

Remodeling Tips

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EXPECT MORE, AND GET IT



Omega
Cabinets

INSIDE OUTSIDE



There is nothing quite so relaxing as a leisurely evening spent outdoors watching the flames dance in the fireplace while soft music plays in the background. On another day, your outdoor living space becomes the hub of activity when friends gather to watch the game. Steaks sizzling on the grill add mouth-watering aroma to the festivities.

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Photo: Courtesy of Eldorado Stone (www.eldoradostone.com)

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Regional CotY Award Winner



Photo: By Dan Feldkamp of Visual Edge Imaging (www.visualedgeimaging.com)

The Hurst's wonderful award-winning kitchen that was featured in our Winter newsletter has won again! We are pleased to announce that **Remodeling Designs, Inc.** received a *regional* 2012 Contractor of the Year (CotY) award for this same kitchen.

Our entry was judged against all the others submitted by members of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) located in Region IV, which includes Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Kentucky. The annual CotY awards are given based on how well a project exhibits problem solving, innovation, craftsmanship, aesthetics and degree of difficulty.

Our congratulations to Beth Spegal, Interior Designer, and Randy Strandin, Project Manager, as well as our entire RDI team for the outstanding work demonstrated in this delightful project. ■

INSIDE

OUTSIDE

(continued from page 1)

Does it surprise you that “outdoor living spaces” is one of the features most often requested in remodeling projects and new home construction today? Across the country, homeowners’ desire for expanding their homes to the outside is remarkably on the increase. This is true, regardless of the size of the home, and even for building projects where affordability is the primary concern. Some homeowners may be scaling back on what goes into their outdoor spaces, and their projects may be completed in phases, but still they highly value having an outdoor space that functions like an indoor space.

According to the most recent Residential Trends Survey by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), the most popular outdoor living features in 2011 were the basics: exterior lighting, fire pits/ fireplaces, a seating/dining area, and a grill/kitchen area. It is interesting to note, however, that not much farther down the list appear items such as stereo systems, internet access, and televisions. This points to an increasing trend for bringing to the outside all activities normally enjoyed indoors.

To design an outdoor living space that is a permanent extension of your home requires careful planning. It is not as simple as rolling your grill out to your patio and putting up a few lawn chairs. These are complex spaces that must be designed as thoughtfully as your indoor kitchen or family room.

A gas line may be needed for your cooking area, a water line for your sink, and electricity for lights, overhead fans, refrigerator and television. These installations are simplified if your outdoor living room is located close to your home and shares an exterior wall. Another advantage for this location is that it receives some protection from wind and rain. If your outdoor space is at a distance, you may want to build a rain shelter so



Photo: Courtesy of KitchenAid (www.kitchenaid.com)

you can continue to enjoy the space during a sudden shower.

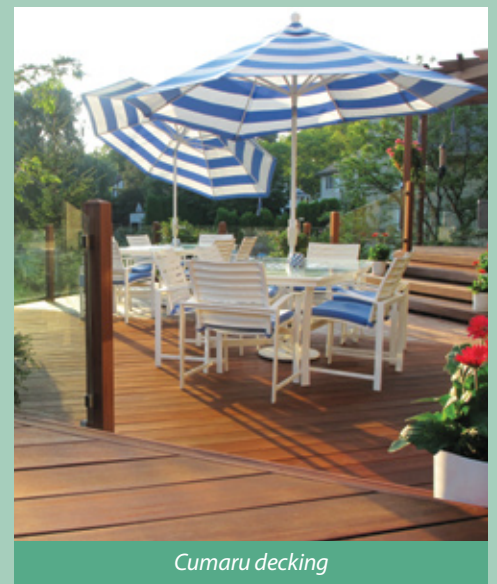
Either way, your appliances and cabinetry should be suitable for outdoor use, so they can withstand the elements year after year. That is also the case for televisions, stereo speakers, and any furniture that is permanently installed in an outdoor area.

Include storage cabinets for cushions, pillows, firewood and anything else that needs protection during inclement weather. You do not want to be hauling these items back and forth. ■

Get On Deck

A beautifully fashioned deck enhances the appearance of your home, and also provides space for entertaining and lounging outdoors, even if your yard is sloped or the terrain is uneven. Typically, your options for decking material have been limited to pressure-treated pine, plastic/wood composites, redwood, cedar or Ipe (an expensive tropical hardwood). With the introduction of several new products at the 2012 International Builders’ Show (IBS) in February, the choice has widened:

- The **Thermory Dance Collection** is solid ash wood, heat treated using technology developed for European



Cumaru decking

Photo: Courtesy of Advantage Trim & Lumber Co. (www.AdvantageLumber.com)



REMINISCENT

A vintage bathroom merely suggests a particular time period, rather than accurately reproducing it historically. If what you desire in your home is an authentic recreation of a 19th century bathroom, beware of the limitations. Few bathrooms from that era would be considered adequate—let alone luxurious—by today's standards. Having indoor plumbing was thought to be fancy enough back then. Shower stalls, double sinks, and separate water closets have come into vogue only relatively recently.

A vintage bathroom, on the other hand, is open to your interpretation. It can accommodate the modern amenities

you desire, while continuing to evoke the sensibility of an earlier age. A vintage bathroom does not have to be from the ornate Victorian period, either. Some younger homeowners who think mid-century modern is vintage, are passionate about re-creating a Jetson look inside their renovated ranch-style homes.

Whichever period you wish to emulate, take some time to do the research and get familiar with the architecture and interior design elements from that time. Try to capture the look in your bathroom overall, rather than limiting it to one or two fixtures

like a claw foot tub or a pedestal sink. Find out which paint colors and window coverings were popular. Make note of architectural details, like moulding and trim. What kinds of accessories were used throughout the home? If electricity was not available back then, what type of lighting was used?

Today's baths have more cabinetry than was typical earlier, since homeowners have more toiletry items to store. Plus these baths can benefit from modern luxuries like radiant heated floors, humidity-sensing fans, heated towel bars, and better lighting. You can introduce elements that never would have been in an original house, as long as you stay within the period effect. It is often little details that make the difference, so carefully select cabinet hardware, towel bars and robe hooks that are reminiscent of the era you are envisioning.

An antique, whether it is a family heirloom or a wonderful find at an estate sale, can add unique personality to the space. However, it is best to avoid antique toilets and lighting fixtures, since these items are inefficient and unpredictable. New high-efficiency toilets will save water and save you money on the water bill. There are lovely electric light fixtures available today that imitate the look of wax candles or gas lights. ■

New Product Introductions

saunas. No chemicals are added. The lumber is high in dimensional stability and suitable for exterior as well as interior applications, such as bathrooms. (www.thermoryusa.com)

- **Perennial Wood** is southern pine to which heat, pressure and an organic compound has been applied to permanently modify the wood's cellular structure. No toxic substances remain within the wood. The lumber will not absorb water and is therefore great for decks and deck furniture. (www.PerennialWood.com)
- **Cumaru** is a very dense tropical hardwood that is being introduced to the USA market as a moderately-priced alternative to the popular Ipe lumber. Cumaru is naturally resistant to insects and decay and has a 25+ year lifespan without preservatives. (www.advantagelumber.com)
- **Second-generation composites** were introduced by several manufacturers. Composite lumber is a blend of recycled plastic with wood fibers. It will sometimes fade or mildew in strong sun or heavy shade. The new composites include a cap over the base material to help guard against mildew. ■



FINDING NEW PURPOSE



The Holdcrafts knew they wanted to improve their family room and galley kitchen that were dark and cramped for space, so they contacted the team at **Remodeling Designs, Inc.** Once we discovered they only rarely used their living room and dining room, the decision was made to combine all four of these spaces into one beautiful open kitchen/great room. After structural investigation, we determined that all the walls dividing the four rooms could be removed safely. By closing off the existing doorway from the front hallway to the family room, we created a much needed laundry room. Essentially, we re-organized all the main public spaces of this home, opening it up in ways the homeowner never thought possible.

Previously, the upper cabinets in the existing kitchen blocked off the family room from view. In addition, the kitchen sink had been placed up against a wall, making the space too crowded for our clients to comfortably wash larger items. The new kitchen sink

now faces the open great room, and there is plenty of room on either side of the sink for meal prep and clean up.

The new floor plan made possible a desk and family organizational center. A bookcase gives space for cookbooks and other decorative items. There is a filing cabinet to the left of the desk chair and storage for a computer printer in the right cabinet.

The fireplace, which was once a part of the family room, was one focal point the homeowner really wanted to keep in place. It was not moved, but instead it currently enhances the kitchen area. A new stylish, non-combustible mantle was installed at a lower height on the brick wall, closer to the wood burning stove. This provided enough space for a large TV on a swivel arm to be installed, giving new function to the entire wall. The kitchen cabinets extend to the brick fireplace wall and include a convenient wood cubby at the end to store wood for the stove. ■

