

naturalLiving

Spring/Summer

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Best of Both Worlds: Natural Gas for Indoors and Outdoors

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Plus
IMPROVING HOME COMFORT WHILE
INCREASING PROPERTY VALUE

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Gas-fueled Homes Sell Faster

If you don't currently have all gas appliances at home, perhaps it is time to consider replacing electric appliances with natural gas appliances to improve resale value. At least that's what a new study by the National Association of Home Builders discovered. The national survey, prepared for the Energy Solutions Center by the National Association of Home Builders in November 2010, asked NAHB's builder members to compare the prices of newly built single-family homes with natural gas equipment to those homes with only electric equipment.

According to the study, homes powered by gas fuel sold for higher prices than electric homes – regardless of the size of the home. The gas home, on average, sold for 6 percent more than the electric home. Other results of the study indicate:

- The average price for a new home with gas heating systems and appliances was \$328,549, compared with an average price of \$308,520 for a comparable home with only electric heating systems and appliances.
- A typical gas home sells for \$250,000 or more.

A majority of builders noted that a new home with natural gas equipment (e.g. heater, range, water heater, dryer or fireplace) generally sells more quickly than a new home with electric appliances. ■



The Heat is On

Enhance home comfort and performance with gas heating and water heating options.

By Paula Felps

Certain things are essential for home comfort – and high at the top of the list is hot water. Whether it’s for showers, washing dishes or doing a load of laundry, hot water is something that is often taken for granted – until it’s not available.

Homeowners who are interested in improving their comfort level – while at the same time boosting their home’s value – would be wise to look closely at water heating options. If your water heater is more than 10 years old, it’s also advisable to start looking into a new one. You want to make sure you replace your current model before it fails and leaves you in the cold! Conventional water heaters account for about 15 percent of your energy bill, and if yours is more than 10 years old, it is probably operating at less than 50 percent efficiency. A new, energy-efficient unit can quickly add up to big savings.

GETTING IN HOT WATER

Tankless water heaters and circulation pumps are among the newer alternatives that provide an investment you can enjoy immediately and will still give you great rewards if you decide to sell your home. One of the strong selling points of a tankless unit is that it offers twice the longevity of a tank unit, offering more than 20 years of hot water. Other benefits include space savings and higher efficiency. “In addition to being very energy efficient and offering the consumer the opportunity for significant savings over their old water heater, the homeowner has an unlimited supply of hot water when they want it,” explains Butch Aikens, Tankless Sales Manager for Rheem Manufac-

turing. “In addition, a tankless unit offers the consumer the opportunity to easily adjust the temperature of their hot water to suit the needs in their home.”

The money that these units save means that it takes less time for the heater to pay for itself. Mike Peacock, National Energy Program Manager for Rinnai Corporation, says the payback is roughly three years.

“The [purchase] cost is slightly higher,” than either an electric or gas tank model, she notes, but the operation costs will be lower. “In addition, a lot of utilities and state agencies offer rebates specifically on the tankless products to offset the initial expense.”

Aikens adds that proper installation is the key to keeping the costs of a tankless system in line.

“There are preferred ways to install a tankless in any home,” he says. “If the preferred installation method is selected, then the cost of installation becomes more affordable.”

THE POWER OF THE PUMP

Another way to improve home comfort is with a circulation pump, which can provide hot water on demand, regardless of the type of water heating systems or how far away the water heater is from the location the hot water is used. The pump can save water because you don’t have to wait for the water to heat up before you step into the shower or rinse your dishes. Aikens notes that circulation pumps work well with tankless units, providing a double whammy by saving water and time while also increasing your convenience and comfort level. (Check with the manufacturer’s warranty before installing a circulation pump.)

With today’s high-efficiency options such as high efficiency natural gas tank water heaters and tankless high efficiency condensing units, consumers have even more ways to save money. While a standard gas tank has an efficiency factor of just .62, a high-efficiency gas tank can have an efficiency factor of .86 EF; a standard gas tankless has an EF of .82, while a high-efficiency tankless has an EF rating of .93 or higher. As consumers study their options, they can weigh the purchase and installation price against the annual operating cost and determine which choice is best for them.





FEELING THE HEAT

Although falling temperatures aren't a problem right now, cooler weather is just around the corner. So while thinking about hot water, it's also wise to start looking at home heating options. Today's choices include natural gas hot air furnaces or hot water boilers for heating.

"Because gas heating is a direct transfer process, gas heating provides faster initial warmth to a home," explains Rex Anderson, director of communications for Goodman Global Group, Inc., which is one of the largest manufacturers of heating, ventilation and air conditioning products in North America. "Historically gas heating is presumed to be 'warmer' than heat generated from a heat pump."

In fact, warm air from a gas furnace is 20 to 30 degrees warmer than air from an electric heat pump; electric heat pumps deliver air at about 95 degrees, which is slightly cooler than your body temperature. Meanwhile, gas furnaces distribute air at around 120 degrees.

According to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, gas furnaces are among the most energy efficient sources of heating available. When compared with heating systems that run off electricity, gas systems cost less to operate. Gas is also more efficient than heat pumps. According to Anderson, heat pumps were initially designed as cooling units that provided heat but were sold mostly in the sunbelt. Therefore, heating characteristics were not a major consideration.

"The products moved north into the frost and snow belt areas and the heating performance of heat pumps became challenging," he says. According to Energy Star®, heat pumps are least effective when used in cold climates with long heating seasons.

Radiant Heating, which provides hydronic heat by forcing hot water through plastic tubes installed beneath a home's floors, is one of the fastest-growing alternatives to traditional forced-air heating systems. Providing a clean, quiet and draft-free heat, this radiant form of heating keeps the floor warm and eliminates cold and hot spots within the room.

"Hydronic heating systems are extremely efficient because of design advances in boilers, zone heating and the nature of the heating system," explains Mary Smith Carson of the Hydronics Industry Alliance. Although it's most popular in cold-weather states and territories, customers in all climates are beginning to warm to the idea of hydronics to heat their home and produce hot water.

Carson says that although the upfront cost of hydronics and boilers may be higher than a forced-air system, "the benefits outweigh the additional costs." In fact, with recent advancements in technology, efficiency in boilers and hydronics systems have increased to more than 98 percent. ■



A Not-So-Traditional Kitchen

From pizza ovens to wine cellars, non-traditional kitchen remodels are upping resale values across the board.

By Kristy Alpert

With the real estate market on the rebound, the idea of incorporating creature comforts into home designs has become more and more prevalent in residential remodeling. But we're not talking about a simple cabinet upgrade; the upgrades seen in kitchens today tend to rest on the non-traditional side as items like wine cellars and natural gas-powered pizza ovens are becoming prevalent in kitchens throughout the U.S. and Canada.

"Trends are leading toward smaller homes and, in turn, smaller spaces; however, features and consumer convenience items are increasing," says Jeff Ehrich, owner of Kenora Construction Services and a registered/licensed remodeling contractor. Along with traditional upgrades to homes, Ehrich says he's seeing more and more features in the kitchen that cater to specific homeowner desires; features like gas-powered pizza ovens, wine cellars, high-end gas ranges, griddles and indoor grills.

"Some of the creature comforts I've seen recently are beverage stations, where adult beverages, coffees of all kinds, water from water filtration systems and soft drinks can all be organized and stored," adds Ehrich. "Recently I toured an open house neighborhood for a local upscale builder to see what he was using to lure buyers and found a design feature that I have not heard of or seen prior. It was a sunken wine cellar right off the kitchen area. The cellar was only five or six steps down on a curve and didn't lead to anywhere, but the walls and the bottom were lined with wine storage cabinetry. Really cool and probably didn't pose significant structural or cost issues, but made for great buyer appeal."

COST VS. VALUE

A recent report from *Remodeling* magazine detailed the national cost versus value averages for 2011 and found that a major kitchen remodel could cost over \$100,000 and could return an immediate 60 percent of your money, while a mid-range kitchen remodel, which can include new countertops, cabinetry, painting and new appliances will generally cost between \$21,000 and \$30,000. With a return of 73 percent, these small changes can bring big rewards for homeowners who decide to sell down the road.

A simple upgrade like installing a high-end gas range with a griddle and indoor grilling feature can add stylish appeal and amazing functionality while only costing an average of \$1,699 to \$8,999 (not including installation) for the product. Home TV shows and magazines are packed with images of these types of in-home gas features, making them a highly desired kitchen feature for potential buyers. While brand names and product features may vary, the prices below show an estimation of what some of these non-traditional features could run:

- High-end range: \$1,699 to \$8,999
- Gas-fired pizza oven: \$7,000 to \$12,500 (Shipping, installation and venting could add another \$5,000)
- Griddle cooktop: \$2,999 to \$3,499
- Indoor grill: \$809 to \$1,649
- Wine cellar: \$1,589 to \$5,599

Along with product costs, Ehrich recommends factoring in installation and labor costs to get the full picture of what a non-traditional upgrade could end up costing. "Clients looking to make their remodels shine above and beyond anything they've seen are relying heavily on the creativity of their designers and contractors to make that happen," he explains. "I think the one thing that consumers under-budget for when starting a major remodel is spending time in the design phase of construction; this can take time and money. However, there are always clients that want the best of everything and are not afraid of spending to get it. I've always said that the 'idea' is the key to what makes a home improvement great, so homeowners need to think out of the box and be creative, looking for contractors and designers who will bring current trends to each space in a way that suits the homeowner's taste and lifestyle." ■





Outdoor EXPANSIONS

Increase your resale value
with the right additions.

By Cindy Baldhoff

Thoughts of spring often are accompanied by thoughts of remodeling, and as the temperatures warm up, outdoor home improvements seem more appealing. Outdoor home improvements can not only expand your living space and enhance your enjoyment of the great outdoors during warmer months, but they can also add value to your home.

“Outdoor improvements add to the resale value and, more importantly, the salability of the home,” says Kay Cementina, a realtor and residential staging specialist in California.

“If the job has already been done and a buyer can see themselves enjoying the space as soon as they move in, they are much more motivated to make an offer.”

However, she points out that it’s important to choose your outdoor home improvement projects carefully and do a little research before you start. What sells well in California, for example, might not have the same appeal in a colder climate like, say, Wisconsin.

“We live in such a mild climate and use our outdoor spaces as another room almost all year long,” Cementina says, pointing out that it makes it easy for homeowners to increase their home value by making outdoor improvements. But it’s wise to think about what sells well in your region before making major remodeling decisions.

BEST SELLERS

The main reason to make improvements to your outdoor space is to enhance your own use and enjoyment. If you don’t plan on spending more than five years in the home, however, you probably

will also want to carefully consider which home improvements will boost the resale value of your property, and which ones could detract from it. Here are some common outdoor home improvements – and how they can affect your home’s resale value.

Deck or patio. Adding or enlarging a deck or patio is one of the best ways to improve your outdoor space while increasing your home’s resale value. According to the 2010-11 Cost vs. Value survey by *Remodeling* magazine, homeowners will recoup between 66 and 72 percent of their costs, with wood decks seeing a greater value than composite decks. To further boost the appeal of your new outdoor space, make sure you have covered areas that provide protection from the sun and the rain – this will further extend the usefulness of your deck.





Outdoor kitchen. The past few years have seen a dramatic increase in the popularity of outdoor kitchens. From simple spaces that could cost just a few hundred dollars with a grill, shaded area and furniture to luxury open-air rooms costing more than \$100,000, outdoor kitchens have become one of the hottest trends in the past five to 10 years. Experts advise that those living in areas where the outdoor kitchen can only be used for one season should stick to a smaller budget, while those who can use it year-round can spend a little more and still see a good return on that investment. The most important component of an outdoor kitchen is, of course, the grill. Natural gas grills offer fast cooking times, lower fuel costs and the convenience of never running out of natural gas, which makes for a better outdoor cooking experience overall. Adding convenience outlets outside the home make it easy to add, move or switch natural gas appliances like grills, patio heaters and fire pits.

Outdoor room. Similar to outdoor kitchens in popularity, outdoor rooms can boost resale value, particularly in warmer climates. In cooler climates, features like a gas fire pit or patio heater provide essential heat and also create a focal point for your outdoor room. The same goes for natural gas-fueled outdoor fireplaces, which are slightly higher priced but provide an effective and visually appealing way to warm up the outdoors. (Keep in mind that while an outdoor room overall will add resale value to your home, it will be difficult to recoup your costs on luxury features like a built-in TV or waterfall. So consider how much you'll use them before you make your final decision!)

Landscaping. Landscaping is a sure-fire way to add beauty and value to your home. According to the national home improvement service, RenovationExperts.com, landscaping will add genuine value to your home. In the front, it provides "curb

appeal," which will attract potential buyers, and in the backyard it can create your own personal oasis. Install landscape lighting to showcase your yard and to provide safety and security.

Swimming pool. Swimming pools can add hours of enjoyment for any backyard. Using a natural gas heater can extend your pool season even longer. A decision to add a swimming pool is a personal one as most pools do not add value to the home at the time of resale. Many experts now say that a swimming pool has no resale value at all and, in some cases, homebuyers will spend thousands of dollars to fill in an existing pool after purchasing the property. Why? Because they're expensive to maintain and also come with certain liabilities for guests. The exception would be if you live in an area that gets sun nearly year-round, and/or are the only home in your immediate area without a swimming pool. ■





It's What's Inside That Counts

Indoor remodeling can help increase your home's resale value.

by Molly Petrilla

Remodeling your home is a great way to get the benefits of a new home while keeping the same address – and everything you already love about where you live. And, if the day comes that you decide to sell, upgrades and improvements you've made will contribute to a potential buyer's overall impression of a home's value. In other words, the things you do now to make your home more comfortable can also directly affect how much time it spends on the market once your "For Sale" sign goes in the front yard.

Funneling some extra cash into upgrades or improvements can enhance your overall comfort and enjoyment of your home. After all, adding that bathroom or updating your kitchen could make it a lot easier to love the house you're with, rather than trying to upgrade or downgrade with a new home.

With that in mind, the following indoor home improvements and renovations will give you the biggest bang for your buck, sweat and tears. Many improvements can yield a good return on investment when you do decide to sell and they can certainly improve your quality of life in the meantime.

SPICING UP THE KITCHEN

According to *Remodeling* magazine's 2010-11 Cost vs. Value Report, a remodeled kitchen can recoup 60 to 73 percent of construction costs in resale value, on average. Major upgrades, such as new wooden cabinets, adding an island and switching to energy-efficient appliances, can mean recouping about 70 percent of the remodel costs. However, aiming for a smaller remodel, such as replacing cabinet fronts and hardware and replacing flooring, can mean an

even greater recoup on cost. (According to the magazine's data, an upscale remodel actually resulted in the lowest cost recoup—just 60 percent as compared to 73 percent for a minor midrange remodel.)

If you're remodeling your kitchen, it may also be time to consider the advantages that natural gas appliances offer. For instance, switching from an electric oven to an energy-efficient natural gas one can save you money right away and for the life of the oven. A 2011 national study of home buyer energy preferences by Woodland O'Brien Scott shows that 78 percent of recent home buyers prefer cooking with natural gas.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEARTH IS

Homes with fireplaces tend to have stronger buyer appeal than those without, due largely to the feelings of warmth and coziness they evoke. In fact, a survey by the National Association of Home Builders found that more than 75 percent of homebuyers would like a fireplace in their family room, and the National Association of Real Estate Appraisers has estimated that you can raise the selling price of your home by 6 to 12 percent simply by adding a fireplace. That makes it one of the most valuable home improvements you can make.

Whether you have a fireplace already or are looking to build one, keep in mind that natural gas hearths eliminate the mess, smoke, and slow start time associated with their wood-burning counterparts. They've also come a long way over the years, and are now available in a wide variety of styles and colors, with an equally wide range of special features to match.

Art deco arches? Through-wall fireplaces? Modern glass beads and gem stones instead of logs? They're all available now, and will begin blazing at the push of a button.





Wood-burning fireplaces can be converted to gas fairly easily, and if your home doesn't have a fireplace yet and you'd like to install one, a gas fireplace is a versatile choice, installable virtually anywhere with access to a gas line. There's no need to spend money on building a chimney, either, since gas hearths vent directly outside—or in some cases, don't need a vent at all. (Check your local codes.)

Adding a fireplace is also a shorter-term home-improvement project, so you won't need to turn your home into a full-on construction zone while one is installed.

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS TOO MANY BATHROOMS?

The larger your family gets or the more house parties you throw, the more squabbling you can expect over use of that most precious of rooms: the bathroom. And really, when have you ever heard someone complain about having too many bathrooms? Just think of those poor Brady children, and you'll want to call up the contractor immediately.

According to MySpendingPlan.com, prospective buyers pay the closest attention to kitchens and bathrooms, which means those areas offer the greatest opportunities for upping your home's resale value. The number you have is also important, and if you add a new bathroom to your home, according to the aforementioned *Remodeling* report, you can expect to recoup about 53 percent of the cost, not to mention attracting additional buyers.

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) recommends keeping your costs in check by using cultured marble sheets for tub surrounds, since they're cheaper to install and easier to clean than tile. And in between picking out floor tiles, debating mirror sizes and painting new walls, you might also consider a less visible element of the bathroom: your water heater.

About a quarter of a homeowner's energy costs go toward heating water, according to the California Energy Commission. In 2009, natural gas water heaters received the Energy Star label, and they continue to offer numerous benefits over electric ones. For starters, tank-style water heaters heat water faster and recover nearly three times as quickly, and they emit less than half the carbon-dioxide electric water heaters do. They're also less expensive to run: according to the same California energy experts, it costs three times as much to heat the same amount

of water with electricity as it does with gas. Tankless water heaters have a number of energy saving features that make them a smart choice, and since they never run out of hot water – and typically last 20 years or more – they are a wise investment. (For information on electric and natural gas energy pricing, see map, next page.)

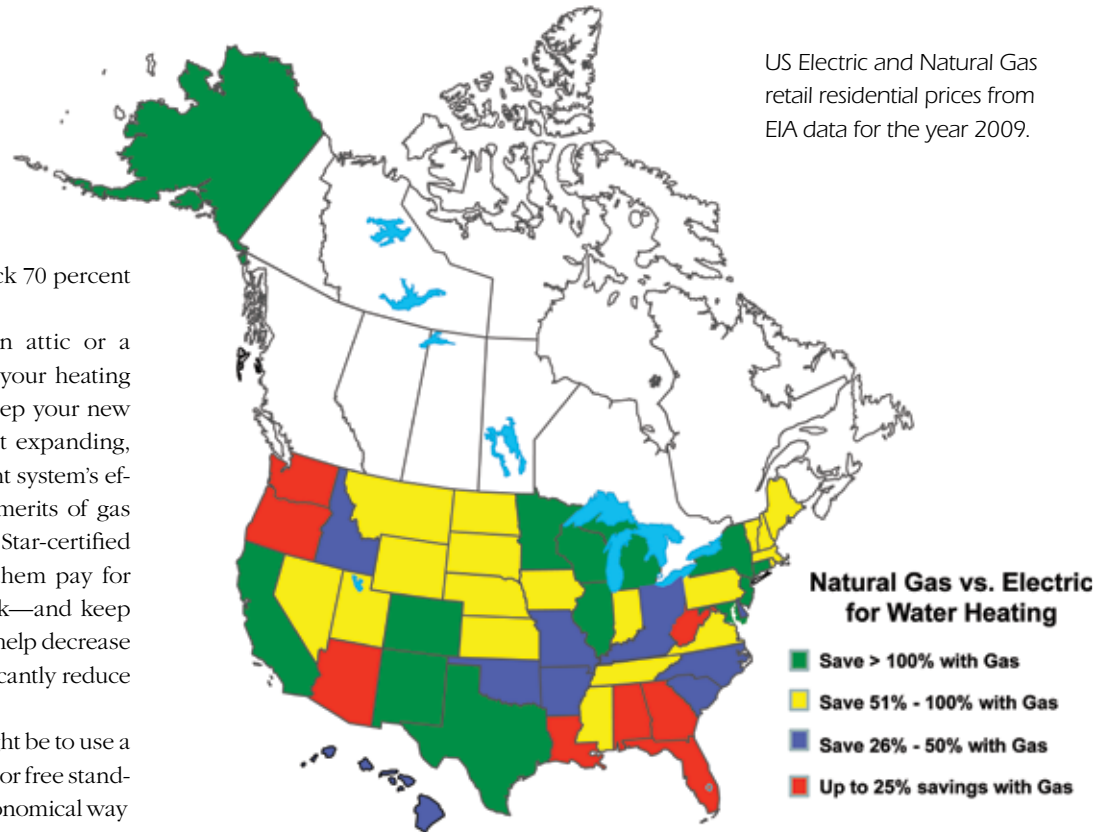
EXPANDING YOUR LIVING SPACE

If you're looking to add some square footage to your home—either for yourself or your resale value—the basement and attic are excellent places to start. They're also among the projects that offer the greatest cost-to-resale recoup, according to *Remodeling*.

According to the magazine's national report, if you convert an unfinished attic space into a 15-by-15-foot carpeted bedroom with closet space and an adjacent bathroom with shower, for instance, you can expect to recoup 72 percent of the cost. Similarly, if you finish your basement to create a sizeable entertaining area, wet bar,



US Electric and Natural Gas retail residential prices from EIA data for the year 2009.



and bathroom, you would get back 70 percent of your costs.

Whether you're converting an attic or a basement, you'll need to extend your heating and air conditioning system to keep your new space temperate. Before you start expanding, make time to consider your current system's efficiency, and to think about the merits of gas versus electric. Look into Energy Star-certified options—the savings may help them pay for themselves sooner than you think—and keep in mind that using natural gas can help decrease your monthly bills and also significantly reduce your carbon-dioxide emissions.

In some cases, your best bet might be to use a natural gas space heater, fireplace, or free standing stove, which can provide an economical way to add heat to a finished basement or three-season room.

ADD SOME COLOR

Paint continually tops lists of inexpensive remodel suggestions, and it's no wonder: as far as home improvements go, it's easy, fast, and can make a dramatic impact on any room. Painting is also something you can do yourself, which means your only investment will be your time and the cost of materials. In fact, the Paint Quality Institute describes it as the "one [remodeling] project that's still affordable for nearly everyone."

Aside from being gentle on your wallet, paint can also help make a room look bigger or taller; warmer or cooler; traditional or cutting-edge; cozy or modern; the list goes on and on. Better still, it can also hide any wall imperfections and cover up years of finger smudges or furniture scrapes.

Colors and finishes abound, but if you're planning to sell in the near future, it's best to stick to a neutral color and avoid flashy crackled or textured finishes, gendered colors, or anything too off-the-wall. Semi-gloss paint has become increasingly popular in recent years, since it is easily washable and can resist dirt and mildew. (Just be aware that its shiny finish also highlights any imperfections on the wall.)

And while there's no data on how much painting explicitly raises a home's resale value, rest assured that it will do something even more important: Help you sell your house. Potential buyers expect to find paint that's in neutral colors and in good shape, and if they don't, they may write your home off immediately. As many experts will tell you, ugly or chipped paint is one of the things buyers have the hardest time overlooking. ■

GAS TRUMPS ELECTRICITY IN HOMEOWNER PREFERENCE STUDY

If you prefer natural gas over electric, you're not alone. According to a New Homeowner Energy Preference Survey conducted by the research and management consulting firm Woodland, O'Brien & Scott and Energy Solutions Center, more homeowners prefer natural gas – including those who don't presently have it.

Among the study's more significant findings:

- Natural gas is the leading energy source for home heating and water heating
- Natural gas is preferred more than it's currently utilized;

while 74 percent of homeowners have at least one gas appliance, 82 percent say they would prefer at least one gas appliance.

- In the U.S. today, 54 percent of homes have fireplaces, and about half of them operate on natural gas.
- Of the survey participants, 74 percent would recommend natural gas to family and friends.

Reasons cited for preferring natural gas included economics, dependability, warmer heat and quicker recovery for heating water.



Invest in an Outdoor Room

The right additions increase enjoyment and ROI.

By Kristy Alpert

Formerly viewed as fertile soil for daisies and storage sheds, today the backyard is a tool for increased return on investment (ROI), with elaborate and enjoyable outdoor rooms. These outdoor rooms have become the space formerly known as the backyard as homeowners expand their living quarters into the garden.

“I’m all about creating spaces that people live in and not just look at,” says award-winning landscape designer and horticulturist Jamie Durie (www.jamiedurie.com), host of HGTV’s *The Outdoor Room*. “These days, outdoor rooms are really extensions of our living space and by creating a kitchen or a dining room or a sunken fire pit area, you’re creating a reason to get outside and you’re building architecture that evokes social interaction and a connection with plants.”

Durie says he looks at a landscape the same way he looks at a house. “The only difference is that I tear the roof off the house and then I replicate the floor plan of that, walls and all, outdoors.”



ROOMS WITH A VIEW

Outdoor rooms create a magical place to commune with friends and nature, but they also add a huge value in terms of ROI to the home. Homebuyers are entranced with the idea of a well-manicured and thought-out backyard, as a study from Clemson University found that homeowners typically see 100 percent or more ROI they put into landscaping. They have become an attractive concept to potential homebuyers, which can translate into more money when it’s time to sell your home. Whereas Durie once told his clients to spend somewhere between 5 and 7 percent of the value of their property on an outdoor renovation to make sure not to over capitalize, he now recommends spending more. He even has clients gladly spending up to 30 percent of the value of their home to enjoy a higher quality of life, and, eventually, to enjoy getting the money back that they put into the room ... most of the time with a profit!

“What creates a successful outdoor room is freedom and good architectural planning,” says Durie, who notes that homebuyers are often attracted by well-thought-out outdoor areas. “An outdoor kitchen is somewhere you literally prepare food with a gas grill and a prep area, and the greater outdoor room is where you relax, come together, interact and dine. There’s a huge value to having both.”

OUTDOOR DÉCOR

The most popular outdoor room components include a porch or sectioned-off area of grass with a built-in gas fire pit (a must-have for any outdoor room) surrounded by weatherproof couch-like seating, side tables and even a rustic coffee table.

Outdoor kitchens have become a bit more elaborate over the years as well, adding to the traditional patio table with full-size wooden dining tables set beneath wooden trellises. Most kitchens now include a high-end gas grill — arguably the most attractive feature for homebuyers — built into a stone structure that includes a prep area for cutting meat and vegetables, and even built-in mini-fridges to add to the authentic kitchen feel. Durie strongly believes native plants interspersed throughout the permanent outdoor room fixtures are crucial to give the full effect of a natural setting, adding that well-planned landscaping is the absolute key to creating a lasting outdoor room that will provide enjoyment in the short-term and at least a 100 percent ROI in the long-term. ■



Addictive Sweet Potato Burritos

Once you've had one - you'll want another. The recipe is a little different from most burrito recipes; serve these with sour cream, chopped green onions and salsa. For vegan burritos, omit the cheese and sour cream. These may be made ahead of time, individually frozen, then heated. For an interesting variation, try deep-frying these tasty burritos.

Preparation time: 30 minutes, Cooking time: 20 minutes, Ready in: 50 minutes, Yield: 12 burritos

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 1 onion, chopped
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 6 cups canned kidney beans, drained
 2 cups water
 3 tablespoons chili powder
 2 teaspoons ground cumin
 4 teaspoons prepared mustard
 1 pinch cayenne pepper, or to taste
 3 tablespoons soy sauce

4 cups cooked and mashed sweet potatoes
 12 (10 inch) flour tortillas, warmed
 8 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese

PREPARATION

- 1 Preheat oven to 350° F (175° C)
- 2 Heat oil in a medium skillet, and sauté onion and garlic until soft. Stir in beans, and mash.

Gradually stir in water, and heat until warm. Remove from heat, and stir in the chili powder, cumin, mustard, cayenne pepper and soy sauce.

- 3 Divide bean mixture and mashed sweet potatoes evenly between the warm flour tortillas. Top with cheese. Fold up tortillas burrito style, and place on a baking sheet.

- 4 Bake for 12 minutes in the preheated oven, and serve.

Grilled Salmon

For a great meal fixed outdoors, try this tasty recipe! A simple soy sauce and brown sugar marinade, with hints of lemon and garlic, are the perfect salty-sweet complement to rich salmon fillets.

Preparation time: 15 minutes,
 Cooking time: 16 minutes,
 Ready in: 2 Hrs 31 minutes,
 Yield: 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 pounds salmon fillets
 lemon pepper to taste
 garlic powder to taste
 salt to taste
 1/3 cup soy sauce
 1/3 cup brown sugar
 1/3 cup water
 1/4 cup vegetable oil

PREPARATION

- 1 Season salmon fillets with lemon pepper, garlic powder, and salt.
- 2 In a small bowl, stir together soy sauce, brown sugar, water, and vegetable oil until sugar is dissolved. Place fish in a large resealable plastic bag with the soy sauce mixture, seal, and turn to coat. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours.
- 3 Preheat gas grill for medium heat.
- 4 Lightly oil grill grate. Place salmon on the preheated grill, and discard marinade. Cook salmon for 6 to 8 minutes per side, or until the fish flakes easily with a fork.



BAXI LUNA



Even in the harshest of Alaskan winters

If a high efficiency, gas-fired boiler can heat a home reliably, even in the harshest of Alaskan winters, it can heat a home anywhere.



Over the past decade, a Baxi-certified contractor has redefined the meaning of "home comfort" for Alaskan residents. Up to 98% efficient, Baxi Luna is no bigger than a kitchen cabinet, but it packs a powerful energy efficiency punch. As Baxi homeowners in Alaska will tell you, their Baxi wallhung boiler cuts annual fuel consumption by up to 50% over previous heating systems, while freeing up valuable living space in new or retrofit projects.

- ◆ Ideal for replacing an aging and inefficient boiler, Baxi Luna supplies even and ultra-comfortable hydronic heating to in-floor radiant, towel racks and snow melt systems, as well as forced air with hydronic air handler applications.
- ◆ The Baxi Luna HT 380 model is a fully modulating and high efficiency condensing wallhung boiler that can be used for a combination of heating and domestic hot water. This unit can heat a home up to 4,000 square feet, and it also acts like a tankless water heater for an endless supply of hot water at a rate of 3.9 gallons per minute with a temperature rise of 80 degrees F over the inlet water temperature. You will never again run out of hot water during morning showers.
- ◆ Baxi Luna is Energy Star approved and CSA certified. Sleep well, night after night and year after year, with reliable performance and built-in safety features (from no open flame, automatic self-diagnostics and frost protection) of this whisper quiet and compact all-in-one space heater/water heater from Baxi.
- ◆ Visit www.wallhungboilers.com and see for yourself how good things do come in small packages when it comes to home comfort, wherever you live!

Baxi Luna wallhung boilers are only available through Baxi-Certified Plumbing and Heating Contractors who are supplied by authorized regional Baxi Distributors. The manufacturer is committed to quality and safety and, therefore, does not authorize the sale of Baxi units directly to consumers or over the Internet.

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