

HOUSE & HOME

South Jersey

Your #1 Resource and Design Magazine

Volume 21, Issue 7



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LANDSCAPE,
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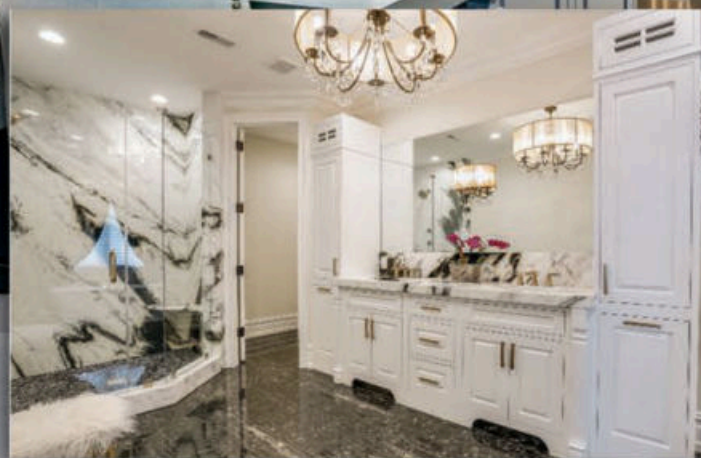
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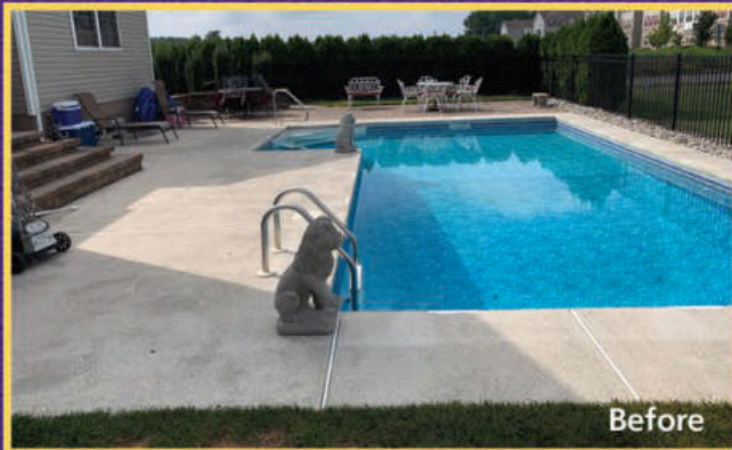


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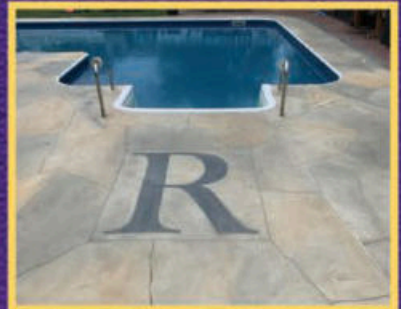
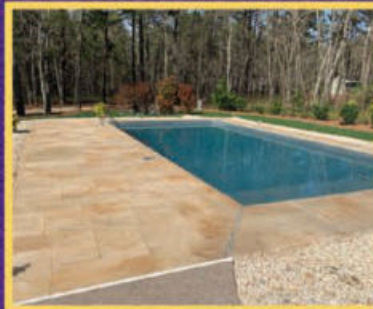
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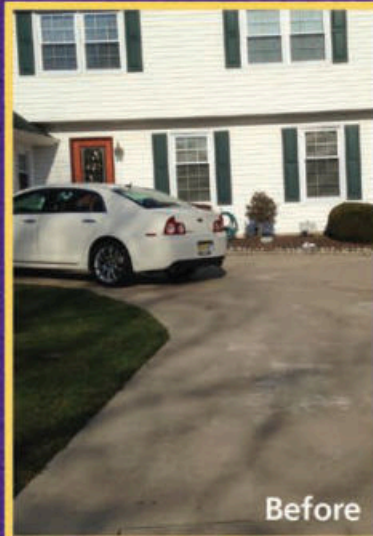


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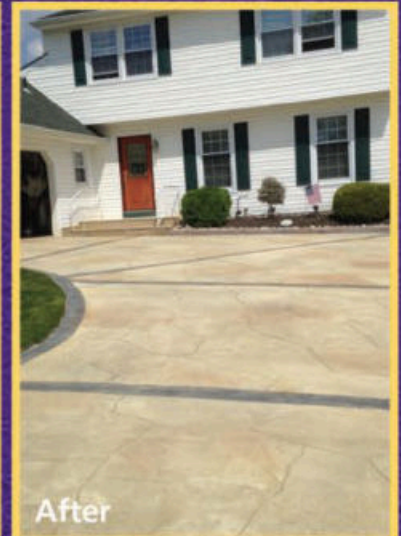


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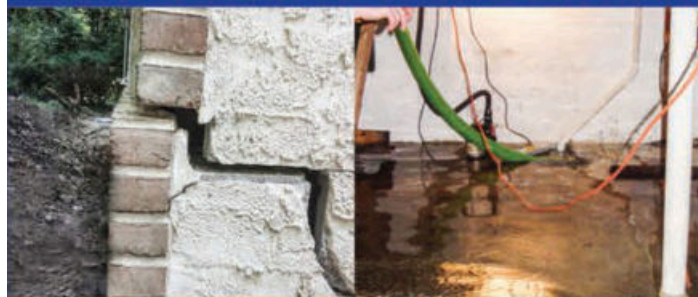
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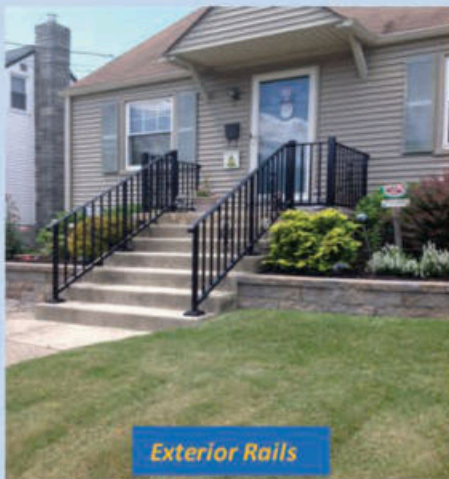
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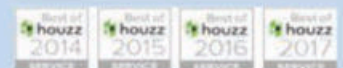
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"MAKE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION"



ask the expert
by Matt Cosentino

Amiano & Son Design-Build

ONE OF THE KEYS TO HAVING LONGEVITY IN BUSINESS IS TO ALWAYS EMBRACE ONE'S ROOTS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY REMAINING FORWARD-THINKING, and Amiano & Son Design-Build seems to strike a perfect balance in that regard. The company continues to adhere to the cornerstones on which it was founded in 1968, yet also welcomes in younger voices and a fresh perspective, and that approach has led to sustained success for more than 50 years.

With the millennial generation becoming more active in home-buying and remodeling, Amiano & Son is well positioned to suit their needs when it comes to kitchen and bathroom renovations, additions and more thanks to company leaders like Joseph Clymer. He joined the family business at age 15 as a laborer and ascended to the role of director of sales and design before his 30th birthday.

Clymer is a member of the prestigious National Kitchen & Bath Association Thirty Under 30 program and has been recognized locally by being inducted into the SNJ Millennials 30 Under 30. He and his team have quickly become known for their unique, original designs that are appreciated by homeowners of any age.



Joseph Clymer,
director of sales
and design

AMIANO & SON SEEMS TO HAVE A NICE BLEND OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS ON ITS STAFF, INCLUDING A STRONG REPRESENTATION OF MILLENNIALS. DO YOU THINK THAT'S IMPORTANT?

As a company, more than half of our staff in the office as well as in the field are millennials and we've been trying to emphasize the importance of having younger people within the industry. I am the director of sales and design and I'm 27. We have two other designers in their 20s as well. We bring a fresh, new look to all aspects of remodeling, including kitchens and baths. We all do extended learning to keep up with current trends and also what's traditional. It makes for a good balance, because our owner, Lou Amiano Jr., has been doing this for 25-plus years now, so we get a lot of guidance from him and he brings a whole different outlook on styles and the approach to a renovation.

ARE MILLENNIALS STARTING TO BECOME A LARGER PIECE OF YOUR CUSTOMER BASE?

Yes. We're working with a lot of younger families and younger couples who are looking for our expertise about what's current and for us to guide them to what will work for them and their family. For example, if it's a younger couple and they're planning on growing their family, then we're going to design the kitchen around growth for them. We keep different

things like that in mind because we're at a similar point in life ourselves so we know what to look out for.

HAVE YOU FOUND MILLENNIALS TO BE MORE OPEN TO BUYING FIXER-UPPERS AND UNDERGOING REMODELING PROJECTS SO THEY CAN GET THE SPACE THEY DESIRE?

We've definitely seen that. This is the first generation to have technology at their disposal from a very early age. A lot of people we work with within that age group are utilizing things like Houzz and Pinterest, idea books or mood boards and sharing Instagram photos with us and using that as an inspiration for their project. They can say they really like this cabinet color or this cabinet style or the way the backsplash flows with the countertop. When the design team sits down and goes through these pictures with them, we can pick and choose which components from these inspiration pictures we want to pull into their remodel. The younger generation is definitely more proactive when diving into a project and doing a lot more legwork, sometimes before they even make the call to a contractor.

THIS GENERATION SEEMS TO BE INTERESTED IN ROOMS THAT ARE RICH IN CHARACTER AND HAVE UNIQUE FEATURES TO THEM. DOES THAT MAKE IT FUN FOR YOU AS A DESIGNER?

Yes. Trending materials are definitely a hot commodity right now. What I mean by that is, instead of doing something more traditional like a raised panel door or a natural stone backsplash, we're doing something like an exotic wood floor or white shaker cabinets with quartz countertops and a blingy backsplash. That's a whole different clientele and a whole different style than what we were doing even five or 10 years ago.

ALONG WITH YOUR COUSIN SOPHIA AMIANO, WHO IS A DESIGNER AT AMIANO & SON, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE USHERING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF THE FAMILY BUSINESS?

It's very important to us. We've seen the blood, sweat and tears that went into it from our grandfather to my uncle and her father. We don't take that lightly. We want to make sure that the hard work and dedication to our clients over the years gets handed down. We want to bring a new approach, bringing different design ideas in and bringing in new materials to our showrooms in Southampton and Barnegat Light. We're trying to keep everything going but also keep adapting to the times as well. **H&H**





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ask the
expert

by Brittany Ann Morrissey

New Castle Artisan

OVER THE YEARS, HARSH WEATHER CAN CAUSE CRACKS AND OTHER DAMAGE ON A HOME'S CONCRETE SURFACES. Homeowners may put off repairs due to cost concerns, but replacing that concrete is not always the answer. Gwen Kunkel, owner of New Castle Artisan, can breathe new life into your existing surfaces—whether it's your driveway, pool deck, patio; practically any concrete surface around your home—with improved products and techniques. *House & Home* spoke with Kunkel about the economic and aesthetic value of concrete resurfacing.

WHY WOULD SOMEONE WANT TO RESURFACE CONCRETE VERSUS REPLACEMENT?

The benefit of resurfacing is instead of just fixing a problem like cracking, pitting or damage from mold, you can make a home improvement. Right now if you have concrete that's cracked or un-level, you can repair or replace it with new concrete, but you'll just have new concrete. It doesn't increase the curb appeal of your home. It doesn't increase the value of your home. With resurfacing, we add design and we carve the cracks into the existing pattern after we repair them, so you've got something that looks like you spent money to do a home improvement and not just a home repair. That makes it more valuable financially and aesthetically.

WHY DO YOU USE POLYMER CEMENTS?

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HOW MUCH EXPERIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

We've been doing projects for 29 years in the South Jersey area.

HOW LONG DOES YOUR WORK LAST?

Resurfacing has been around since the 1960s. It is not new technology but I have personally had jobs down for over 25 years in South

Jersey. We offer a two-year warranty that can be extended. If the bond is done properly, it will last a lifetime with some routine resealing maintenance.

YOU ALSO RESURFACE POOL DECKS. HOW COST EFFECTIVE IS THAT?

The cost to rip out and replace a pool deck is usually considerably more than resurfacing. Being that most pools are located in the backyard, just the concrete can cost up to 35 percent more because they have to wheelbarrow it in, which is labor intensive.



Gwen Kunkel and brother Paul Randall of New Castle Artisan

WILL IT RUIN MY LANDSCAPING OR GRASS?

No. As a matter of fact, aside from it being beautiful, you wouldn't even know we were there. You don't have to take down any fences. We don't use any heavy equipment. Everything we bring is carried in and carried out, so your landscaping looks exactly the same.

CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FLOORING SOLUTIONS FOR GARAGES, BASEMENTS AND SHOWER ROOMS?

Polymer cements are good interior options because they're highly durable and water resistant, which is great for basements and garages. Our products are applied by hand for a unique artistic touch that can be customized however you would like. We offer various styles from simple solid color flooring to textured finishes comparable to brick or natural stone.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR FIREPLACE SERVICES AND ACCENT WALLS?

In the winter when we cannot be outside resurfacing exteriors, we do like to take on fireplace and accent wall projects. In as little as one day, we can transform an old brick fireplace to look like a beautiful stone custom centerpiece for your home. The same with our accent walls that can be designed to match existing decor or we can create a new style completely. **H&H**



Be Inspired!



Sequoia Out Back

helps homeowners take their backyard living dreams and make them a reality.

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 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



“[H]ere, 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.”

— John Keller, owner

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 in-

novative 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

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We're all daydreaming about summer—the sun, burgers on the grill, cold drinks and diving into the pool—so we decided to explore a few of the best outdoor projects in our area to add to the excitement. These photos are just a small sample of the skill and savvy required to bring a homeowner's vision to life, and show the wide range of possibilities you could incorporate into your own space.

EDITED BY LIZ HUNTER



“This project was started by another contractor who didn’t finish the job and left it in disarray. The homeowner was so disappointed in the other contractor, they took their trust in us and contracted us to come in and take over the job. We installed retaining walls, patio, coping, planting beds, plants and mulch. The homeowner was so happy that we did a professional job from start to finish.

“It was important to us to help this homeowner who put a lot of money in their backyard and was so put off from the first contractor that we wanted to secure their trust that not all contractors are like that. We can come into any stage of a project and complete it, making the customer happy.”

Donald Panetta, owner
D. Panetta Contracting, LLC
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“Outdoor living is a passion of ours. Most of our staff enjoys being outside as much as possible, so the ability to create spaces for our clients to enjoy their own backyard is incredible! This project is a perfect example of seeing the need, hearing the want and designing the dream. We were able to pull this off by mixing form and function; giving the homeowners space to entertain, space to retreat and a space to call home. Somewhere they are excited to spend time, where memories are created that will last a lifetime. From design to build this project showcases our passion to bring life back outdoors.”

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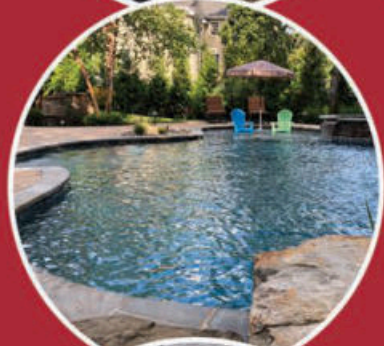
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YOUR BACKYARD *Oasis*

Crafting a gorgeous outdoor space by blending landscaping and hardscaping elements in harmony.

by **Lindsey Getz**

When it comes to enjoying your home to the fullest, there's nothing quite like having a backyard oasis to which you can escape.

But in order to truly get the most out of such a space, it's essential that you're partnering with the right landscaping professionals. The landscaping and hardscaping decisions you make will ultimately impact how much use and enjoyment you get out of these areas and you want to be sure to maximize it.

According to Michael Pasquarello, degreed landscape architect with Elite Landscaping, the pandemic has created a surge of interest in residential outdoor entertainment spaces like never seen before. While outdoor living has always been popular, homeowners are looking to truly maximize the most of these areas. As they look to move indoor parties and events to the outside, they want more functionality out of their backyards.

"There is a newfound interest in maximizing the use of one's property," Pasquarello says. "The opportunity to bring the indoors out has led the way to some awesome projects which rival vacation resorts. I also believe that home resale values are going to be based on the amount of outdoor living space square footage is available."

Ronni Hock, owner of Ronni Hock Garden & Landscape, has seen a similar surge in interest. She says that so many homeowners who found themselves in lockdown began to look around their homes and start to think about where they could make improvements. For many, an enhanced outdoor space was the opportunity to find pleasure, “despite the difficulty and darkness that surrounded them,” she adds.

Hock says that she had the opportunity to be able to create a backyard oasis for a family in Princeton, which provided them with a personal sanctuary. Hock says that every outdoor living space should be personal and reflect the homeowners’ specific wants and needs.

“One of the first questions I asked my client was, ‘What do you love in life and how can we incorporate your passions into the outdoor space?’” Hock recalls. “In this case, she was a mom with a family that loved to swim and an avid gardener who wanted to be surrounded with beauty, a wide variety of perennials, a vegetable garden, flowering trees and a greenhouse. She also wanted spacious patios for entertaining. That was my challenge and I spent the better part of three months designing the outdoor space to include all of these elements and more.”

ADDING AMENITIES

Oftentimes, it’s the amenities that help get the most enjoyment and use out of an outdoor

living area. Pasquarello says that when designing a space, he’s often thinking about “the three F’s.” That is, Food, Fire and Fluidity.

“Nothing brings people together better than food, so an outdoor kitchen is a must,” he says. “Fire has a mesmerizing quality which should always be incorporated in some fashion. Whether it’s a simple fire pit or a grand stone veneer fireplace, it will surely entice a crowd to gather around on cool nights. Finally, the fluid movement of water from a pool waterfall or a pondless water feature creates a calming effect and helps to drown out outside noise.”

Undoubtedly, a water feature can be a tranquil and welcomed addition to any outdoor living area. It helps to create a sense of “zen” or well-being in your outdoor space.

George Mihalchick, owner of Ponds by George, says that nothing adds aesthetic appeal and enjoyment quite like a pond. A backyard pond gives you the visual beauty as well as the sound of water that just immediately begin to have a sensory effect. Of course, Mihalchick says homeowners often have a lot of questions about the maintenance involved—and he says they’re generally pleasantly surprised by the answer.

“If built correctly—and that’s key—the maintenance could be as little as cleaning out the skimmer every 10 to 14 days,” he says. “But it’s important to remember, it’s not just

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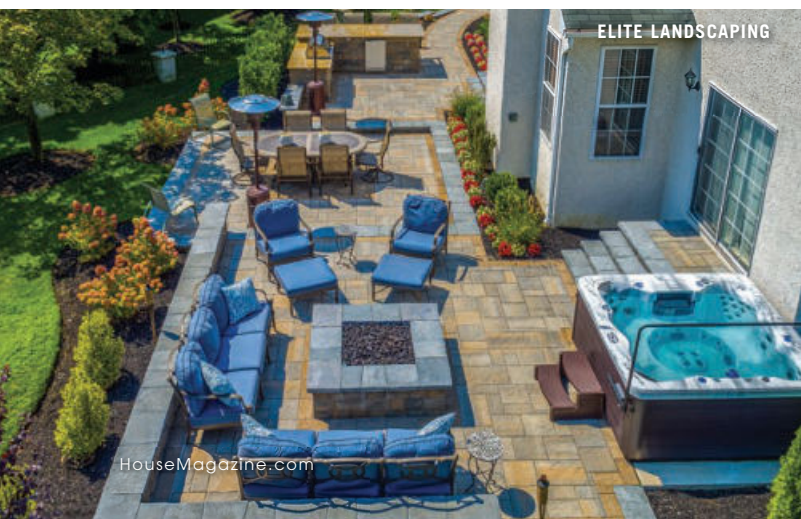
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PONDS BY GEORGE

a hole in the ground with some liner, water and rocks. It's an entire ecosystem so it must be built properly from the start."

Mihalchick says that so many details go into creating an aesthetically beautiful and optimally functional pond. One that's really important is lighting. You want just the right amount of lighting to be able to see and enjoy your pond at night—but you don't want it so bright that you can see the particles in the water.

"You want a subtle look with lights situated in just the right places," he explains. "You can have color-changing lights and you can have them hidden in the waterfalls so that they light up. The big thing is hiding the components—not just the lighting but everything involved in making your pond complete. When a pond is built correctly, you shouldn't be able to tell what makes it work. You shouldn't know where the water is coming from or going. That's all important for a natural, integrated look."

EXTENDING YOUR TIME OUTSIDE

Of course, if you're investing in an outdoor living space, you want to be able to fully maximize your time there. That means spending time outside both day and night—and as late into the season as possible.

Hock says that her Princeton client loved the greenhouse and appreciated being able to spend time gardening, even in the winter months.

"It can be difficult constructing a design that incorporates elements that can be appreciated all year-round," Hock says. "However, in the case of this Princeton residence, a greenhouse was constructed which gave the client many pleasurable moments—even as the snow fell. She's an avid gardener who planned and planted seed trays for installation in the spring in her vegetable garden. She also had a large number of tropicals that she pruned, shaped and fertilized throughout the winter months."

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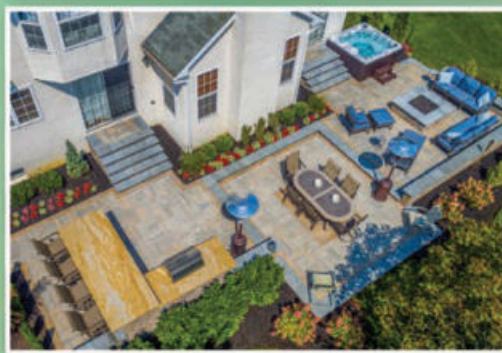
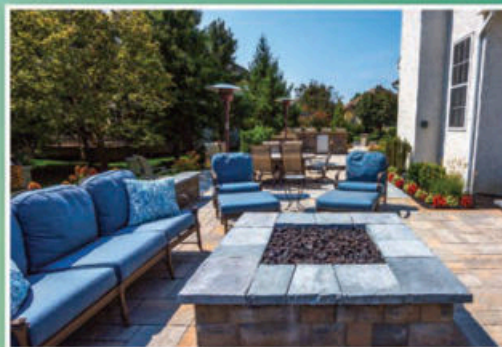
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Pasquarello says that homeowners can definitely extend their time outside.

“Open air pavilion roof structures with built-in infrared heaters can extend use into the winter months,” he says. “Infrared is the best option, as this heat source only emits heat where it is directed. The roof structure will also provide some relief from the heat in the summer as a shaded escape. Water misting systems can even be installed along the perimeter of the roof, creating a cooling blanket of droplets.” **H&H**



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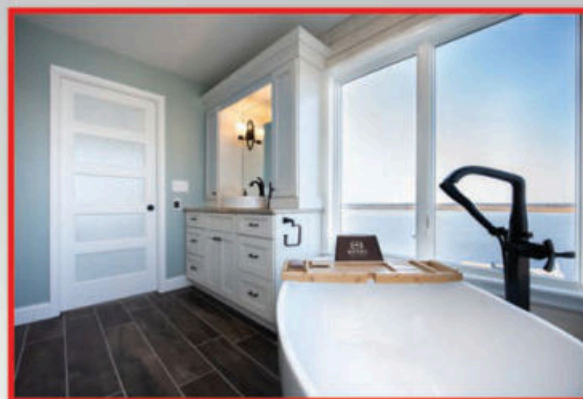
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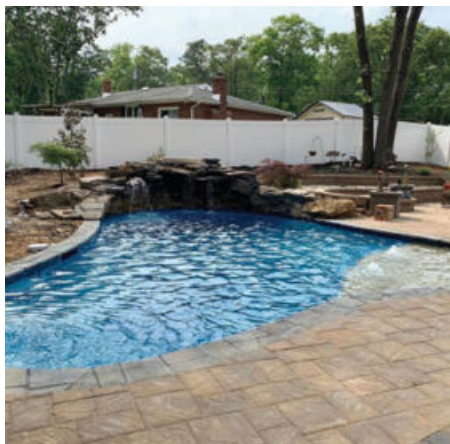
by Bryan Hull, co-owner of Del Val Pools & Spas



I can remember being a young child and watching reruns of *The Beverly Hillbillies*, a 60's show about a rural family striking it rich and moving to Beverly Hills, California. In the show, the character Elly May Clampett—played by Donna Douglas—referred to their swimming pool as the “cement pond.” I can still hear her accent to this day.

Oddly enough, six decades later, that term “cement pond” still hangs around, but swimming pools have come a long way since the 1960's. These days, it's gunite that forms the outer shell of a pool, a material that's a lot more effective than bags of cement from Lowe's or Home Depot.

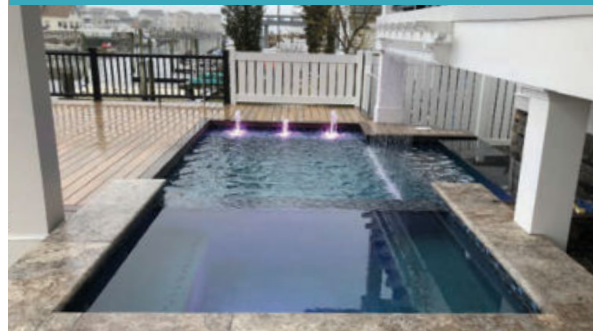
Gunite is a cementitious and aggregate mixture pressurized through a hose, mixed with water and pneumatically projected at high velocity onto a surface, frame or form. Similar compounds are used to line tunnel walls, mines and subways, meaning gunite is quite strong and highly durable. The individual applying the gunite acts as your pool sculptor and can regulate the amount of water and pressure as he builds up areas like the pool keel, walls and sun decks.



As proficient as the gunite may be, it's the underlying frame or cage that gives the pool its strength. At Del Val, we frame out the pool with steel rebar rods that form 12-inch squares. Some contractors try to get away with less, but in the end that comes back to bite the pool contractor and the homeowner. The more steel one uses and the thicker the gunite, the stronger the pool. All one has to do is watch a pool being shot with gunite to get the sense of this structural relationship.

The great thing about rebar and gunite is that using these materials allows Del Val to build custom pools focusing on the customer's vision of shape and integration into the backyard. There's also something to be said about the Biblical verse comparing a house built on stone to

Del Val Pools & Spas offers their expertise on in-ground swimming pools: what you are paying for and how to pay for it.



a house built on sand that translates well to pool construction and design. The thickest part of a pool is its keel—the base that can be imagined as the spine of the structure. If a contractor cheats out on this part of the pool, the consequences a few years later can be disastrous.

At Del Val we love working in the tri-state area, as the soil is perfect for most applications. Southern New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware are mostly sand and clay which is easy for excavation and holding back underground hydrostatic pressure while we do our magic. Pools at the Jersey Shore on the coastal islands are a different type of construction, but we love those too, because we know that what we build will stay “Sandy-proof,” as the locals like to say.

Popular upgrades like quartz plaster finishing, saltwater natural chlorination systems, sun decks, spas, waterfalls, fountains, firepits, hardscape decking and lighting can add to the costs, but it's the pool construction end of things where the heaviest dollars are spent. That's where one's reputation and relationships become paramount. Del Val Pools are known for their structural integrity, their durability and their quality. Planning and zoning boards and permit departments know us, and they know our pools. Frequently, we are called upon by municipalities and builders to provide counsel on pool construction and design.

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Mike Iannelli, co-owner of M&J, has been installing roofs for over 17 years, and in 2018, he realized that his dream of being his own boss could be a reality. He founded the company, along with partner Adam Wingate, and in the first year of business completed over 900 residential and commercial projects in the South Jersey and Philadelphia areas.

In all of his years of experience, Iannelli continues to see the same problems in roofs.

“We find that the older generation of roofers didn’t put a water and ice shield on the house and didn’t put ventilation on the roof. That’s huge right now,” he says. “Without that ventilation, the humidity builds up and causes condensation and damages the shingles, which decreases their lifespan. We also find that they would use 15-pound roofing felt, which is almost paper-thin and doesn’t provide enough protection between the structural wood and the shingles.”

Another common mispractice he notices is shingles without six nails in them. “Six nails are the standard for New Jersey for the maximum wind coverage. Without that, shingles will just fly off.”

M&J’s process doesn’t leave anything to chance, beginning with the most reliable roofing products on the market. “Our process from start to finish includes roof deck protection with GAF Deck Armor, which is used under the shingles and provides protection from wind-driven rain and trapped

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“We only use GAF-certified Timberline HD shingles, which is the leading roofing manufacturer in North America and the No. 1 selling shingle. These products come with a 50-year product warranty and have a whole book of colors for homeowners to choose from. We are also GAF Factory-Certified, which means we’re licensed and insured to offer these products and the warranties.”

Siding is another service available at M&J. “We use Alside vinyl siding, which is another good brand we trust. It has been in business for decades and offers a lifetime warranty as well,” he says.

As the leader of his own company, Iannelli is proud of the qualities that make M&J

stand out from the rest. “We only have employees on staff—no subcontractors. I have four supervisors, all with extensive roofing experience, and they are on-site for every job and available to the homeowner at all times. We stand by the proven materials we offer and take no shortcuts,” he says.

And because he is a business owner who lives and works in the community, he has immense appreciation for it. “The community is so important to us—we’ve lived here all our lives. I’m on the board of trustees for the Gloucester Township Stallions Midget Football Association, as well as a coach,” says Iannelli. “Adam is a member of Harrison Township Committee and serves as the public safety liaison for the township. We have a lot of name recognition and are proud to serve the community.” **H&H**

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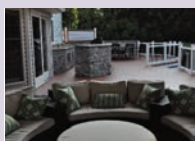
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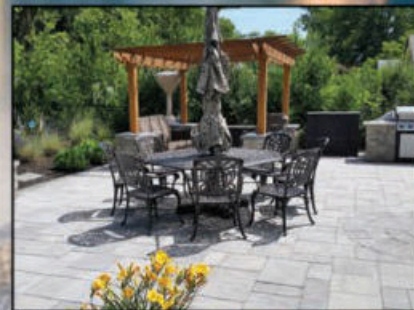
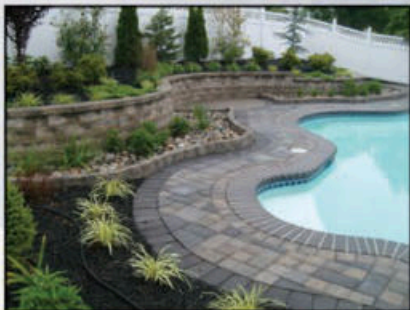
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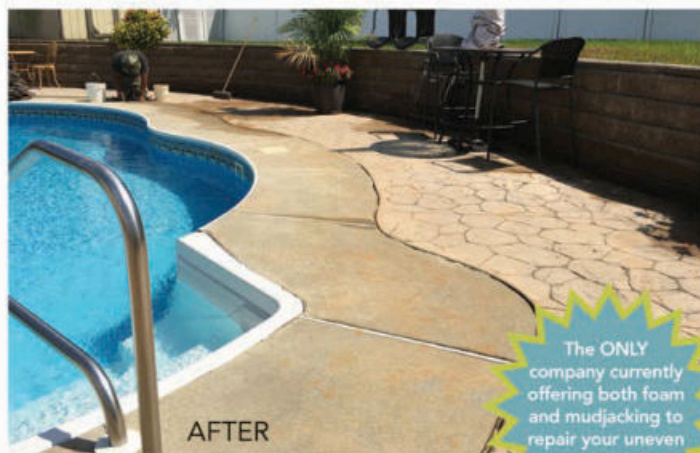
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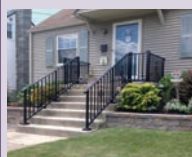
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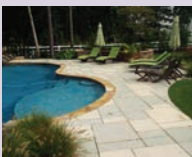
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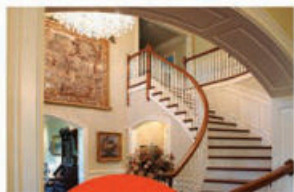
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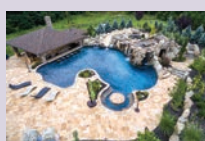


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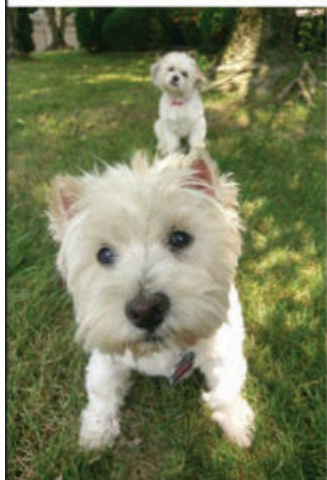


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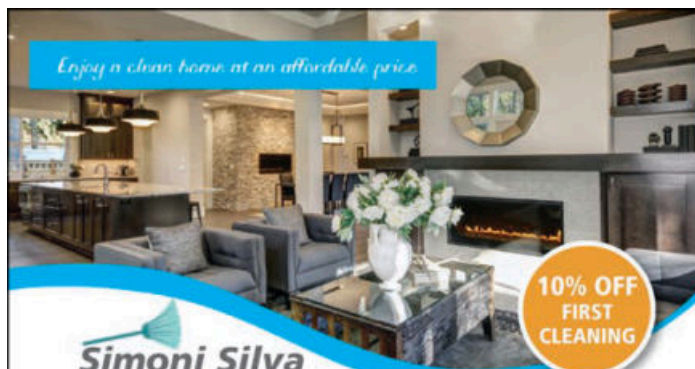
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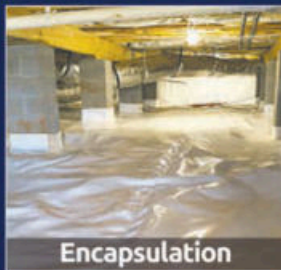
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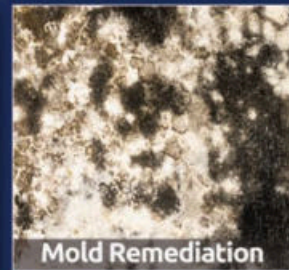
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Industry Check-In



How the home improvement industry is dealing with the unprecedented impact of the pandemic.

by **Liz Hunter**

WHEN THE PANDEMIC STRUCK OUR COUNTRY THIS TIME LAST YEAR, no one knew what to expect. Shelter-in-place orders forced everyone home, where work, school and recreation all had to take place within that one space. Businesses were shut down too, many seen as nonessential. For those in the home remodeling industry, 2020 could have spelled doom.

“One year ago we were more concerned that it would be a ‘no’ year than even a down year. Construction was shut down for close to eight weeks and uncertainty was at an all-time

high. Like many people and companies we were unsure of what the future and new normal would look like,” says Adam Parnes of Global Home Improvement.

As it turned out, the year was better than anyone could have imagined. A perfect storm of factors contributed to a massive spike in requests for remodeling projects all over the home. As they sat inside their homes 24/7, consumers got tired of what they saw. Coupled with the fact that vacations were canceled, they now had the income to spare on projects that otherwise would have waited. And let’s not ignore the record-low interest rates that have

spurred a real estate boom, motivating people to fix up their house for a quick sale or renovate a new purchase.

Zonda, a housing market research firm, estimates a 9.87% increase in big-ticket remodeling projects in 2020 from 2019, totaling 14.4 million.

“We were able to slowly get back to work and due to a hot housing market, our sales were able to make up for lost time,” Parnes says.

Success did not come without some necessary adjustments to meet safety protocols. Ryan Lederman, owner of Rykon General Contractors, says it’s been his busiest year, but also the most challenging.

Among his first concerns was protecting his employees. "There was the risk of losing half of our workforce if one crew member contracted COVID-19 because we'd have to isolate everyone on that crew," he says. "So we had to reduce crews from four to two inside a home, which changes how we schedule projects and also takes the projects a little longer to complete."

And it's hard for them to work long days wearing a mask, Lederman admits, but they do it. "We've had homeowners tell us they don't care if we wear one but we still do." Along with masking and cleaning hands while on the job site,

Lederman's employees also have to continue to be careful in their personal lives. Amazingly, considering they've worked in more people's homes this year than ever before, there were no cases of COVID-19 among his crew until just last month when two employees were affected.

For Global Home Improvement, whose core of work is exterior projects, it was more conducive to social distancing. "The summer and fall were ideal for outdoor appointments on back porches and patios. Same goes for our crews, working outside on roofing, gutters and siding definitely helped," Parnes says. "Our main challenge was window installations which require interior work. With that being said, our window installation teams all wear masks and install room by room so it allows for social distancing as well."

Keeping the noise down was also another obstacle, Lederman mentions, as kids and parents were home for school and work.

When it comes to materials, supply is down and costs are up, meaning consumers are waiting a little longer and paying more to get just what they want. "One of the biggest challenges we have

seen is with material ordering. Many products are back ordered for weeks and typical material orders have been pushed back from four weeks to up to eight-plus weeks. That is why we definitely recommend planning your spring and summer installs sooner rather than later," Parnes says.

This is all directly related to the pandemic, Lederman says. "Demand tripled and factories can only run on skeleton crews to maintain social distancing. ... Project costs are rising monthly with material prices, by about 10%. It's a huge challenge because quotes we give are only good for 30 days, so if the materials cost goes up, customers have to pay that."

Nonetheless, his phone is ringing off the hook. "It's a good problem to have, but I think 2021 is going to be even busier than 2020. Things aren't slowing down," Lederman continues.

"This next year has a lot of promise but what we learned from 2020 is to expect the unexpected. We are planning to grow but we are doing it cautiously with our employees and customers in mind," Parnes adds. **H&H**

"I think 2021 is going to be even busier than 2020. Things aren't slowing down."

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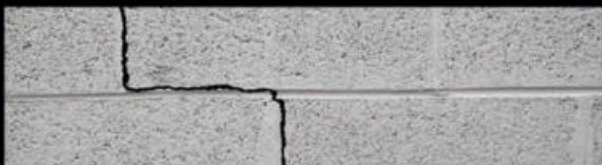
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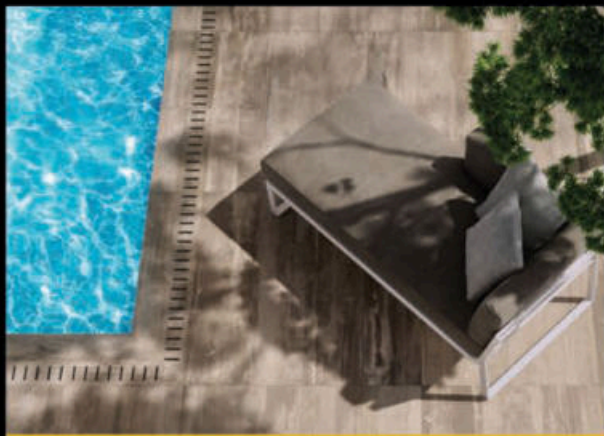
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