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Volume 23, Issue 1

Amiano & Son

Bringing South Jersey's construction visions to life with a people-first philosophy *page 11*

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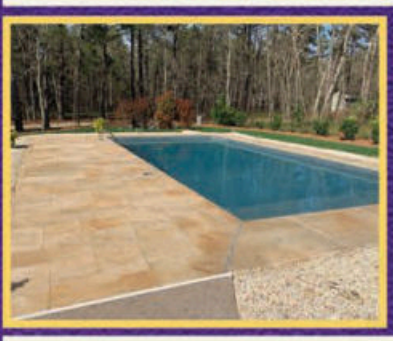
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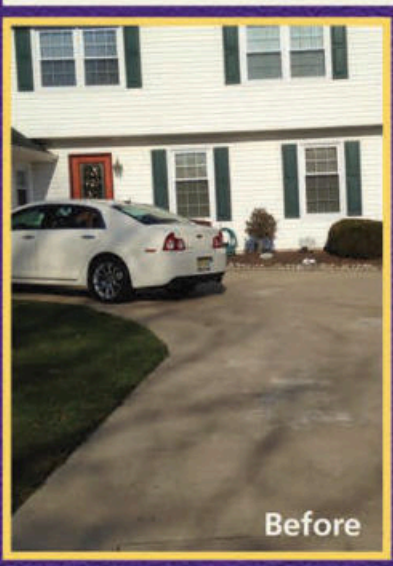
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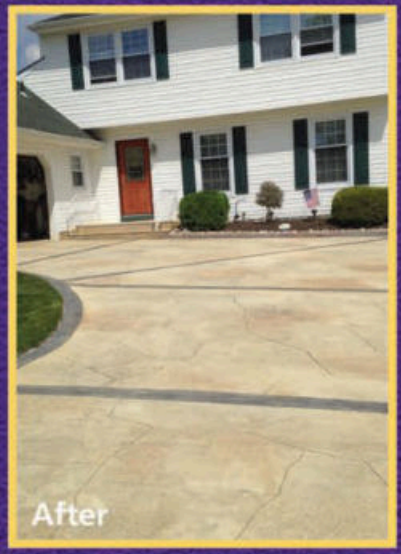






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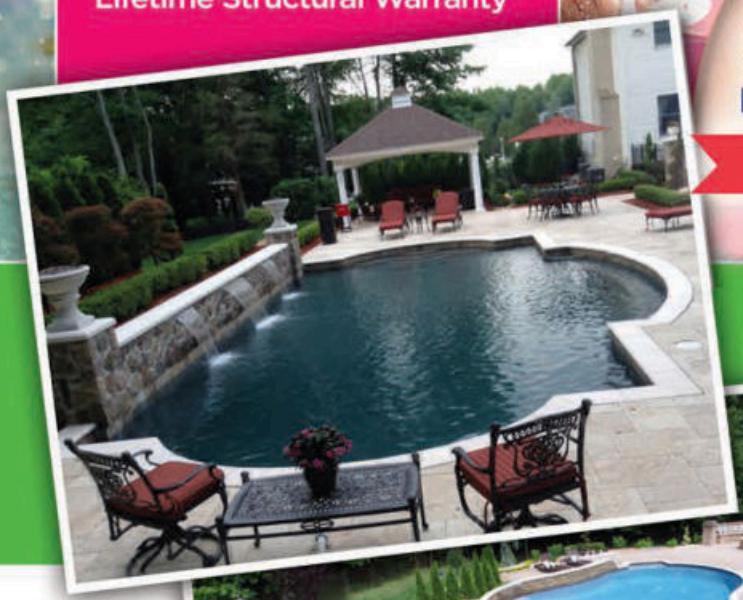
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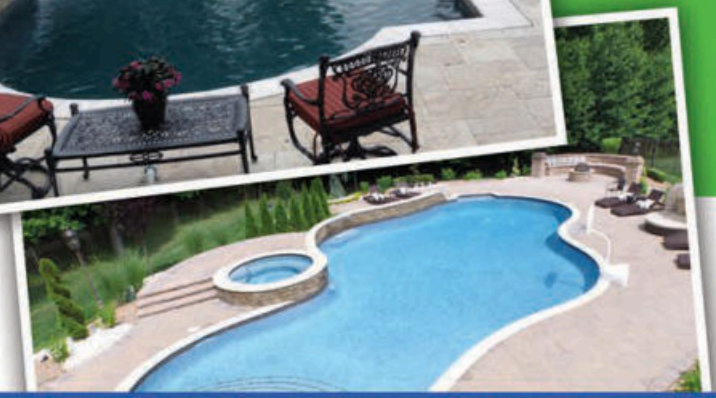
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Building Relationships

Two South Jersey locations help **Amiano & Son** bring South Jersey's construction visions to life with a people-first philosophy to doing business.

by **Madeleine Maccar**

Amiano & Son has been serving South Jersey's construction needs since 1968, or for three generations of Amianos. In that time, the company founded on the strength of Louis Amiano Sr.'s masonry has grown with new team members, new technology and even a new location.

But one thing never changed as its services expanded to include home additions, full-home remodels, kitchen and bathroom renovations, and outdoor-living concepts: Relationships come first.



That people-first perspective deepened as the company developed a distinctly family feel. Louis Amiano Jr. assumed his father's president role in 2009, his wife Wendy joined the team to handle marketing and client relations, and their daughter Sophia is bringing her color-certified interior-designer's eye to the company as she attends the University of Wilmington. The Amianos' nephew, Joe Clymer, is also part of the team and has worked his way up to sales manager.

Being family goes beyond blood, though.

"We have a staff where everyone is on the same page because we're so close and connected," Wendy says. "If anything happens to one of our people, they have this whole family who's there for them."

After years of "doing everything in the company," Wendy says her husband eventually wanted to spend less time working in the business as a jack of all trades and more time working on it as an owner. "Lou Jr." has since surrounded himself with people he trusts, with millennials accounting for much of that 19-person team.

"Our staff is very millennial-heavy," Wendy notes. "We have people like Keith Blose, who worked his way up to field manager and still jumps into any role we ask him to. We're at the point where we have longevity with our younger staff. I look at our team and I get excited about the future."

As he planned his transition, Lou Jr. started working with Clymer, who thrived under that guidance. And when Amiano & Son expanded beyond its Southampton office and showroom to a second location at the Shore two years ago, Clymer was the obvious choice to lead it.

"Joe started off in the field right out of high school. When there was a crawl space to go in, we sent Joe," Wendy laughs. "Then he self-trained on interior design, he was doing sales here and there, and he had a real knack with people. Now he's an award-winning salesperson with a strong future."

Treating employees like family and developing their strengths is how Amiano holds onto top talent, like accountant Mary Beth Brodtman, who has been with the company for more than a decade and Wendy swears is so integral that "we all feel it when she's out on vacation." It's also how the company assures its staff is organically invested in the company's future.

"We work hard to retain our younger employees because they're the future of this company," Wendy says. "The benefit to the client is that they're working with a team that's knowledgeable, detail-oriented and proactively trouble-shooting even before the onsite project starts."

What Amiano does is deeply personal work, and the team takes that responsibility seriously. Wendy describes an internal quality-assurance process that engages clients throughout every phase. Pre-construction meetings set expectations; site visits establish familiarity; project managers oversee a project throughout its duration; Blose ensures nothing is left unexamined, right on down to contracts and budgets.

"It took a long time to perfect our process," Wendy admits. "We learned throughout the years that communication with clients is extremely important. We've set up on a cloud-based system so that anyone on a job can take a picture and upload it so the client can see what's going on in their home at all times."

And it's not just about delivering top-notch service. Amiano is discerning in the products it uses, too, interviewing suppliers to ensure everything from the tile and siding it stocks to the tried-and-true brands it builds with to the budget-conscious options it offers all deliver the quality Amiano promises. That's where working with other builders, remodelers and construction-industry peers is especially advantageous.

"You'll always get what you pay for but this industry is constantly changing," Wendy explains. "The Builders League of New Jersey really helps bring everyone together, and Lou's constantly learning something new through NARI (National Association of the Remodeling Industry) and NKBA (National Kitchen & Bath Association)."

That always-evolving education, as well as tapping into its team's range of expertise and soft-skill professionalism, is all part of what makes Amiano & Son special.

"The feedback I get is that everyone loves working here, everyone wants to come into work," Wendy says. "Our clients know that they're working with professionals who really care about the job—which is someone's home—and not just the sale." **H&H**

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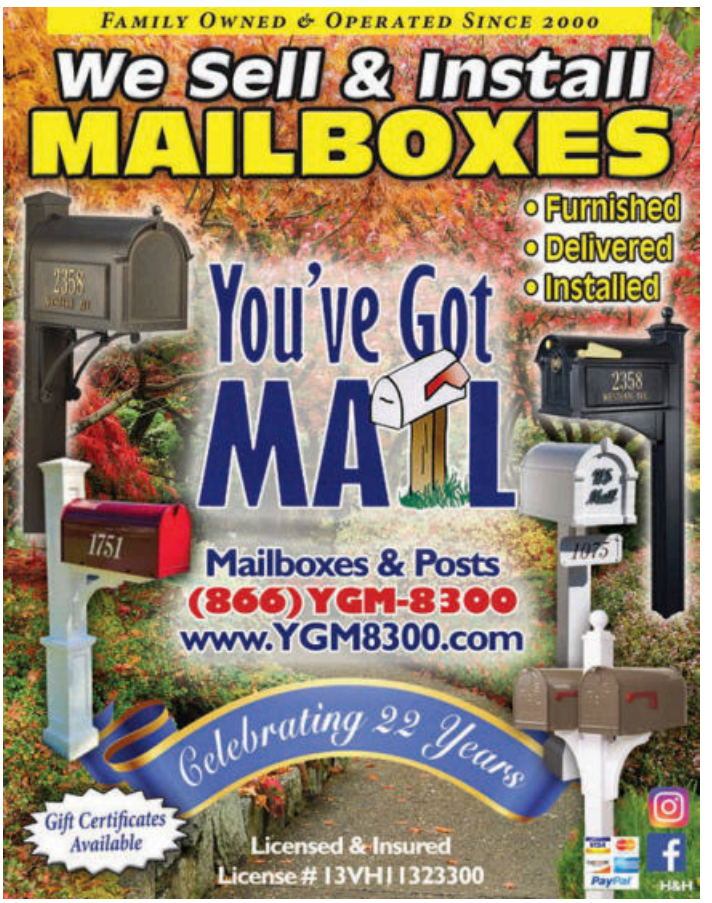
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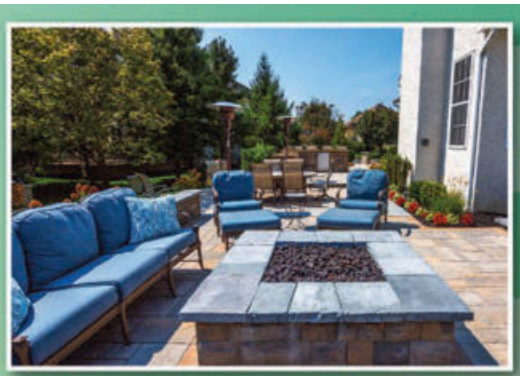
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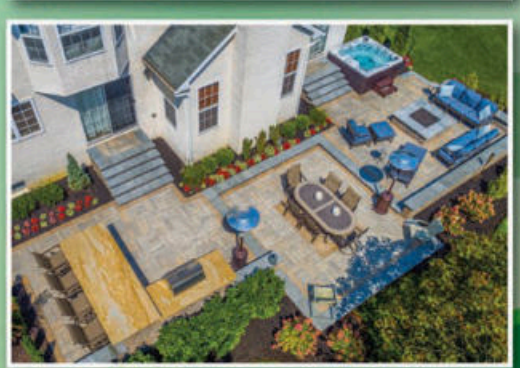
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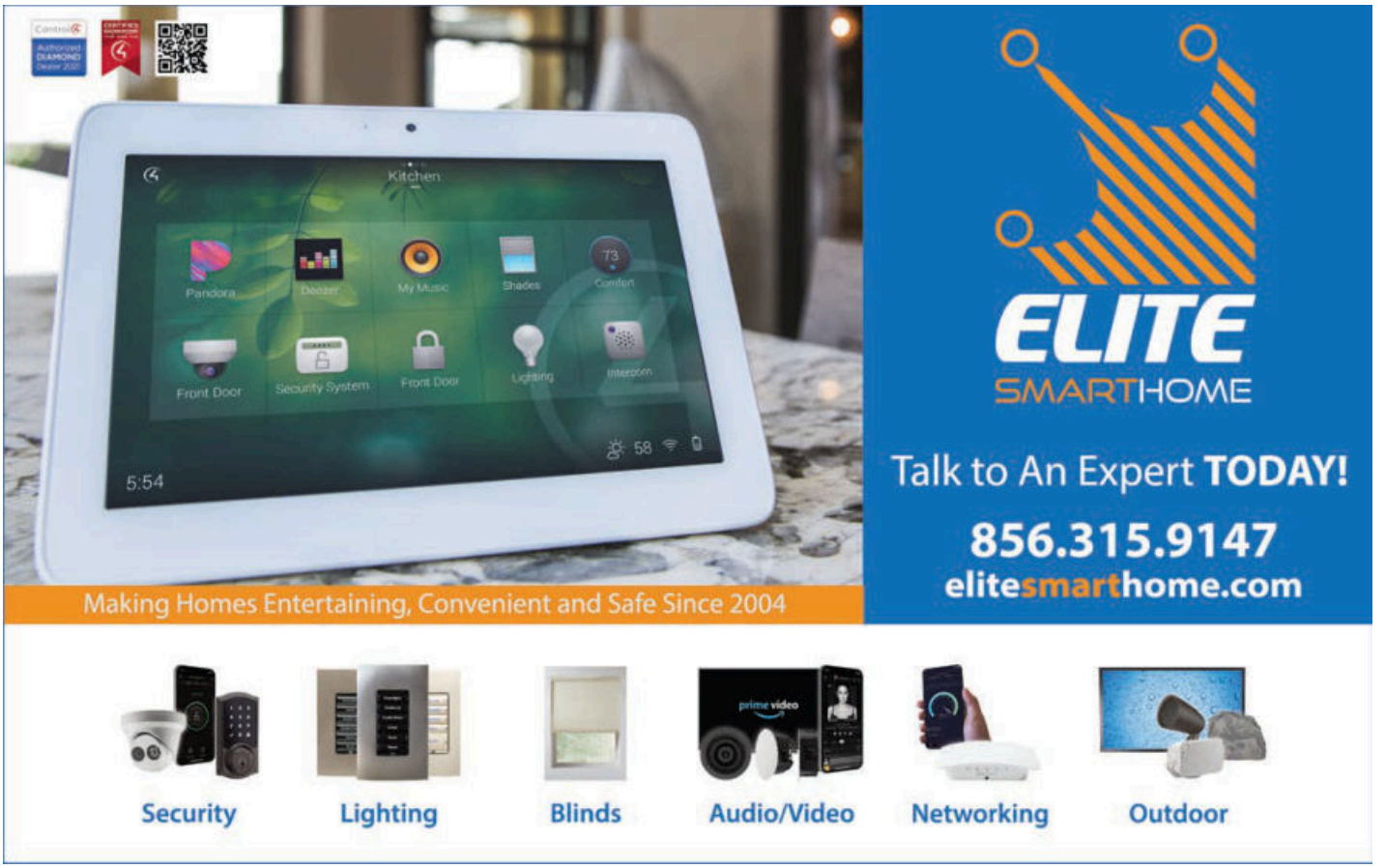
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(908) 617-0097
GlassTechNJ.com

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WITH MORE THAN THREE DECADES OF EXPERIENCE AND THREE LOCATIONS, the family-owned and operated Del Val Pools & Spas has been a trusted name in South Jersey for custom designs and installation, consistent service, and seasonal pool openings and closings.

As the second generation at Del Val, partner Bryan Hull thought he had seen it all—until the pandemic completely transformed the industry and created a surge of new construction never seen before.

"The entire industry has changed since COVID. People took a hard look at their backyards and the term 'staycation' became mainstream," Hull says. "We have seen a huge increase in demands for custom pools in the past few years—and design is everything. Gone are the days of the fenced-in rectangular pool surrounded by a concrete slab. People want a pool to integrate into a backyard design that promotes a family get-together lifestyle."

House & Home spoke to Hull to learn more about their custom pool capabilities and how his company brings clients' dreams to fruition.





Bryan Hull, Partner

COSTS SEEM TO BE SPIRALING OUT OF CONTROL ON EVERYTHING FROM A GALLON OF GAS TO A LOAF OF BREAD. HOW ARE YOU KEEPING YOUR COSTS DOWN?

With the third generation coming through the ranks at Del Val Pools & Spas, I can say we saw this coming. We buy supplies and materials in bulk and a year in advance at a minimum. With three locations, we have plenty of storage so the monthly gyrations of related industries do not affect us. Also, simply put, after decades of building pools, we know how to do this, and we know how to do it well. Efficiency and experience allow us to have a very sharp pencil when bidding on a new project.

MOST CONTRACTORS SEEM TO BE MONTHS OUT BEFORE BEING ABLE TO SCHEDULE. HOW ARE YOU CONTROLLING YOUR SCHEDULES AND DOING CONSTANT ON-TIME COMPLETIONS?

We don't subcontract out our work. From the excavation, to the spraying of gunite, to the plastering, it's all Del Val. That way we are never vulnerable to another company's delays. We control our schedules because we own all of our equipment, and our schedulers are masters at their tasks.

DEL VAL IS KNOWN FOR CUSTOM GUNITE POOLS. HANDS DOWN, YOU ARE THE LEADER. WHY?

Over the years, the cost difference between pools with liners and custom gunite has been closing. With gunite, one gets a fully custom pool that integrates into their backyard. That's the market where we wanted to be. We are designers, and we recognize each job is unique and reflects a dream and vision of the homeowner. I think we do it better than anyone else. It's a different engineering mindset—it's a totally different process. We build more gunite pools than anyone because we have the experience.

YOU HAVE CREATED QUITE A NICHE MARKET AT THE SHORE, BUILDING INTRICATE POOLS IN TIGHT FOOTPRINTS. DO YOU SEE DEMAND FOR POOLS CONTINUING TO INCREASE AT THE SHORE?

Absolutely. It's the new standard. Ask any realtor or any builder. Last winter, we were asked to speak to a group of realtors about constructing pools on the coastal islands. It's a specialty for sure. Pools at the Shore are very custom and frequently are integrated into the piling structure of the home. Plus, you never know what one will find under the sand. Much of the bayside and ocean front are various forms of "fill" depending on when the land was developed. It's an art form building at the Shore, and it's where we get to showcase our work since homes are closer together. Sometimes we start a project and find ourselves still constructing pools on the same street a year later. It's a combination of word of mouth and line of sight. I don't see it stopping. **H&H**

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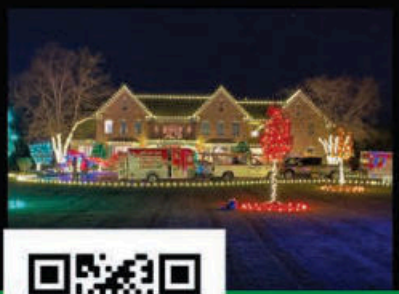
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BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER, AND THE TEAM AT WE HANG HOLIDAY LIGHTS (WHHL) HAS BEEN TIRELESSLY WORKING TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CLIENTS ARE PREPARED FOR THE QUICKLY APPROACHING FESTIVITIES SINCE SEPTEMBER.

House & Home recently spoke with owner Jeff Adamiak, who prides himself in providing clients with nothing but the best, as top-quality service has been the We Hang Holiday Lights standard since 2017.



Jeff Adamiak, Owner

WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A CUSTOMER?

Simply give us a call or visit our website to answer some qualifying questions to make sure we are a good fit for what you're envisioning. Then we will determine if what you're looking for can be designed virtually or if it requires an onsite consultation with me. I will work with you on display options and budget and discuss the terms of our service. Our lighting is customizable LED SMD lighting and because we cut them to fit your home, we can't reuse them and only offer 3-5 year agreements.

HOW DOES THE AGREEMENT WORK?

We do a lease agreement with our clients. We amortize the cost of the material over the length of the agreement. The longer the term the less per year, and everything is included. The price remains the same throughout the agreement.

WHAT'S NEXT?

After we agree on a display and the length of the term, we begin building your lights in our warehouse. Our crew comes out and custom-cuts the lights to fit your home. We label and diagram each strand of lights to make sure the display is the same each year and use special clips to ensure the lights are perfectly straight and secure without damaging your home. We take full responsibility to maintain your display throughout the season. Should anything go wrong, simply call us and we will fix it either that day or the next.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE SEASON?

We begin our takedowns the first week after the new year and, weather permitting, all the lights are down by the end of the month. We make sure everything is labeled properly, box them up and store them in our facility. Installs for returning customers begin in the middle of September, starting with our clients who celebrate Diwali. We get as many rooflines installed by the end of October before the frost to be as safe as possible for my crews. We will have them installed and ready to go. You simply plug them in whenever you're ready.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE HIRE YOU RATHER THAN DECORATE THEMSELVES?

Our clients appreciate the concierge-type service. The materials we use cannot be bought by the general public and the way we design your display is much more involved than simply "hanging lights." The end results are spectacular.

WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHER COMPANIES?

We take an artistic approach to decorating your home. We don't just 'hang lights." A few years ago a customer came to me and showed me lights installed by another company. She was happy with the display but wanted better. We came up with some different ideas and agreed that some of her trees didn't quite scream "put lights on me." After the first season with us, she replaced those trees with Christmas lights in mind. This client now has one of, if not THE nicest displays in her town.

IT SEEMS LIKE YOU REALLY ENJOY WHAT YOU DO.

Yes, this business is amazing. Our clients may be the ones paying for the lights, but the whole community gets to enjoy them. A few years ago, a woman called our phone number from a sign we left at a client's house. "I just had to call you and say how beautiful the lights look, I don't know the neighbor, but we walk past her house every night and it brings us so much joy to see the lights," she said.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE DISPLAYS?

The displays I enjoy the most are the ones we don't charge for. Five years ago, a client asked me if she could pay to have lights installed for a family member whose husband and son were both deployed overseas. She paid for the lights and we supplied the labor for free. It was done as a surprise and they were thrilled. It felt great to be a part of that and since then, we are always looking for opportunities to light up someone's home who is going through tough times. Whether it's for a child who's sick or disabled or a family who has lost a parent with young children, we hope to do about 10-12 of these jobs per year free of charge. **H&H**









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Stylish Spaces

Gehman Design Remodeling

After removing a wall in between the kitchen and dining room to create more of an open floor plan, the team at Gehman added new red oak wood flooring and toothed it into the existing hardwood floor in the dining room. Finishing touches included new paint, a backsplash and LED lights under the cabinets.

Harlyesville, Pa.
(215) 513-0300
GehmanRemodeling.com



Amiano & Son

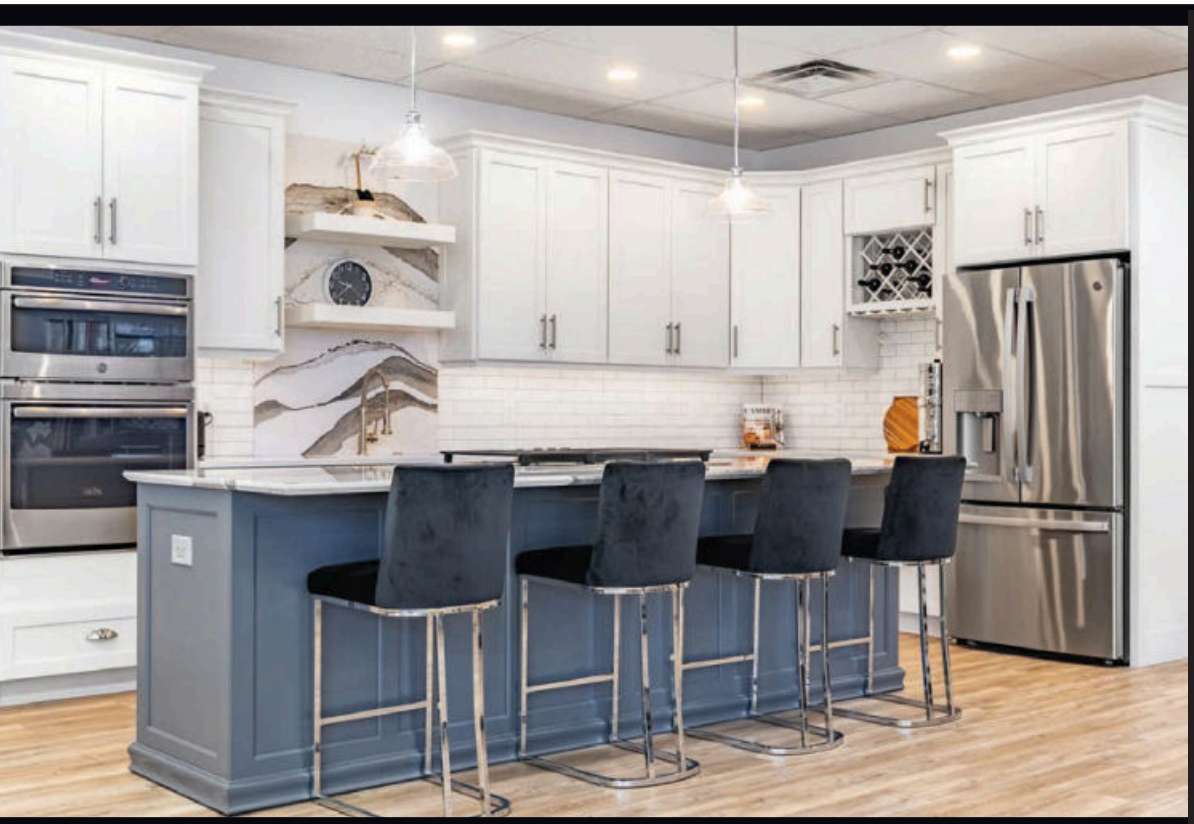
After eliminating an original load-bearing wall as well as a foyer coat closet, the idea was to create a room where everything works together flawlessly. This was achieved by seamlessly integrating the kitchen into the rest of the house using natural wood tones from floating shelf decorations and the luxury vinyl plank flooring.

Southampton Township, N.J.
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Inspiring kitchen designs

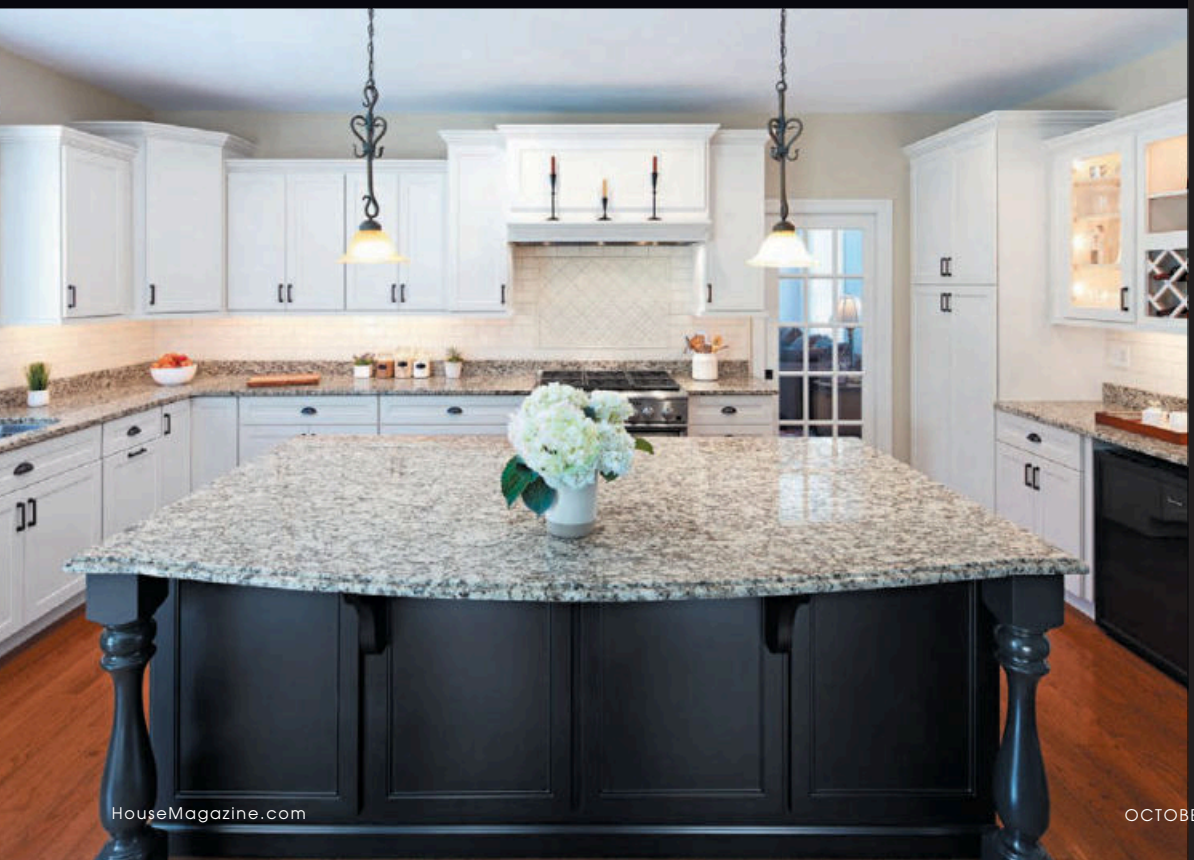
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Kitchen Tune-Up Mainline

The work on this kitchen started with a cabinet refacing project where designers looked to make a statement by adding dark color cabinetry on the bottom to contrast the lighter colored upper cabinets. A new subway tile backsplash and fresh hardware further added to the sleek new look.

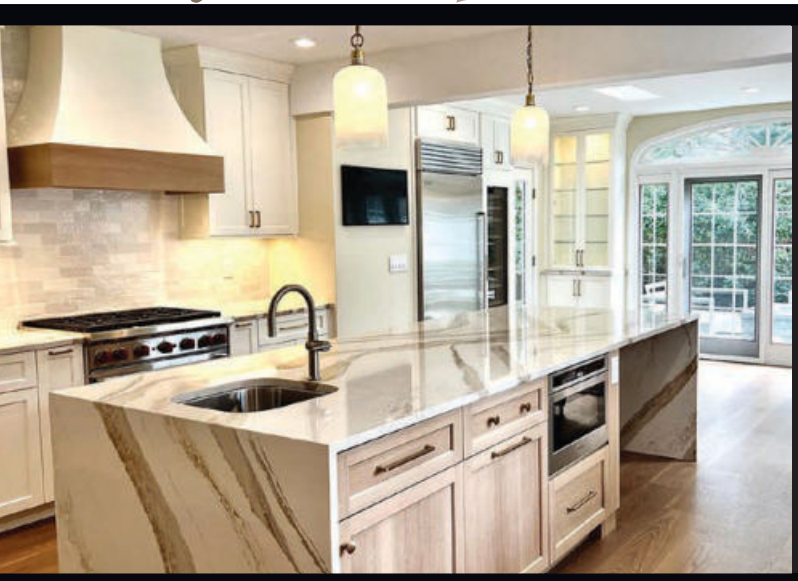
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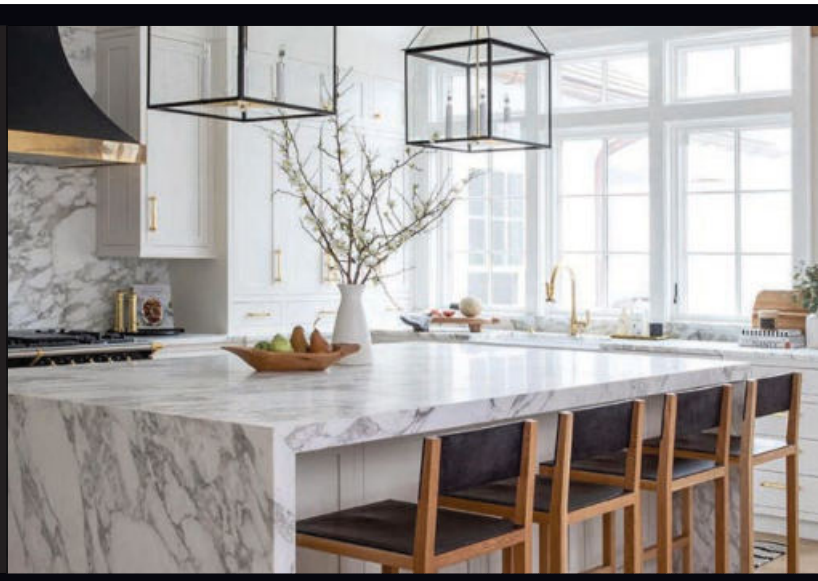


Kitchen Magic

This kitchen was designed to not only be beautiful, but to function for family use. That started with stone countertops and super-sized appliances, but also with the addition of a big island that encourages entertaining. These changes along with refined touches throughout and a thoughtful color scheme helped take this kitchen from traditional to transitional.

Deptford, N.J.
(866) 525-7999
KitchenMagic.com





Magnolia Home Remodeling Group

In creating this masterful kitchen, the folks at Magnolia Home Remodeling Group pulled out all the stops. After removing a wall and installing a structural beam, some of the other ehancements include white oak wide plank flooring, custom cabinetry, large windows and doors for natural light, quartz countertops with a waterfall edge on the island, a porcelain subway backsplash and high-end appliances.

Union, N.J. | (855) 624-6655 | MagnoliaHomeRemodeling.com

Dente Trading Co., Inc.

This kitchen was created using Arabescato Vagli marble from Italy, which is beautifully showcased on a waterfall island, the full-height backsplash by the range and the perimeter countertops. Dente Trading Co. supplied these stone slabs to the vendors who installed them into the kitchen and the homeowners couldn't be happier with their selection.

Cedar Grove, N.J. | (973) 857-4050 | DenteTrading.com



Inspiring kitchen designs THAT PROVIDE BOTH FUNCTION AND BEAUTY





Prime Kitchen Bath

This stunning kitchen wows on several levels, from the design detail, custom cabinetry, millwork and more. The modern flair aside, the room is an extension of the rest of the home, creating a cohesive element of beauty and functionality. And for more than a decade, the folks at Prime Kitchen Bath have been not only meeting client expectations, but exceeding them.

Cherry Hill, N.J. | (856) 484-3003 | PrimeKitchenDesign.com

Fascella Construction Corp.

For any project they touch, the experts at Fascella Construction Corp. make it their goal to bring luxury and comfort into the home, and this kitchen makeover was no different. From the first consultation to the finished product, the end result is to create a space in the home that welcomes you upon your arrival.

Upper Black Eddy, Pa. | (610) 847-6862 | FascellaCorp.com





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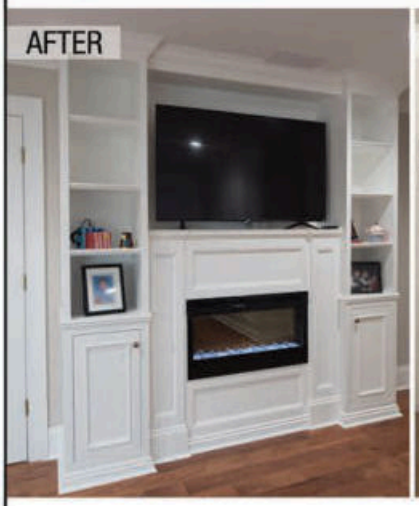
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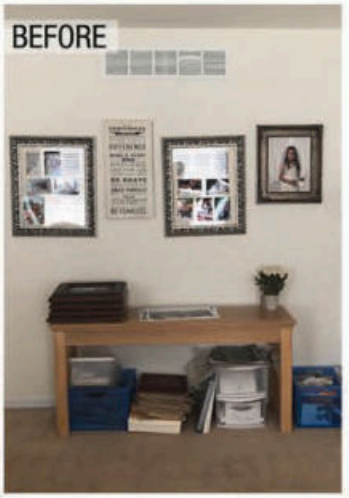


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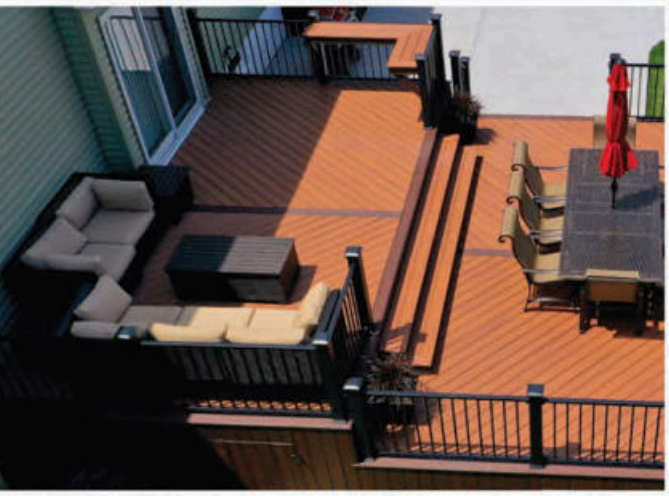
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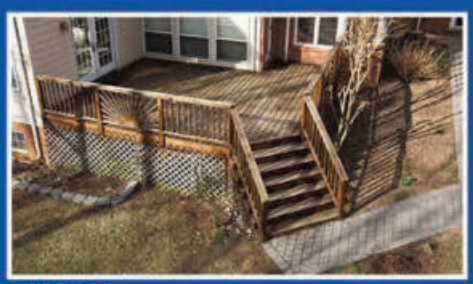




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BEFORE



IN PROGRESS



AFTER



Practical Beauty

Image at left courtesy of HomeTech Renovations. Image below courtesy of Sterl Kitchens

Kitchens and bathrooms are the ultimate double agents, serving as both practical necessities and modern-day works of art.

by **Katie Francis**

A KITCHEN AND BATHROOM, ACCOMPANIED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE APPLIANCES, ARE CRITICAL ROOMS THAT MAKE UP A FUNCTIONING, FEASIBLE HOUSE. However, it's the rooms' style and charm that allow them to cross the threshold of being a house to becoming a home. *House & Home* magazine spoke with experts in the industry to find out the latest trends in kitchen and bath design.

Much like fanny packs—now more commonly referred to as "belt bags"—are making a comeback in modern-day fashion, mid-century American modernism in home design is having a renaissance, too. The movement, originating in the mid-1940s, remained popular until the late-1960s; today, people are coming back to the simplicity and cleanliness of mid-century modernism as they're moving away from decorative embellishments and ornate paneling.

David Cerami, the president of HomeTech Renovations, says



that this style has been prevalent through his 38 years of experience in design, but has been thrust into the limelight now more than ever.

"Mid-century is prevalent and it's always been stylish. It's taken more of a center stage with a lot of the kitchen and bath designs that we're doing now." Cerami adds that he sees a lot of influence from Frank Lloyd Wright, a popular American architect during the height of the mid-century modern era, in his clients' dream kitchen and bath designs.

Coordinating Color

Incorporating complementing pops of color is an integral part of the mid-century modern style, and some colors are popping up more frequently than others. Different shades of green, gray and blue are very popular in both kitchens and bathrooms.

There is also a larger interest in black stainless steel appliances, which marks a huge shift from the ubiquitous gray stainless steel that took over kitchens in the 2010s.

As a clean base color to a kitchen, white shaker cabinets allow for bold contrast through accent colors.

"They [white shaker cabinets] are very versatile and have allowed for color trends to shift from warm earthy to cool grays," says Chuck Bendixen, owner and general manager of Dreammaker Bath & Kitchen.

Lorraine Sterl of Sterl Kitchens agrees, stating that she often sees a mix of colors, whether it's white cabinets with a colored island or vice versa.

"The most popular color for kitchen countertops and bathroom vanity tops is any variation of a Calacatta White, white with gray veins in it," Sterl says.

Exposed wood is also a main component of mid-century modern design. Cerami says that his clients often go the route of more "semi-exotic natural woods" and prefer to see the natural texture and colors of the wood instead of painting over it. "I'm talking about white oak, as opposed to red oak or natural red birch, as opposed to standard white birch. We see finishes that are more subtle, almost like waxed finishes or low-luster finishes on a lot of doors," he says.

"The woodgrain basically becomes the fingerprints of the character of the presentation and we want to see the originality and that genuine aspect shine through in the design."



Serene Spas

As for bathrooms, they've come a long way from simplicity. Gone are the days of quickly showering, brushing your teeth and heading out the door. Now, more and more clients are choosing to spend more time in their bathrooms, turning them into their own private oases.

"In bathrooms, we see more spa-like presentations where we're using natural River stone in certain shower environments," Cerami says, adding that the sleek look of popular mid-century modern kitchens carries into bathroom design as well.

Bendixen says that there are multiple other elements alongside





river stones that give a shower that luxurious feel. "The spa experience is big, using shower systems that provide body spray, rain heads and other accessories."

While a shower is a major component of any bathroom, Sterl says that many other crucial design elements throughout the room give it that "spa-like style." Clients often opt for floating vanities and more storage systems, including ways to "display" their items, to open up and make efficient use of space. Such seemingly minor decisions have a massive impact on the overall feel of a room, especially the smallest spaces in a home.

Flooring Galore

Despite being one of the most important and influential aspects of a renovation, flooring is undoubtedly one of the most overlooked. Today, clients are choosing a wide variety of options from oversized tile in bathrooms to luxury vinyl in kitchens.

In bathrooms, large format, black dot and penny tile are widely popular. Bendixen says that some clients go as far as to add heated floors to their bathrooms, making that harsh morning transition from a warm cozy bed to



Image at left courtesy of HomeTech Renovations. Image at right courtesy of Sterl Kitchens

> "The best designs are always utilizing natural materials as opposed to synthetic materials because they're real, they're genuine. They have a character and depth of their own.
> —David Cerami, president of HomeTech Renovations



the hard bathroom floor a much more inviting one.

The temperature of flooring plays a large role in what materials to use and where, especially in kitchen designs. Many people are opting for hardwood flooring in their kitchens, with tile the second most sought-after, and luxury vinyl the least popular option. Most of this decision is based on cost, aesthetics and the type of layout a home has. For instance, if a family has an open floor plan and wants tile in their kitchen, they have to decide whether or not that flooring will continue into the living room and other connecting areas of the home.

"Do you want hard porcelain in the living room for your kids to play on, or do you want something a little bit warmer to the touch on the cold winter days?" In situations like this, customers often select other options, like natural wood, Cerami's personal favorite.

"The best designs are always utilizing natural materials as opposed to synthetic materials because they're real, they're genuine. They have a character and depth of their own."

While hardwood floors are beautiful, there is a much more affordable and practical way to get that natural and earthy aesthetic. Homeowners can mimic this look by having luxury vinyl installed instead. This option has become very popular the past few years and is quickly taking over the reign of hardwood. Vinyl floors are very durable, easy to clean, more resistant to scratching, typically waterproof and remarkably affordable.



RESOURCES

Dreammaker Bath & Kitchen of Burlington County
Moorestown, N.J.
(856) 252-0055
Dreammaker-Remodel.com/BNJ

HomeTech Renovations
Lower Gwynedd, Pa.
(215) 646-7477
HTRenovations.com

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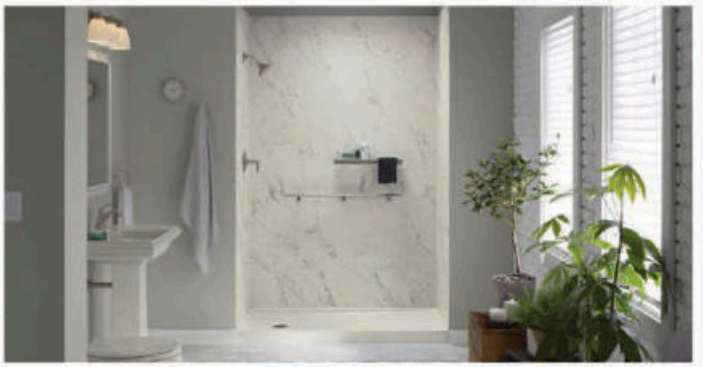
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