

The *March 2010*
Woodlands
Lifestyles & Homes

*Sculpting
a Home*

**10 Tips to Avoid
Real Estate Blunders**
Pool Inspirations
2010 Furniture Trends

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Adding a New Pool

The easy solution for summer entertaining



Alderete Pools, San Clemente, CA

By Christie Craig

Ah, summer. Its warm temperatures and seemingly endless blue skies provide a perfect setting for outdoor entertaining of all kinds. Although summer is still several months away, it's not too early to start thinking about how to maximize your summer fun potential. In fact, no matter what your summer wish list may include—creating a fabulous outdoor living space, finding a way to spend more quality family time with your loved ones, or living a healthier lifestyle—the solution could be the same. Namely, building an in-ground pool.

After all, a pool offers hours of refreshing family fun and can be the perfect backdrop for home entertaining.

What's more, an in-ground pool will add thousands to

your home's resale value when you choose to sell.

What could be more perfect?

Choosing The Right Pool for Your Home

Much like any other home remodeling project, choosing the right pool is a matter of deciding on a pool that complements your personality, individual style and budget.

Start by discussing your options with a professional builder. He, or she, will need to know how you plan to use the pool—for family pleasure, for exercise, for entertaining or for all three—as well as the amount of space available in your backyard to accommodate a pool.

“When choosing a pool, consider the elevation of your

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property, the proposed location of the pool, and the ground conditions,” says John C. Romano, president and CEO of All American Custom Pools and Spas in Norwalk, Conn.

Your specific location may limit your options or encourage the selection of a specific size or shape of pool.

Romano stresses that choosing the right contractor who has the capability to meet your needs, desires and budgets is important.

“Make sure the builder is a CBP, or Certified Building Professional,” Romano suggests.

CBPs are certified by the Association of Pool and Spa Professionals, the world’s largest international trade association for pools and spas.

“An APSP member, particularly a CBP, is trained by the APSP and has access to its standards, which are the hallmark to building safe pools,” adds Romano. “APSP members who use the APSP standards are building not only wonderful backyard environments, but are also building a safer product with the latest up-to-date technology.”

As for the pools themselves, they are available in a wide variety of designs, shapes and sizes, as well as landscaping options and special features, such as decking and fencing, water treatments and fiber-optic lighting. Truly, if you can imagine it, a pool builder can likely create it for you.

Building materials for in-ground pools include vinyl, fiberglass and gunite, which is a blend of concrete and sand that is sprayed into place. Vinyl pools have re-enforced walls and vinyl liners, and can come in a variety of shapes and sizes, although rectangular shapes are most common.



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Fiberglass pools, on the other hand, are one-piece and are built in a factory, which makes them a popular choice among many homeowners because of their shorter build time. Gunite pools are usually more expensive, but they're well worth the added expense because they lend themselves beautifully to the

addition of special features, such as waterfalls, custom steps and beach entries.

"All pools are great if built properly," reminds Romano.

And don't forget to maintain your pool after its installation to ensure you reap the benefit of years of enjoyment.

Conduct your own investigation of pools to see which type of in-ground model best suits your family's needs.

"Don't be swayed by a builder who builds just one of these type pools or who knocks the quality of one type over the other," cautions Romano. "Be more concerned about the ability and reputation

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of the builder. After all, any type of pool with the right equipment package will give the family years of enjoyment.”

**Adding the “Wow!” To
Your In-Ground Pool**

After you’ve selected the type of in-ground pool you want, take the same care with choosing your additional features for a beautiful poolscape. Water features, such as waterfalls and fountains, add drama with the sound of moving water and can make a bold statement when used as a focal point.

Water features are versatile, too. If your land-



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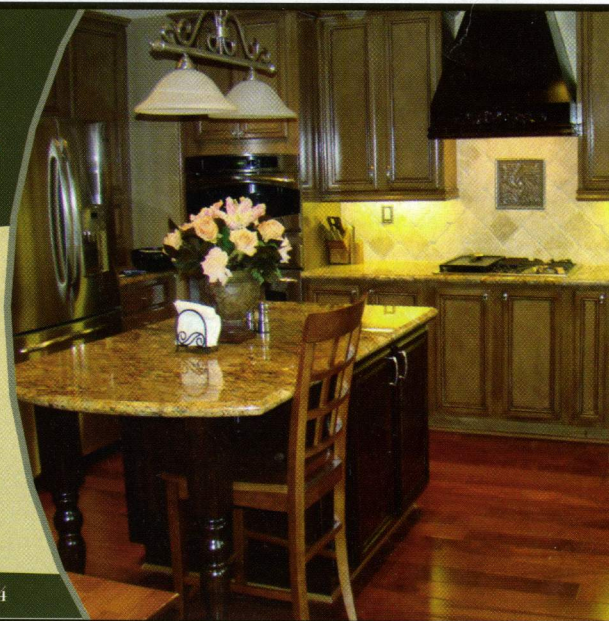
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scape supports a view, you can maximize its impact by using a negative edge application for your pool, which creates the illusion of having no visible pool wall. By contrast, having running water spill over a raised rock wall will create a dazzling focal point for your poolscape.

When it comes to lighting your pool, follow the same basics you use for lighting your home. That means, play with light; use it to add interest, to set a mood or accentuate a specific feature of your poolscape.

Underwater pool lights, whether clear or colored, can add a dash of drama to your nighttime entertaining, while fiber optic lighting is perfect for emphasizing water features, such as fountains or waterfalls. Landscape lighting can highlight trees, shrubbery and the pool itself. The proper lighting can help you add a romantic ambiance for a moonlight swim for two, or transform your backyard into a water-filled paradise for a nighttime poolside party.

Of course, all of these features can be added after the initial build, but the best time to incorporate the “wow!” into your new pool project is when your pool is being installed.

“Far too often, homeowners miss opportunities to make the most of their pool installation by limiting their focus to their ability to swim,” says Romano of All American Custom Pools & Spas. “You can lose the ‘wow!’ factor by not considering upgrades to the pool that are more cost effective to have done during the initial construction, like upgraded equipment or fiber optic lighting or some sort of water feature.”

With summer on its way, temperatures in Texas already set to soar, we don’t want to miss any opportunity for some cool pool-side fun. Best of luck with planning your new pool and backyard paradise. ●

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