

Home Trends: Embracing the “Outdoor Room”

Playing up your home’s exterior spaces is a cost-effective way to get more enjoyment out of what you already have. Improvements that enhance your home’s overall appeal can also increase its resale potential. Surveys show outdoor living rooms and cooking areas rank high on the list of features that today’s homebuyers find most desirable.¹



The creation of special outdoor living spaces is one of this year’s most popular trends, according to 94% of the residential landscape architects polled early in 2010.² Outdoor rooms extend interior amenities, sensibilities and comfort beyond the walls and increase the amount of space available for the cherished activities that are part of daily living and entertaining. Even a small enclosed patio or terrace can be transformed into a relaxing place to enjoy the fresh air.

Emphasize Utility and Livability

- Decks, patios, terraces and covered structures such as pergolas provide the perfect place to begin. Updating or adding one is likely to increase the value of your property. When selling, it may also help you compete against new homes given that finished decks or patios are often not included in the initial sale.
- A functional outdoor kitchen can be as simple as a built-in grill, some counter space and a dining table. A more elaborate set-up may include storage cabinets, a sink, a small refrigerator, an ice maker—anything that makes entertaining more fun and convenient.
- Seating groups around a cozy fire pit or even a more elaborate fireplace encourage conversation. Televisions, projection screens and speakers may also be incorporated.
- Homeowners can now find high-quality outdoor furniture collections at any price point that are stylish, durable and nearly as comfortable as their indoor sofa or recliner.
- Front porches make for great curb appeal and are currently very much in demand. When they are well-lit, decorated tastefully, and at least large enough for a couple of chairs or a swing, they provide additional living space and a sense of friendly connection to the community.

Sources: 1) Avid Ratings, What Homebuyers Want in 2010
2) American Society of Landscape Architects, 2010

Oh, by the way... I’m never too busy for your referrals.