benefits to cabinet refacing. "We've really seen an uptick in that," Fennessy says. "They'll reface it because they're sick of looking at their outdated kitchen, and refacing offers a cost savings as well as quick transformation in color and style."

Five to 10 years ago, granite was the hot word when it came to kitchen countertops, but quartz has replaced it as the go-to material. "It's mostly all quartz [because of] maintenance and consistency," Fiore says. "If you have veining, it's a consistent look, whereas granite has a lot more variation. You can get the look of a natural stone and it's amazing. The options out there are incredible."

Another kitchen trend is to create a statement with the backsplash, compared to the past when it was used more to complement other elements in the room.

"We used to sell subway tile all day long in the ceramic, but people are asking for more elaborate styles and patterns," Fennessy says. "So we're adding lantern and octagon and geometric shapes. People are getting the lighter quartz countertops, the whites, so they're not as busy and it's the backsplash that is the star of the remodel. … You can introduce color, you can do busy patterns. It's eye-level and people want to make it the showstopper."



Photo courtesy of Kitchen Magic

A SPA-LIKE RETREAT

For some time now, many homeowners have looked to recreate the feel of a spa or luxury hotel in their master bathroom. For Cerami, that usually starts with removing the large, builder's-grade tub that is rarely utilized and using that space for the shower instead.

"The No. 1 request we get is to increase the size of the shower and the functionality of the shower," he says. "Why wouldn't you want a shower that is more like a spa experience? It can have a rain showerhead, a handheld showerhead, body sprays or room to sit down. People want more of that human car wash experience with beautiful tile surrounds, a space that is

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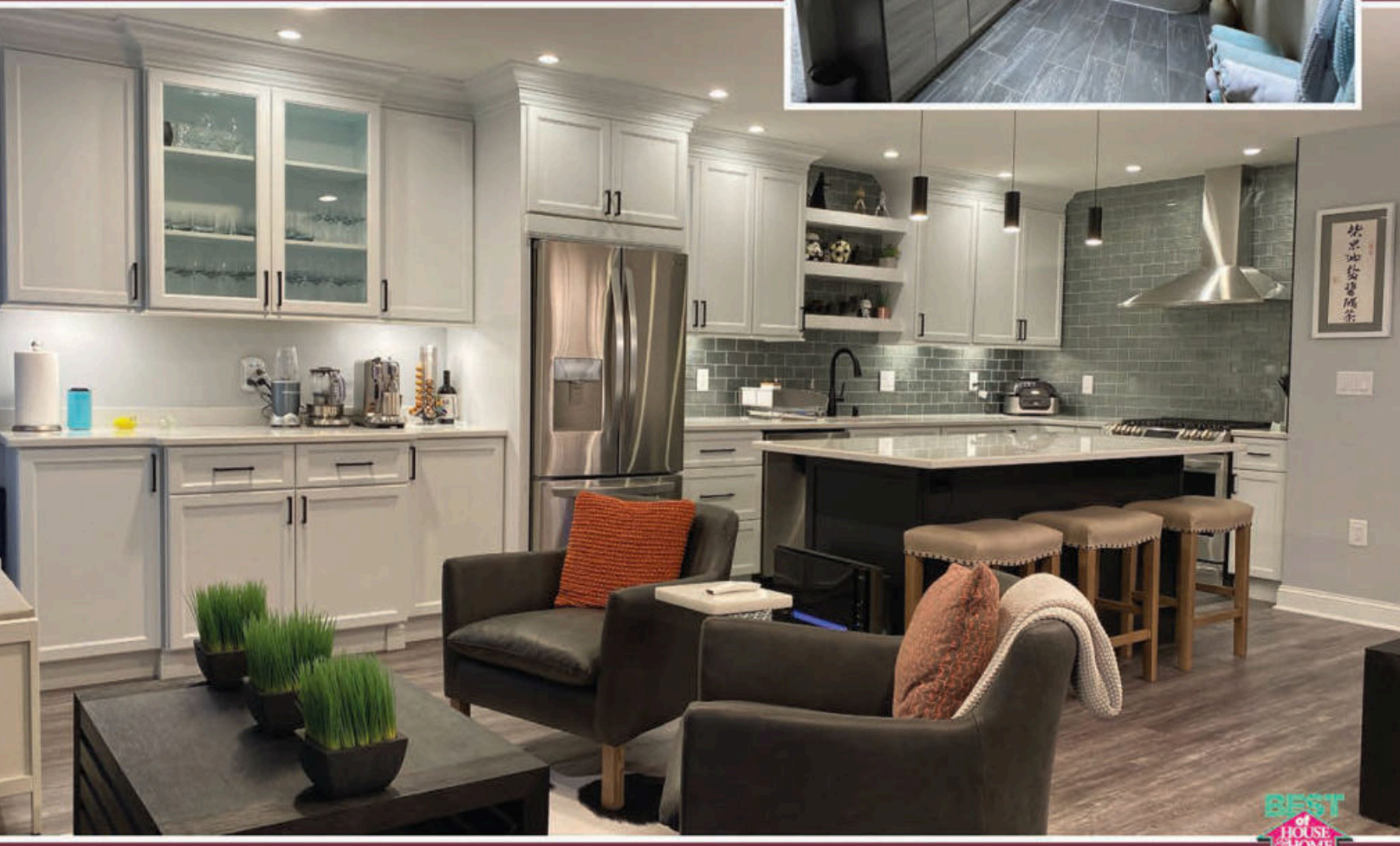
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Fiore is getting the same request from his customers, along with oversized vanities and heated floors. Cerami adds that those who still want a tub can opt for a freestanding one that is almost like a piece of art and has visual appeal. To that end, Amiano recently designed a master bath that certainly stands out.

"We just did a project where we actually incorporated the tub into the shower, so it's a drop-in tub in the shower," she says. "We did granite at the top to coordinate with the granite on the vanity top, and it looks really neat. I also do a lot of the freestanding tubs. Most people if they can fit it still want a tub, but the idea is to make a bigger shower so it's like a hotel or luxury feel to it."

She adds that no-entry showers are also in demand, especially for older homeowners who want to ensure safety without having to step over a curb. Linen cabinets within the bathroom are popular as well, so that towels can be accessible without walking down the hall.

THE FINAL WORD

Renovating a kitchen or bathroom is a major project and homeowners should know what to expect when beginning one. But with the right plan and team of professionals in their corner, the end result can be life changing.

"Understand that they are probably the two more costly projects to get involved with, especially if you're going to go all in, meaning you're going to strip the room and upgrade the plumbing, electrical, insulation, drywall and then start your finishes," Fiore advises. "But if it's done right, there is a return on your investment, not only in terms of house value but enjoyment and day-to-day use. The mistake that some people make is not setting a sufficient budget and not being 100% satisfied with the finished product. You really need to have a budget that is realistic in terms of the space and what needs to be done.

"You might want to wait until you can properly budget for a whole room renovation. You can minimize your cost and just do a little facelift until your budget allows for the full gut. You don't want to spend too much and you don't want to spend too little. We try to find a good balance of budget and scope, and you also have to take into account how many years you plan on living in the house and what your long-term goals are. Not everybody needs a custom gourmet kitchen with $50,000 appliances. Everyone has to make sure they're comfortable with the entire scope, budget and material selection." H&H

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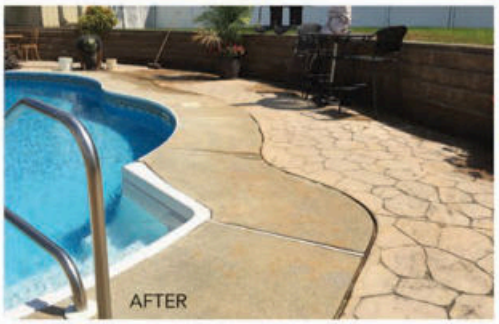
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Greater Philadelphia Convention Center in Oaks, PA
February 25-27

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Show guide produced by House & Home Magazine
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MARKETPLACE | EVENTS



Welcome to the 2022 Philly Home + Garden Show!

This is where you can explore more than 200,000 square feet of exhibit space, delight in new features and solutions designed to meet your needs, gain insights from design experts and knowledgeable exhibitors, and even learn some new, hands-on project skills (and take home the results).

You'll see and learn about the newest ideas and products in home and garden improvement, get inspiration for your next project, and connect with experienced local providers who can assist you in achieving your goals. To enrich your Philly Home + Garden Show visit, we've added some fun special events, unique shopping experiences, and happy hours.

We hope that we will inspire and help you to try new ideas and ways to enjoy your indoor and outdoor space!

Sincerely,
Jenna Naffin, Show Manager

Don't Miss These Special PhillyHome Show Events!

The 2022 Philly Home + Garden Show is very excited to announce the Main Stage Guests and Speakers at this year's event! Friday kicks off with hit television and home renovation stars, Jeff Devlin from DIY Network's *Stone House Revival* and Matt Blashaw from the HGTV series *Professional Grade, Yard Crashers,* and *Vacation House for Free*. Get ready to hear from HGTV star, Mina Starsiak Hawk from *Good Bones* on Saturday, Chris Lux from *Harth Builders*, Chris Mattingly from *Backyard Eats*, and Jennifer Anderson from *Trellis for Tomorrow*. On Sunday, get expert advice from Collen Falicki from *Back to Earth Compost Crew*, as well as Jeff Devlin. For Main Stage schedule updates and more information please follow the link https://phillyhomeandgarden.com/ show-features/speakers-celebrities.

Celebrity Guest: Mina Starsiak Hawk

SATURDAY, FEB. 26, 1 PM



The HGTV series star, Mina Starsiak Hawk from *Good Bones* will be in attendance to share some of her best home improvement and renovation tips, as well as meet with fans of the show.

Celebrity Guest: Jeff Devlin

FRIDAY, FEB. 25, 5 PM;
SUNDAY, FEB. 27, 12 PM



Host of DIY Network's *Stone House Revival* and licensed contractor with more than 20 years of building experience, Jeff Devlin will be in attendance to share his passion for designing, creating, and building with attendees. Devlin will also have a booth set up all weekend demoing different tools and answering your questions.

Celebrity Guest: Matt Blashaw



FRIDAY, FEB. 25, 6 PM;
SATURDAY, FEB. 26, 11 AM

HGTV Host of *Professional Grade, Yard Crashers,* and *Vacation House for Free*, Matt Blashaw will be in attendance to share his experience as a licensed contractor and relator with the slogan "One Call Fixes It All." If you are thinking about starting your own DIY project, Matt is the guy to talk to.

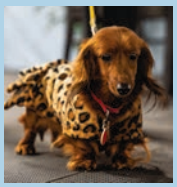
Make-It, Take-It Workshop Presented By Little.Tall.Rulers

VARIETY WORKSHOP TIMES THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND



Take your DIY skills to a new level this year with a variety of DIY workshops presented by Little.Tall.Rulers. Attendees will have the opportunity to work directly with local designers on a variety of projects including candle making, mini sunburst wall hangings, clay earrings, the art of charcuterie, hand-stamped vintage spoon plant stakes, melt and pour soap, sugar scrubs, paint your own cookie, and a clean/dirty dishwasher magnet

Doggy Fashion Show



SATURDAY, FEB. 26, 3 PM

We've partnered again this year with our friends at the Pennsylvania SPCA to bring some of their adorable, adoptable dogs to the Philly Home Show. Support our four-legged friends as they strut their stuff in Doggy Fashion Show where a portion of sales will support PSPCA!

The Spirited Backyard Yappy Hour

ALL WEEKEND

2D Distillery has partnered with this year's event to set up the Whiskey Backyard where attendees can relax and check out some of the finest spirits. Guests are also welcome to join Yappy Hour on Saturday, February 26th, 4PM- 6PM with our furry friends from the PSPCA!

The Red Cross Blood Drive

FRIDAY, FEB. 25, 10AM- 3PM

This year's show has partnered with the Red Cross to put together a Blood Drive in Hall E of the Expo Center to support U.S. blood banks. Come out and support the American Red Cross by donating at this year's event! Pre-registration is required. Visit phillyhomeandgarden.com to register to donate.

Hero Day

FRIDAY, JAN. 25, ALL DAY



The Philly Home Show proudly honors our local heroes on Hero Day. All active and retired military, nurses, first responders, firefighters, and teachers will receive one free ticket with identification at the box office on this date.

The Factory In Oaks

FRIDAY, FEB. 25, ALL DAY

The First 100 people to come to the show on Friday, February 25th will receive a free ticket to the American Treasure Tour, and every attendee will receive a coupon with discounts for all the fun at Arnold's Family Fun Center.

THANK YOU TO OUR SHOW SPONSORS AND PARTNERS!

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PHILLY HOME +GARDEN SHOW

SHOW HOURS:

FRIDAY
February 25
11 a.m.–9 p.m.

SATURDAY
February 26
10 a.m.–9 p.m.

SUNDAY
February 27
10 a.m.–6 p.m.

WHERE:

Greater Philadelphia Expo Center at Oaks
100 Station Ave.
Oaks, PA 19456

TICKET INFORMATION:

ADULTS (at the door): $11
ADULTS (online only): $9
CHILDREN ages 12 and under: FREE

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Friday, February 25th is HERO Day!



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You've Gotta See This:



Get Growing

Over 3,000 square feet of garden inspiration for your outdoor space, as well as a relaxing wine garden brought to you by The Renegade Winery. The space includes an inspirational garden, a garden market, a flower shop, and a succulent bar.



Floral And Hardy Garden Market And Succulent Bar

Shop the Garden Market with some of the most unique décor and gift items to spruce up your yard and be sure to customize your own succulent at the DIY Succulent Bar.



Pop-Up Flower

Take home beautiful, fresh-cut arrangements by Cameron Peters Floral Design and register for one of the Cameron Peters Floral Workshops throughout the weekend to learn the artistry behind the floral design process.



Ask The Gardener

This year's event will feature an "Ask the Gardener" booth thanks to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in which attendees will be able to ask questions and get advice from the professionals.



The Barking Lot

Don't leave the show without visiting The Barking Lot pet market! Delight your fur babies at home with special treats, accessories, and more that you'll find from vendors in this specialized market area. And you'll feel good about a portion of all purchases benefitting the Pennsylvania SPCA.



The Spirited Backyard

2D Distillery has partnered with this year's event to set up the Spirited Backyard whiskey and vodka tasting area where attendees can relax and check out some of the finest spirits while playing backyard games with their family and friends.



Do You Dig It?

Join the experts to upgrade your gardening experience. Learn more about edible landscaping, composting, native plants, and more.



Homes That Roam

Drop by the Homes that Roam presented by Campers Inn to check out the latest and greatest in RV's including new adventure trailers that are perfect for bringing along your bikes and kayaks. Don't settle for a tent on your next camping trip, find out more about your new home away from home on wheels at the show!



Philly's Favorite Market

An open market featuring one-of-a-kind décor and gifts from local artisans and retailers. Shop anything from antiques to original art to homemade pieces to finely crafted items.

Reimagine Your Workspace

Remodel your work from home office space with traditional and modern inspiration from the design corner presented by Ethan Allen. Vote on your favorite design and be entered to win great prizes!

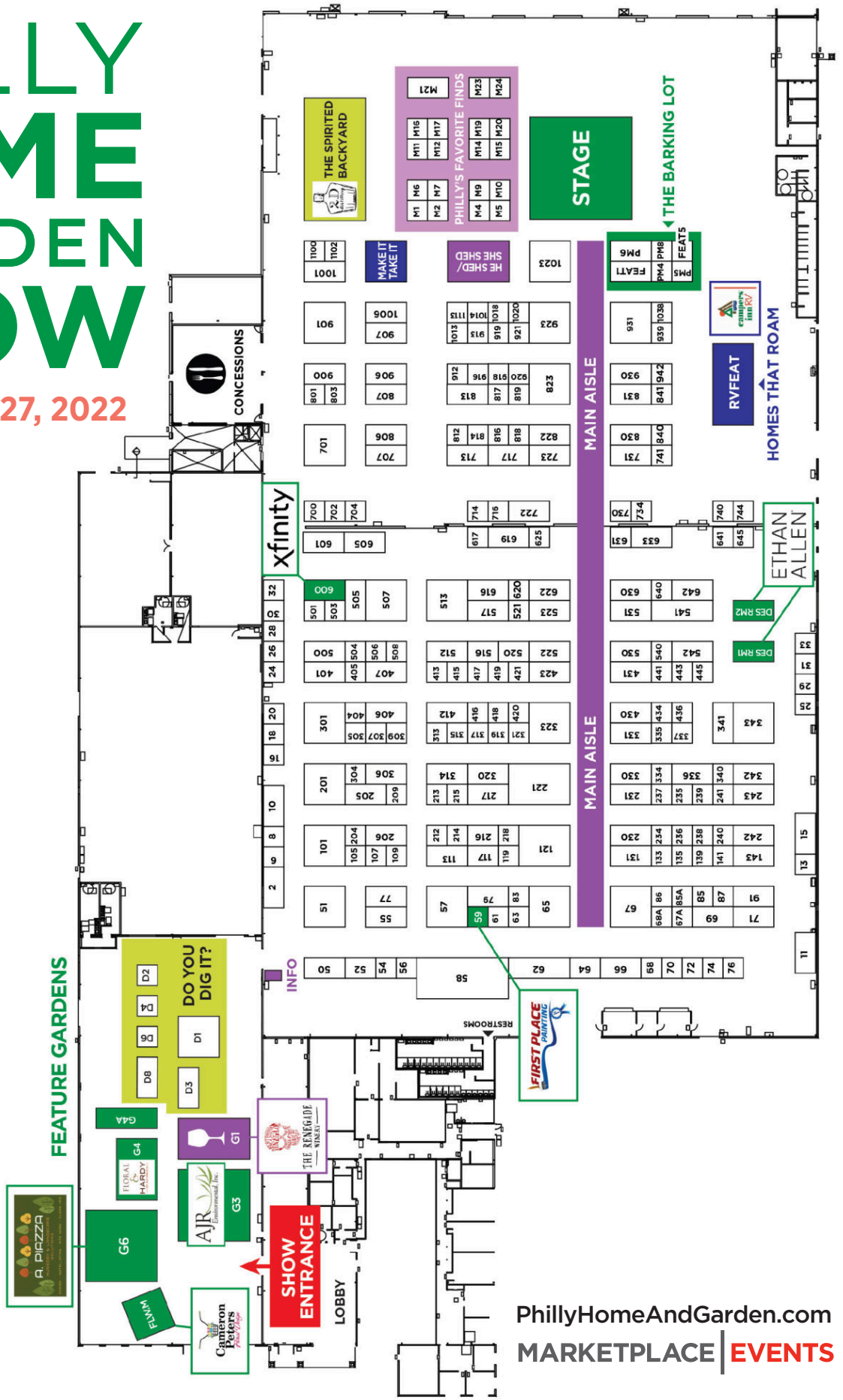


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FEBRUARY 25-27, 2022

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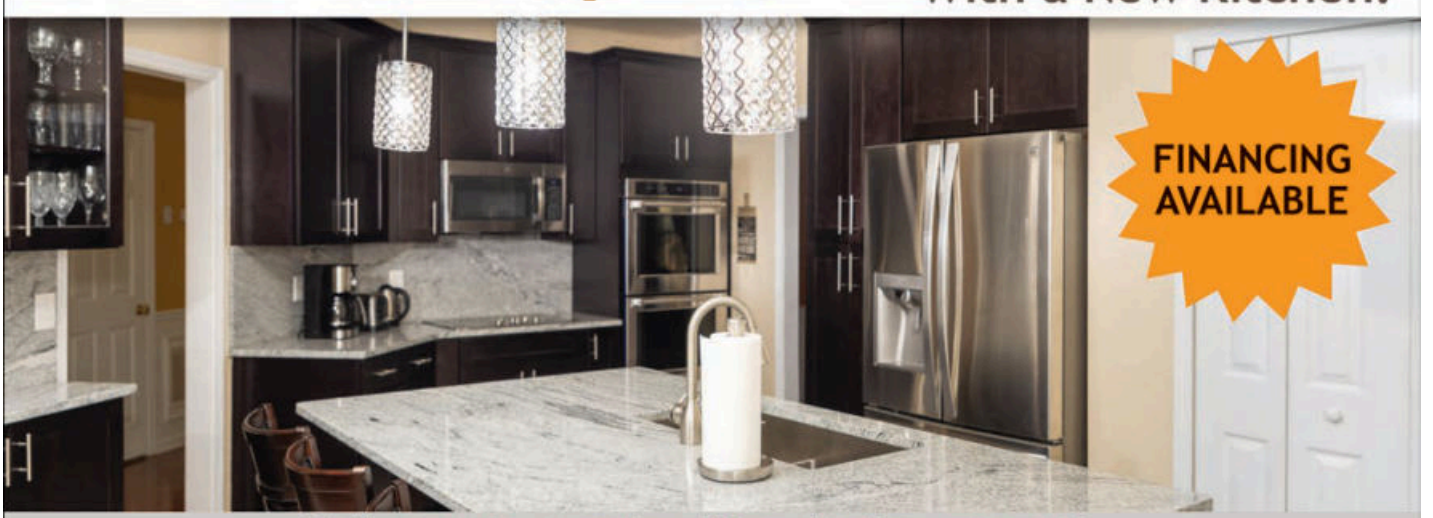
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Restoring *from the Inside Out*



New Castle Artisan transforms aging concrete into beautiful surfaces that will last. *by* **Liz Hunter**

Most home improvement projects come with their share of hassles, from permitting to disrupting daily routines. For this reason, homeowners often put them off. However, New Castle Artisan has a better way.

Family-owned and -operated, New Castle Artisan is helmed by Gwen Kunkel and her brother Paul Randall, who have 30 years of experience in the industry. Its core business is concrete resurfacing, a technique that can breathe new life into almost any existing concrete surface, whether it's your driveway, pool deck or patio. To ensure the project is the right fit for the process, the company offers a free inspection and estimate.

Concrete projects can be invasive on a property, and pouring new concrete doesn't guarantee the same problems won't occur down the line. "Instead of the usual repairs made to cracks, pitting and other issues, our resurfacing allows us to hide all of the repairs in a beautiful, custom upgrade," Kunkel says. "You avoid all the hassle and mess of the demolition and repouring. With resurfacing, we add designs and carve the cracks into the existing pattern after we repair them, so you've got something that is more valuable financially and aesthetically."



Projects typically take three days to complete and don't require township permits—another headache avoided. Kunkel also says one day of bad weather won't set the project back either. "Each day is independent of each other, so if it rains one day, we extend the project one day. We don't need three consecutive sunny days."

Resurfacing has been used since the 1960s, and if applied properly, it will last a lifetime with some routine resealing maintenance. "We use polymer cements because they resist erosion. They are absorbed into the existing concrete, grow spines that expand, creating a new cement surface that is incredibly durable, as well as stain and chemical resistant," says Kunkel.

One of the most important aspects of the product used by New Castle Artisan is that it's naturally textured to be slip resistant, making it an ideal choice for pool decks.

Resurfacing a pool deck also comes with significant cost savings. "Pool decks, as they age, can have movement, creating cracks and unlevel pads. The heavy equipment required to bring new concrete into a backyard is labor intensive, which makes the cost higher," she says. "On top of that, your landscaping and grass are damaged, your fence has to be taken down—our process is no mess. We use small pieces of hand equipment that can be carried in and out, causing no impact to your landscaping."

There is also a level of artistry with resurfacing. "Our products are applied by hand for a look that can be customized however you would like. We can add colors and sealants to make it look appealing," says Kunkel. "We utilize design to incorporate the repaired cracks into a pattern that can be managed. Should cracks reappear, they are blended within the design. If you try to repair other products, like stamped concrete, you'll never be able to match the color after five years. ...We've perfected this method, not only providing quality installation, but an investment that can always be remedied or managed." H&H



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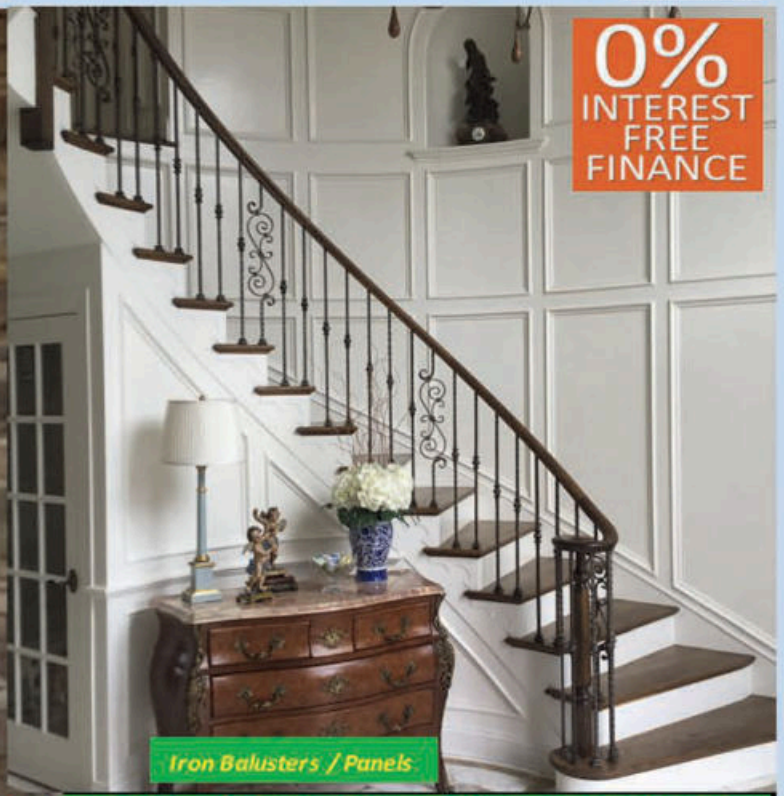
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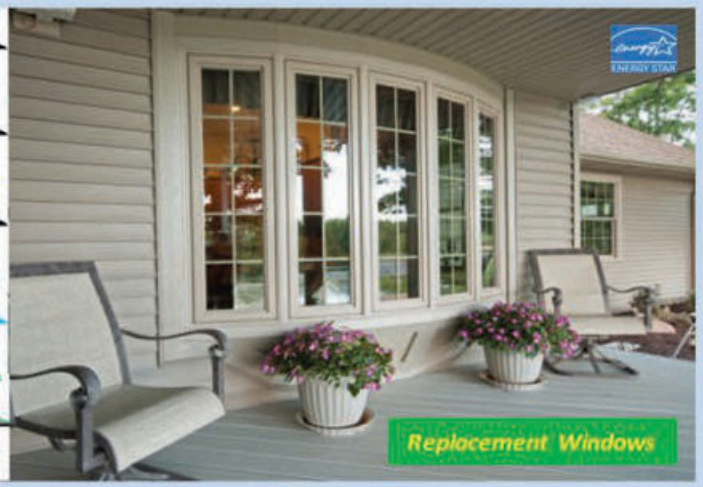


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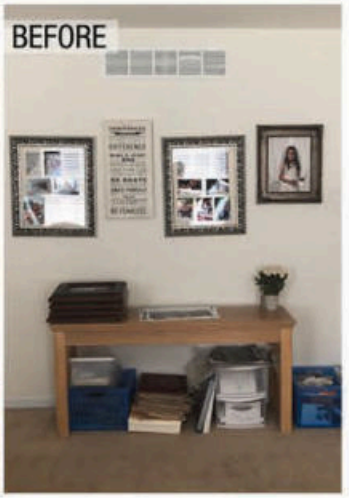


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LANDSCAPING

LANDSCAPING ISN'T JUST FOR THE WARM-WEATHER MONTHS, and area experts have plenty of advice for all the ways you can use the rest of winter to plan, prune and prepare to ensure that the outdoor oasis of your dreams comes to life once spring has sprung.



Preparing for *Spring*

by **Madeleine Maccar**

It's tempting to regard the winter as a temporary reprieve from outdoor projects, especially when the cozy indoors become more and more appealing with every cold snap and snow storm.

But being too lax with your property in the dormant season can come back to haunt you in the spring. By sitting out the winter, you lose out on valuable designing time, an optimal place on professionals' client schedules and staying on top of necessary yard maintenance, to say nothing of the extra work winter neglect can make for you in the spring.

Even just using this time to plan ahead can be a proactive approach to kickstarting your property's yearly transition from cold-weather dormancy to spring's reawakening. "Winter is probably the most ideal time of the year to plan these projects," says Mike Pasquarello of Elite Landscaping. "There is much more added time and attention that can be given to the design phase, with actual installation construction slower due to weather constraints."

As more and more people are bringing the comfort and personal flourishes of their home's interiors outside, they're casting a keen eye on its landscaping and hardscaping potential. Whether your upcoming outdoor projects are major overhauls, more about simple updates or anywhere in between, the region's landscaping professionals have plenty of advice about how you can embrace the winter months to get started, maximize the lifespan of your yard's features and boost your home's overall curb appeal.

Your Property's Plant Life

With the pandemic entering its third year and people still spending more time at home than ever before, they've been able to focus on truly personalizing their living spaces. Some already tackled their major landscaping goals a season or two ago and are focusing on maintenance and upkeep, while others are just now getting around to their outdoor overhaul.

"Homeowners spending more time at home has given us more opportunities to create healthy, beautiful, pest-free living spaces to beautify their property more," confirms Madison Malik of Joshua Tree Experts. "Winter is very important as the beginning of a project's planning stage. We arborists have more time in the winter to really nurture our clients' property and create a great maintenance plan with them moving forward."

Winterizing a living yard actually begins in the fall. That's when it's crucial to lay down a protective layer of "compost or high-end mulch that doesn't introduce new weeds to your garden" to protect plants' root systems from the cold and prevent their soil from drying out in the harsh weather, says Ronni Hock of Ronni Hock Garden & Landscape.

"Snow is actually great for your garden: A blanket of snow on the ground is marvelous because it acts as an extra blanket protecting it from the winter winds, and those winds are what's most damaging to your plant life and soil," she notes.

Unsurprisingly, your yard's soil is a crucial component in determining how exactly your landscaping goals will come to life, as its composition will indicate what kind of foliage will thrive there. Hock points out that

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winter is a great time to get your soil tested, and says that all kinds of resources offer testing kits, like the bigger tree companies, any county office of Rutgers University's New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Cooperative Extension or a local gardening center.

"It's all in the soil: If your soil's not right, nothing is going to grow no matter what you plant in it," she says. "Once you test your soil and send out your sample, you'll get your results back and an explanation of what they mean and what you should be planting."

Ryan Panetta of D. Panetta Contracting says the winter can be a great time to study your property's relationship to the elements.

"Do some research to see how the sun travels across your property," he suggests, adding that websites like SunCalc.org can help in determining things like daylight duration, shadow lengths, average solar paths and more to ensure you're designing natural elements that are harmonious with your unique geographic location and its features.

Take Advantage of the Dormant Season

With winter's bare branches and dormant plant life making parts of your yard more accessible in the cold months, it's also an opportune time to get hands-on and reshape some of your more unwieldy overgrown landscaping elements.

"Winter pruning is great to do during the late winter months, as you really can easily see and evaluate branching habits of a deciduous shrub or tree," says Pasquarello.

"Some tree pruning is optimal to perform in the winter, despite the common misconception that springtime is best," Malik adds. "This includes pruning fruit trees because they become dormant or pruning diseased trees. When it comes to accessing hard-to-reach trees, winter is an optimal time to perform that service—plus, the soil conditions often create a more compact ground, which supports heavy equipment without damaging the lawn."

She also suggests removing dead or dangerous trees, as well as any unsightly stumps. "You'll want to look at mature trees with hazardous deadwood, as well as hazardous oak trees. Tree removals and stump grinding also become ideal in the winter if you are looking to plant a new tree in its place, since it provides plenty of time to prep the area to plant again in the spring. If you wait until spring, the optimal window for planting will have passed."

Panetta notes that a little winter landscaping TLC can be hugely beneficial for plant life once spring returns, whether it's tidying up or introducing native species to your landscaping.

"Starting in the fall through now, it's nice to get all your plant material properly trimmed and pruned back to make sure the snow doesn't do any damage to your plant material," he explains. "Make sure your grass is all cleaned up and there's no grass clippings or leaves on it so when spring comes, it has a better chance to germinate and a better chance to thrive."

"If you're OK with digging through the frozen ground, you can do transplants," Panetta continues. "They'll just kind of stay dormant until springtime, which is when you'll have to revisit them and make sure everything's coming in properly. We've done a lot of pine plantings and spruce plantings this time of year. They're all in their element, so they'll be dormant until they start thriving in the spring."

Some Final Words of Advice

The frozen ground, snowy runoffs, soggy daytime conditions that refreeze at night, and the overall harshness and unpredictability of Northeastern winters make it a suboptimal time to break ground on a new walkway or steps. It is, however, a good opportunity for examining cement, concrete and other hard fixtures for signs of weathering and wear so you know exactly



what you need replaced or repaired.

Most high-quality construction should be fine after just one winter, though the introduction of salt and other de-icing agents can be what rapidly ages those features. "The one thing that really hurts everything in the winter is the chemicals and salt you use, which could do damage to certain materials," Panetta explains.

The kind of winter weather we have will definitely impact the kind of spring maintenance you'll have to do. To minimize the damage of harsh winds, driving snow and inclement weather that can kill plants, Pasquarello has some proactive tips to ensure your yard's plant life lives to see another spring.

"Protect trees and shrubs from snow and ice, which can bend and break branches," he says. "Many evergreen varieties of trees and shrubs become extremely weighted with snow and ice and become damaged beyond repair. Simply tying outer smaller branches to inner central leaders will give an added strength to withstand the stresses of snow and ice load."

With the uptick in landscaping services' demands, now is the time to start talking with professionals and snagging your place on their schedules before it's too late.

"In a normal year, if you called in January, you could probably expect to get your work done by late spring or early summer but now, with the pandemic and the volume of calls and leads, I'm working on projects that I started last summer," notes Hock. "And it's not just me: It's across the board with anyone in the business and construction because there's been such a big explosion of demand, which is a blessing and a curse."

No matter what your landscaping goals are, the size of your property or the features you want to personalize your outdoor space with, the must-dos remain the same, according to Malik.



"If there's one thing every homeowner should keep in mind when it comes to caring for their homes' outdoor spaces, it's to prioritize preventative maintenance and yearly inspections," she says. "They are both extremely important." **H&H**

RESOURCES

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