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Masters of Design

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THE GREEN SCENE

POOL AND SPA NEWS (ISSN 0194-5351; USPS 793-180) IS PUBLISHED SEMIMONTHLY IN JANUARY, MARCH, AND MAY; MONTHLY IN FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER BY ZONDA MEDIA, 1152 15TH ST. NW, SUITE 850 WASHINGTON, DC 20005, AND PRINTED IN THE USA. SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE FREE TO QUALIFIED RECIPIENTS. PUBLISHER RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE RECIPIENT QUALIFICATION. PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT WASHINGTON, D.C., AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO PSN POOL AND SPA NEWS, P.O. BOX 3494, NORTHBROOK, IL 60065.

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40612608. RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO PITNEY BOWES, P.O. BOX 25542, LONDON, ON N6C 6B2.



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EDITORIAL

JOANNE McCLAIN

Editor-in-Chief
jmccain@zondahome.com

REBECCA ROBLED

Deputy Editor
rrobledo@zondahome.com

SALES

GARY CARR

National Sales Manager
gcarr@zondahome.com

LISA HEITNER

National Sales Manager
lheitner@zondahome.com

ART

CAROLYN SEWELL
MELISSA KROCHMAL

Design Director, Media
Graphic Designer

PRODUCTION

CATHY UNDERWOOD
STEPHANIE FISCHER

Senior Director, Print Production
Production Manager

OPERATIONS

LENA RAGUSA

Human Resources Manager

ZONDA MEDIA

ANDREW REID
JENNIFER PEARCE
PAUL TOURBAF
MARI SKELNIK
BRIDGET FORBES
JOHN TATUSKO
JENNIFER MALKASIAN

Chief Operating Officer
Executive Vice President/Chief Content Officer
Executive Vice President
Vice President/Audience Operations
Vice President/Digital Strategy and Operations
Vice President/Sales
Director of Analytics

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JEFF MEYERS
MELISSA BILLITER
ANDREW REID
TIM SULLIVAN
KURT NELSON
AMY DUDLEY

Chief Executive Officer
Chief Financial Officer
Chief Operating Officer
Senior Managing Principal/Advisory Group
Group Vice President/Talent Strategy
Executive Vice President/National Sales

EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING OFFICES: 1152 15th St. NW, Suite 750, Washington, D.C. 20005 • (323) 801-4900; SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES & BACK-ISSUE ORDERS: (888) 269-8410; fax, (847) 291-4816; e-mail, psn@zomedia.com; REPRINTS: Wright's Media, (877) 652-5295; e-mail, zonda@wrightsmedia.com

ADVERTISER BILLING QUESTIONS: (202) 729-3522; LIST RENTALS: The Information Refinery, Brian Clotworthy 800.529.9020; email, brian@inforefinery.com; PRIVACY OF MAILING LIST: We rent our subscriber list to reputable companies. If you do not wish to receive promotional materials from other companies, please call us, toll free, at (888) 269-8410. To be removed from the mailing list, please email your request including name and full mailing address to: clustan@zondahome.com.

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Defining a Master



Joanne McClain
Editor-in-Chief, PSN

Welcome to Masters of Design, our annual pool design showcase!

This issue is a particularly fun one to work on — after all, what's better than being able to celebrate pool and spa design? Just looking over all of the entries we received lowered my blood pressure as I imagined the homeowners' delight with their backyard oases, whether their projects are chock full of exciting features or calm and soothing in its simplicity.

The ability to artfully design and build a backyard space so perfectly attuned to a homeowner's desires and work with the given limitations of space, budget and time truly takes a master. It's achieved through the knowledge and use of special or unusual materials, devising thoughtful solutions to space limitations, or creating beautiful spaces to highlight a waterscape.

This year was particularly difficult for our judges. Thank you to the hundreds of people who submitted their work for consideration. I re-

gret that we're required to narrow it down to just ten winners when there were so many deserving projects.

A round of applause, too, for the hard work and dedication of our deputy editor, Rebecca Robledo. Having previously served as our construction and design editor for many years, her experience and insight into pool design is essential to the program. This special issue would not have been possible without her.

And now, please enjoy the pageant of stunning pools and spas in this issue, and congratulations to our winners. You are each truly a Master of Design!


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Poolwerx Takes On Private Equity

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO

The retail/service franchise Poolwerx now has a private-equity partner.

It has joined with Norwest, a global investment firm based in Palo Alto, Calif., with the purpose of fueling growth for the retailer in the U.S. and overseas.

Poolwerx, which originated in Australia and has U.S. headquarters in Dallas, had been talking to potential private-equity partners since 2019, said the company's chairman of the board, Troy Hazard. Back then, the firm spoke with 46 investment firms, then narrowed it to six that they believed made the best cultural and strategic fit, then began earnest negotiations with Norwest late last year.

"Over the last couple years there have been a lot of opportunity for these types of transactions, but we were more focused on the strategic opportunity, not just the fact that somebody wanted a partner and to put some equity into the business," Hazard said. "It was more, 'What's that going to do, how's that going to benefit our franchise partners, support our relationship with our supply chain, and add value without disrupting anything that we've created, but be there for the first phone call if we needed some support?'"

"They had a very similar vision of what they felt the business could look like in the next three to five years."

In its search, Poolwerx wanted an investor whose portfolio had included franchises, retailer and service firms, if not specifically in the pool/spa industry, and who could offer guidance to help in its mission to offer leading-edge technology to support its franchisees, Hazard added. Norwest counts Junk King, a junk removal and recycling company, and The Learning Experience, a pre-kindergarten

educational program, among its portfolio companies. The investment firm also has a system in place whereby leadership from portfolio companies can share strategies or address various issues and disciplines in running their businesses.

"That, for us, is exciting, because it continues to feed innovation and new ways to refresh and tighten the franchise system," Hazard said. "That, we believe, will make a massive impact on those who are seeking to join the franchise system, because they'll see that there's an extra dimension of support there ..."

Norwest said it chose Poolwerx because of its track record as a franchiser. "Poolwerx is one of the few international franchise brands that has cracked the U.S. market ...," said Stew Campbell, a partner in the investment firm. "The company is uniquely positioned to capitalize on opportunities in the large and growing pool and spa market ..."

Poolwerx has created the new title of North American CEO, which has gone to former COO Andrew Kidd. "With 10 years of experience in leadership roles at Poolwerx, Kidd will bring his skills in franchising and operations to his enhanced role in the United States," said John O'Brien, a founder of Poolwerx.

O'Brien has moved from Poolwerx CEO to executive director.

The company has yet to nail down its long-term plans with the investor. But it expects to focus more on converting independent pool/spa companies into its network, where most new franchisees came from outside the industry over the last few years. With conversions it has in the works, the firm expects to enter three new states by mid-2023, Hazard said.

Viner Moves to Fluidra

The former president of chemical firm BioLab has taken a role at pool-equipment juggernaut Fluidra.

San Diego-based Fluidra North America has named Jon Viner executive vice president of its Commercial, Spa & Specialty Division. He has been charged with maximizing operating efficiencies and broadening the company's product categories in the commercial space, which it has been growing recently.

Viner brings more than 20 years of experience managing strategy and operations in the chemical industry, with his most recent position heading BioLab.

"His knowledge of our customer base will be invaluable in establishing his quick integration into the business to deliver an outstanding customer experience while bringing improved solutions ...," said Troy Franzen, president of Fluidra North America.



Industry Mourns John Romano

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO

John Romano, for decades one of the most visible industry figureheads in the Northeast and nationwide, has passed away. He was 73.

Romano died July 13 after a brief battle with cancer.

The builder was part of a core group of professionals who formed the face of the Northeast Spa and Pool Association and the region it served. He was on the NESPA board from 1987 until 2018, taking on just about every title, and serving as president in 1995. At his passing, he was still on the board of his local chapter, the Con-

necticut Spa and Pool Association.

“John was a larger-than-life advocate for the pool industry,” said NESPA Executive Director Dominick Mondì. “He was one of those individuals who never stopped. Whatever the next meeting or committee was, he was one of the first to put up his hand. He served as inspiration for other people to get involved and lead.”

Romano served prolifically on a national level, as well, spending years on the Builders Council for the various iterations of the national industry association, now known as the Pool

& Hot Tub Alliance. He served on the Builders Council when it originated the Certified Pool Builder pro-

gram, helping write the manual on which it is based. For this service, he was recognized as Pool Builder of the Year in 2008, making him the second to receive that honor, after his good friend and collaborator Al Rizzo.

He served on the national association's board as a representative for the Northeast for several years, and was chairman of the organization (then called the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals) in 1998.

A full tribute to Romano and his career will be forthcoming.



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Comments Taken for Florida Building Code

The Florida Building Commission has begun the second and final public comment period for the upcoming edition of the state's building code.

Proposed changes for the 2023

edition would allow swim-up bars on commercial pools, require automated ORP and pH controls on commercial pools, and further refine the minimum pool-size requirements on properties

in the Hotel-Motel-Apartment-Condo-minium space.

Regarding the latter, proposed changes would require that pools include so many square feet of surface area and generate a minimum flow rate based on the number of units on the property. This addresses something of a loophole in the current edition, which relies partially on water volume, thereby allowing pools with less square footage if they are deeper.

"[The proposed change] allows for the flexibility that the [last] code was trying to get at, but alleviates some of the concerns about really small pools," said Dallas Thiesen, senior director of government affairs for the Florida Swimming Pool Association.

The public comment period remains open until Friday, Aug. 26.

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Blue Square Names New National Sales Manager

Pool-equipment manufacturer

Blue Square appointed a new national sales manager. Industry veteran Don Smith, who formerly served as Florida territory sales manager for the company, now takes the role for the Chandler, Ariz.-based manufacturer.

In three decades of industry experience, Smith also has worked for Horner, SCP and, most recently, Waterway Plastics as its Florida territory sales manager. While at Waterway, he increased sales by 20% for five years in a row. In his tenure so far at Blue Square, he has grown the Florida territory by 30%.

"He brings vast industry knowledge that will support our customers as well as our internal sales team," said CEO Jeremy Owens. "I have no doubt he will continue to brilliantly represent Blue Square Manufacturing ..."



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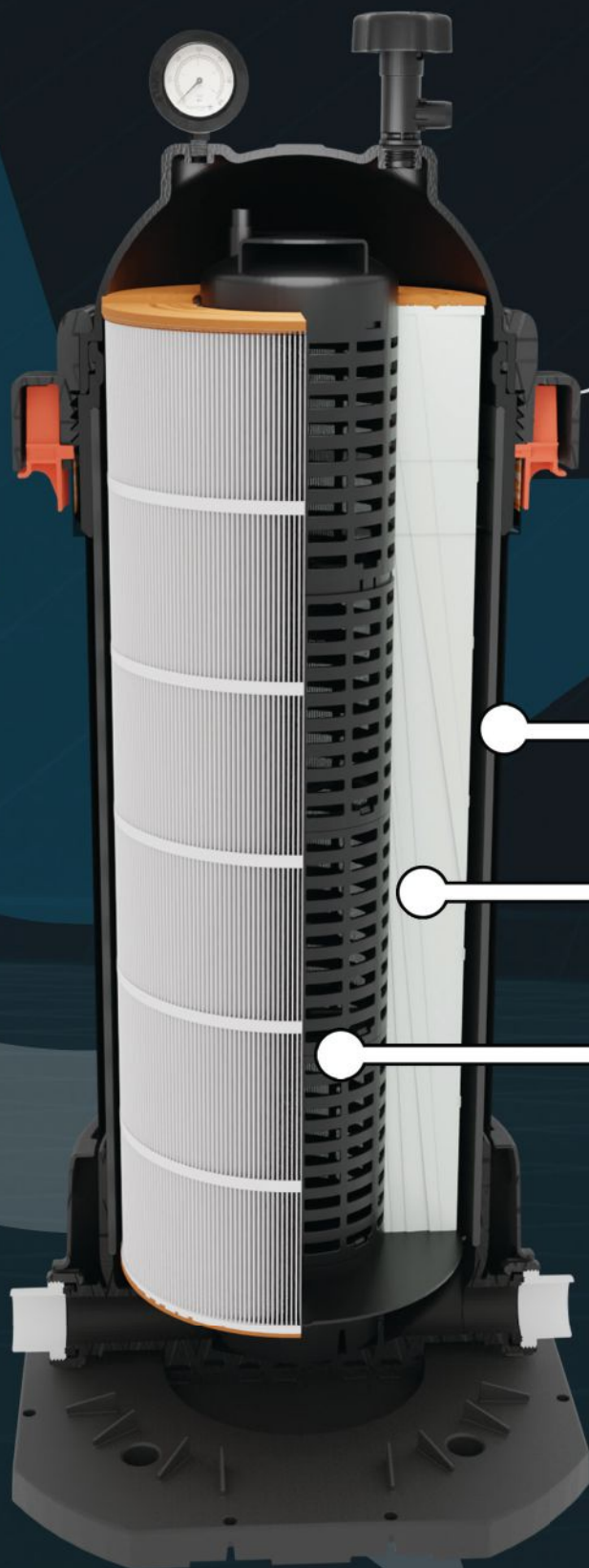
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MASTERS OF DESIGN



Great design begins with a solid story — a principle made tangible by the pools and spas featured in this year's *PSN* Masters of Design issue, which heralds some of the most beautiful pools and spas around. Turn the page to learn the stories behind this assortment of backyard aquatic environments.

Concrete

MODERN OASIS

The lines and materials of this pool blend seamlessly with the home, a standout in a community of traditional architecture.

Shane Leblanc, Principal
Selective Designs Covington, La.

Brandon Miller, Owner
Cajun Pools, Breaux Bridge, La.

When it came to architectural styling for their home and backyard, these clients wanted a little disruption in a region very much ruled by tradition.

“As far as the design, they wanted to stay as far away from Louisiana as possible,” says Brandon Miller, owner of Cajun Pools, in Breaux Bridge, La. “People still use a ton of brickwork and travertine [here], but she wanted to stay absolutely as far away from that as possible.”

The abode itself is covered in black sealed brick and black mortar, to create as monolithic a look as possible. Because the home and pool were designed and built at about the same time, the team was able to wrap the abode around the pool area, creating a U shape, then design it so that the pool foundation helped support the home.

Designer Shane LeBlanc wanted to enhance the view and create a sense of spaciousness. “As you walk through the home, I didn’t want it to be short and boxy, because the yard was short and boxy,” says the principal of Selective Designs by Shane LeBlanc, based in Covington, La..



PHOTOS BY JIMI SMITH





To do this, he created something of an optical illusion. He set the pool perpendicular to the home to draw the eye outward along its length. Then he made the portion closer to the home a bit wider than the end of the pool.

“It’s really wide close to the house,” LeBlanc says. “We have stepping stones across the water, so it’s all showing visible water, especially inside. But as you go out, I made it more sleek, lean and narrow, which gives you a long-view perspective, makes the yard look a bit bigger.”

A wider body of water near the home, with stepping stones to walk across, creates the sense that the pool is built over water. This strategy also allowed the team to place high-use features, such as the spa and sunken fire pit, closer to the living quarters. That not only made these destinations more accessible and protected, under the covering. It just keeps these areas front-of-mind.

“You’re going to use it more because you’re going to see it more,” LeBlanc says.

The homeowners knew what materials they wanted, based off photos of other pools. Some were hard to identify — either they were more obscure, or the photos weren’t great.

“With some of those materials, it was hard to make out if it was a natural or man-made stone, for

WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

This environment is museum-worthy while being warm and inviting. With the home and pool appearing to interlock, and through shared materials, everything is of a piece.





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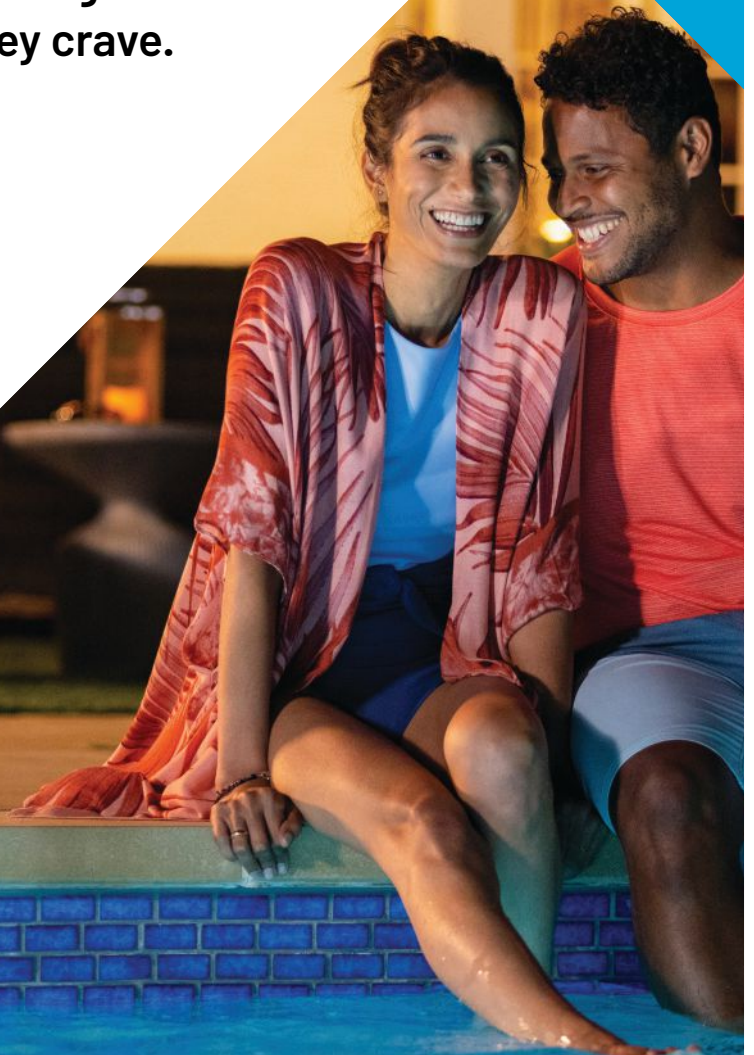
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MASTERS OF DESIGN

Concrete



instance,” Miller says.

If they could, they tracked down the original designers or builders of the projects. If not, Miller put out calls to professionals he communicates with on social media and other venues to find finishes that were the same or close.

For materials, the emphasis was largely placed on clean finishes. For the floating stepping stones, Miller wanted something in a larger format, that would not be interrupted by grout joints. When they couldn’t find something that worked perfectly, he arranged to have a local concrete contractor create what he likens to shoe box lids to place over the shotcrete columns supporting the step pads. A light texture was added to the tops for traction.

The back of the vanishing-edge wall is finished in a black split-face stone to meld with the modern house finishes while providing plenty of texture to foster water movement. The top of the wall is capped with a through-body black porcelain tile.

A gray porcelain tile is used on the deck, as well as the pool’s waterline.

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Concrete

ELEGANT ENGAGEMENT

This desert design fulfilled the client's wish for a backyard immersed in water.

Troy Grondahl, Senior Designer
Creative Environments, Tempe, Ariz.

Wally Dykert, Senior Designer
Mark Clarke, Project Manager
Shasta Pools, Phoenix

Set in the Arizona desert, this modern project carried a design objective that goes against traditional principle.

"The wife's number-one comment is that she wanted the entire backyard flooded with water — as deep, wide, and big as we could make the pool," says Troy Grondahl, senior designer with Creative Environments, based in Tempe, Ariz.

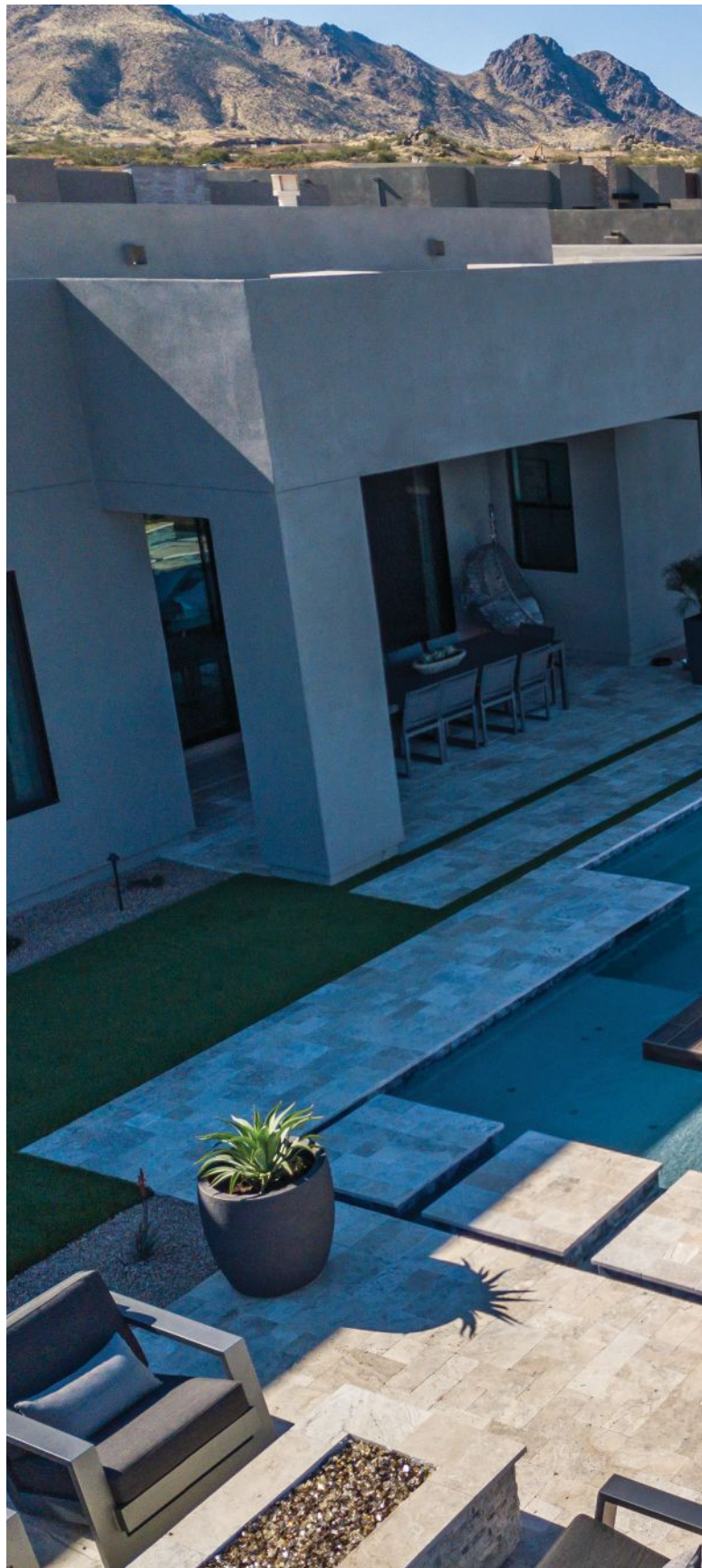
Matters of scale and utility generally prevent this approach, but here the clients insisted.

The team oriented the pool parallel with the home so the building would feel surrounded by water.

Floating stepping pads further forwarded the design goal. "The wife's intent was to force people, with the floating step pads, to walk through the pool to get to elements like the spa and the floating sundeck," Grondahl says.

They even placed a planter in front of the fire pit so visitors could not evade the floating pads.

They made one exception: A dry walkway allows people to access the outdoor kitchen



PHOTOS: MATT MANFREDI/MAGNETRY



without carrying plates of food over the water.

The feature wall serves as focal point and privacy screen from adjacent properties. It supports a 12-foot-long rain curtain and two fire features. These elements, set in cut-out windows, helped soften the massing of the wall, which measures 32 feet long and 24 inches thick. Split-face travertine, also used on the outdoor kitchen and fire pit, further softens the look and makes a nice textural counterpoint to the stucco home.

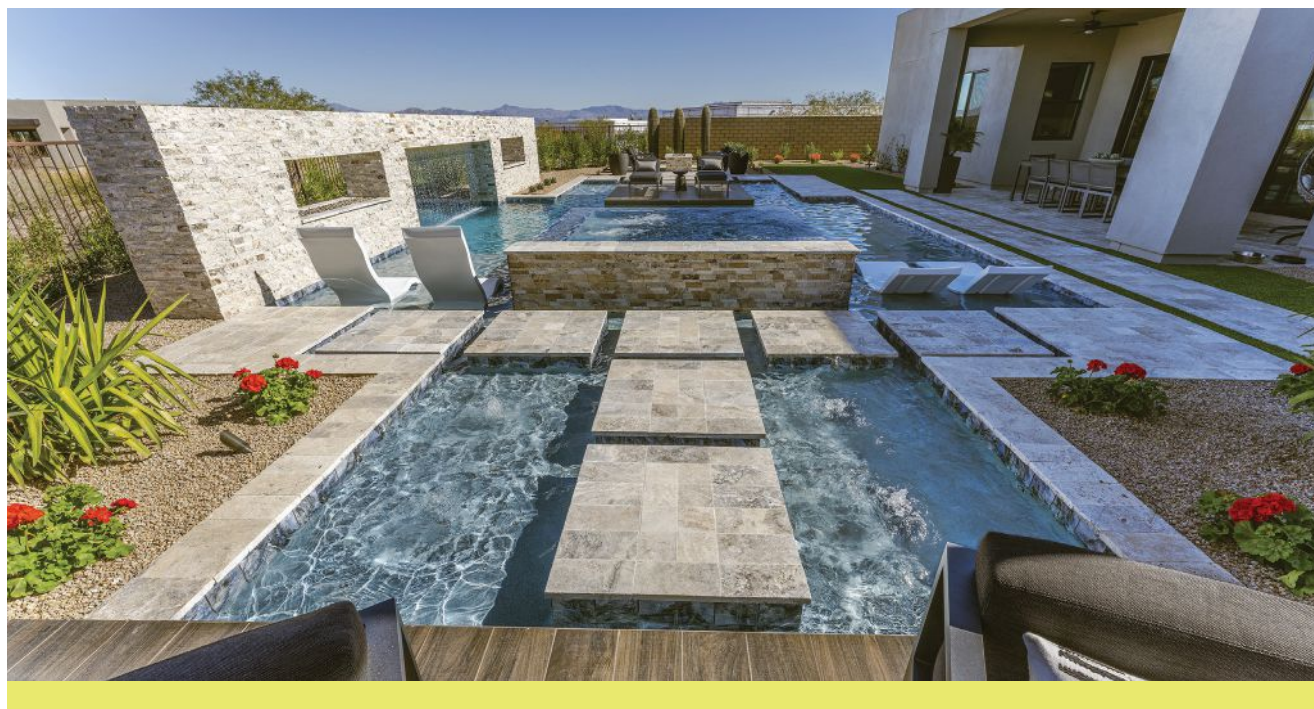
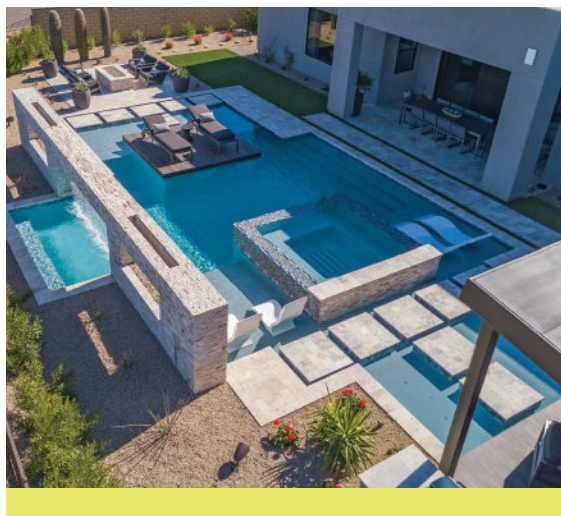
“It doesn’t look chunky and blocky — it looks more like a continuous veneer,” Grondahl says. “Because the pieces vary in height from 1 to 3 inches, it doesn’t give the appearance of bricks or something with heavy joints.”

The veneer was carried over the top of the 54-inch-tall wall, to avoid a solid cap, leaving a clean look.

A bench behind the rain curtain allows swimmers to see the backyard filtered through the falling water.

Rather than a four-sided vanishing-edge spa, Grondahl designed it to spill over three. On the fourth, the team installed a stone top and veneer. This provides easier access and a place to keep drinks or other items.

Directly across the way, a floating sundeck duplicates the spa’s dimensions for symmetry.





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WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

This really is a backyard water world, with opportunities to engage throughout the property. The bold lines and substantial back wall are complemented by the textured materials.



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There are an estimated 10.4 million residential swimming pools in the United States alone – they're part of everyday life. Maintaining a pool's cleanliness and swim readiness poses a unique set of challenges to pool owners and those in the pool industry. Historically, instead of prevention, pool cleaning technology has focused on cleaning the bottom as a reaction to sunken and decaying debris. Why? The physical task of hand-skimming before jumping in indicates that you have to 'earn' your swim time.

The creation of the original Solar-Breeze, an invention which was largely drawn from the hundred-year-old concept of harbor skimmers, sought to thwart the root problem. "Could solar energy power a surface skimming robot across the water for a long period of time to effectively collect all debris before sinking?" The question, first posed in 2003, became the catalyst for the multi-year success of a new category in the pool industry – automated surface cleaning robots. Pool robots have allowed people everywhere to #DitchTheNet and bottom-cleaning equipment for good, plus save time and money.

Layers of dust and debris that loom on the surface often discourage pool owners from jumping right in. After placing the Ariel unit in the pool and turning her on, she effortlessly maneuvers to remove up to 95% of dirt, leaves, pollen, dust, hair, oil and more before the debris decays and sinks to the bottom. Ariel owners enjoy a net-free world, less bacteria and algae growth, less filtration and sanitization needs, and less pool pump runtime.

"Automated surface cleaning is becoming recognized throughout the pool industry as a

Photos (from top right): Tim slides out Ariel's tray after she has cleaned the surface of his pool. Tim then places Ariel back in his pool, and turns her on with one press of a button. It's always swim time for his kids, and Tim's mom enjoys sunbathing pool side when the water is crystal clear and lovely to look at.

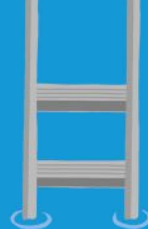
Photography Credit: The Creative District

critical part of pool maintenance and greatly contributes to having a clean and healthy swimming pool," said Paul Sim, Vice President of Pivot Pool Products. "Ariel is the culmination of years of engineering and consumer feedback to produce the quintessential, future-focused pool cleaning device that brings a whole new level of intelligence, beauty and performance to the robotic surface cleaning category." Tell your customers about Ariel and earn big commission on every sale. With an advanced solution like Ariel, you'll spend less time at the pools you service, improve customer relations, and increase your bottom line. Plus, pool owners will enjoy a constantly swim-ready and healthy pool, and lower energy bills.



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BACKYARD FIREWORKS

A large pool and many visually and physically engaging features make for a powerful draw.

Justin Fox, Creative Director
Foxterra Design, Irvine, Calif.

This client wanted a modern design, and a pool that takes up as much of the yard as possible. Problem was, he also wanted a relative ton of features, including an outdoor kitchen, entertainment area, spa, and plentiful waterfeatures and fire bowls.

“The client wanted something that really would allow him to feel like he had walked into his own private resort,” says Justin Fox, creative director of Foxterra Design, based in Irvine, Calif. “And modern elements spoke to him a lot.”

To help everything fit together like a puzzle, Fox began with a focal point for the yard. Namely, he’d place a combination light-water feature between two covered patios. The acrylic panel features a leaf-type pattern backlit with color-changing led light. A gentle, relatively clear film of water oozes over the piece, not able to be caught in photographs.

This focal point helped ground everything visually. The two covered patios flanking it helped with the space dilemma. By placing most of the outdoor living features behind the pool, Fox could include more water in the space. The designer split the outdoor living area under two covered patios for balance. “If I had just put one patio cover on one side, it would have felt

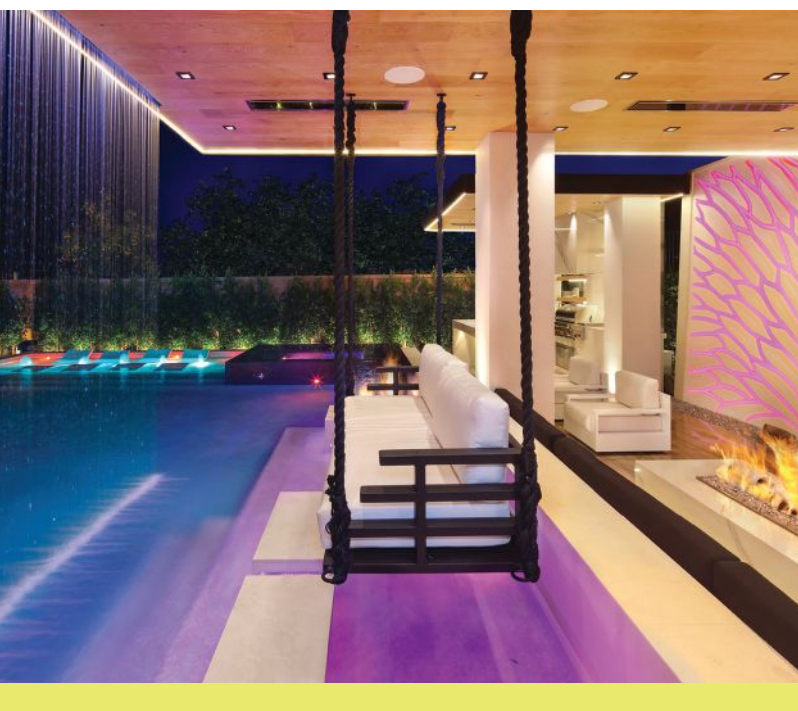


PHOTOS: JERI KOEGEL



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weighted,” Fox says. “So having them frame that central piece, to me, was really important.”

Under the smaller patio sits the barbecue and island. The more substantial patio houses the entertainment and lounging area, with large-screen TVs and mini bar. This structure overhangs the pool slightly, so the team could drop a rain curtain from it, into the pool.

“I brought my kids there, and they all got on the swing, and their goal was to reach out and get their feet wet under the rain curtain,” Fox says. “The clients do that, too. So [the rain curtain] ends up being this engaging piece that a lot of people love, whether it’s swinging toward it, swimming underneath it, or just touching it.”

Across the way sits another focal point: A textured water wall made of Corian falls into the pool, capped by a long, narrow fire bar. The Corian sheet came in only three segments that could be connected without visible seams, giving it a monolithic look.

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WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

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WOOD- GRAINED GEOMETRY

Various wood-inspired materials bring this geometric hybrid closer to nature.

Moses Lee Campos, Design Consultant
Charlie Burton, Project Manager
Southernwind Pools, McKinney, Texas

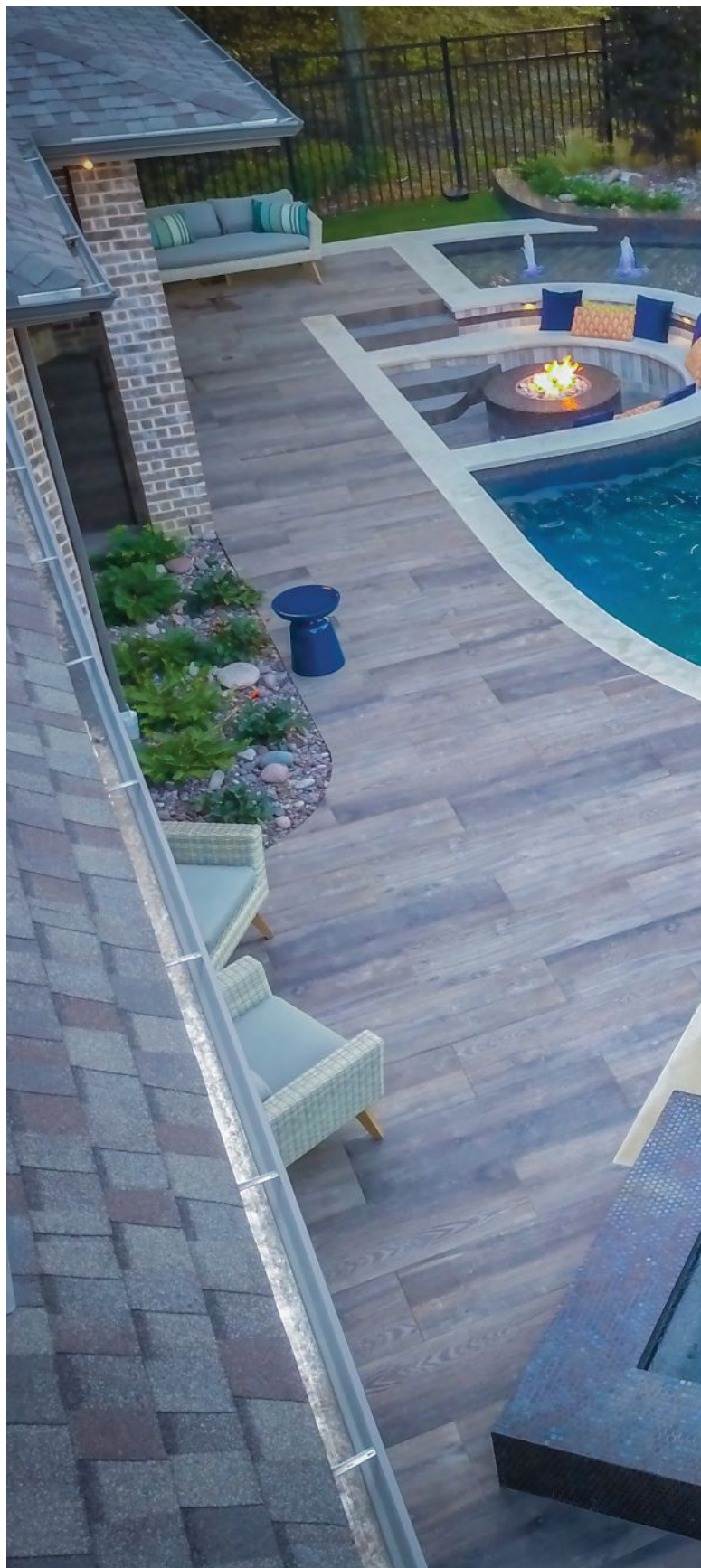
Space was a bit of a premium in this yard, as the clients wanted a pool and spa, but needed to leave plenty of room for a lawn, trampoline and other items for their children. They also sought negative space just to foster an overall sense of calm.

“They wanted to find the best way to bring all elements they requested into their smaller space and find the right flow and balance,” says Moses Campos, a design consultant with Southernwind Pools in McKinney, Texas.

This waterscape — a style hybrid combining clean lines with curves and natural tones — was the answer.

The design centers on the firepit, sunken to make a bigger statement as well as to add elevation changes to the flat yard. Campos kept the basic design of the firepit simple, with the round fire element itself surrounded by a clean horseshoe-shaped seating area. He added more interest to the area by combining more materials than usual — in this case an assortment of natural-toned hues.

PHOTOS: MOSES LEE CAMPOS/SOUTHERNWIND POOLS



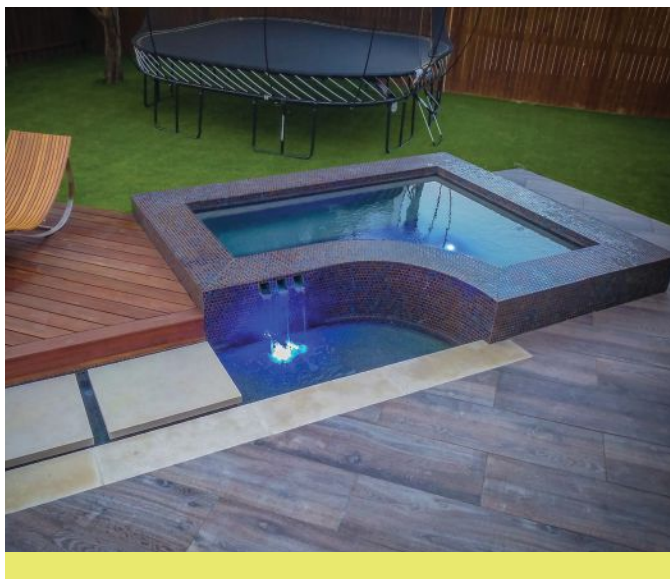


“She liked nature,” Campos says. “She wanted it to have less of a travertine feel and more [using] brown tones that were more like wood.”

A raised lounging deck to the side is finished with ipe, making it the only spot where the team felt comfortable using actual wood, since this area would remain dry.

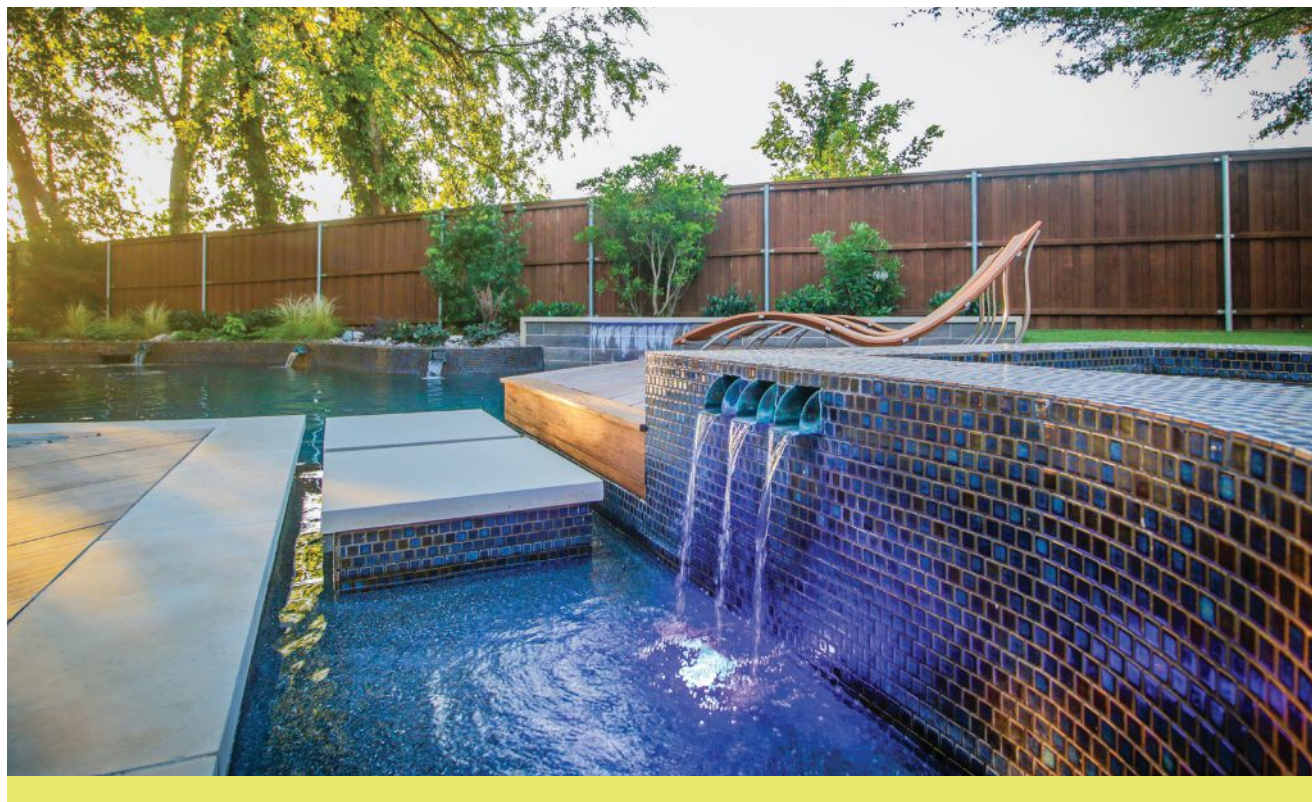
The spa was placed for its view to the master bedroom. It is set off to the side at an angle, with three brass scuppers spilling into a channel leading to the pool. Stepping stones in the channel lead from the main deck to the ipe sundeck. Single, wider scuppers are set along the pool’s back wall. Three bubblers on the tanning ledge add yet more water movement.

A large-format porcelain tile with wood grain is used on the deck. Leuders Limestone coping was chosen for its combination of beige tones and clean lines.



WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

The combination of line, shape and materials make for a poolscape that is simultaneously elegant and homey, modern and retro.



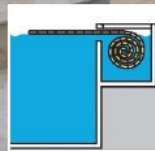
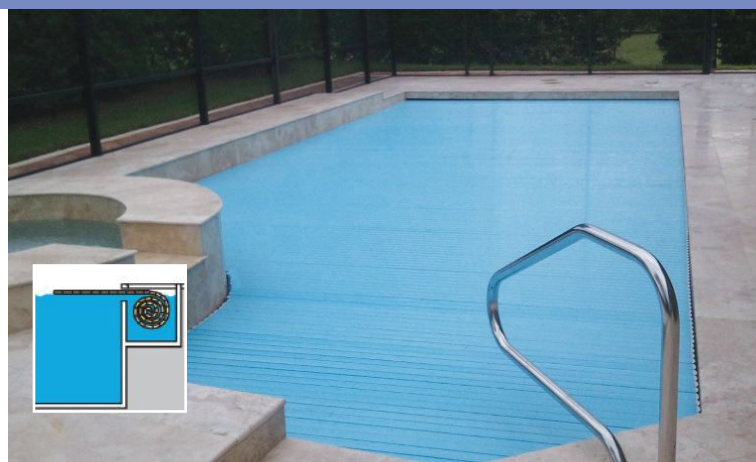
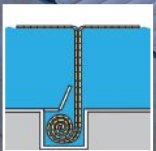
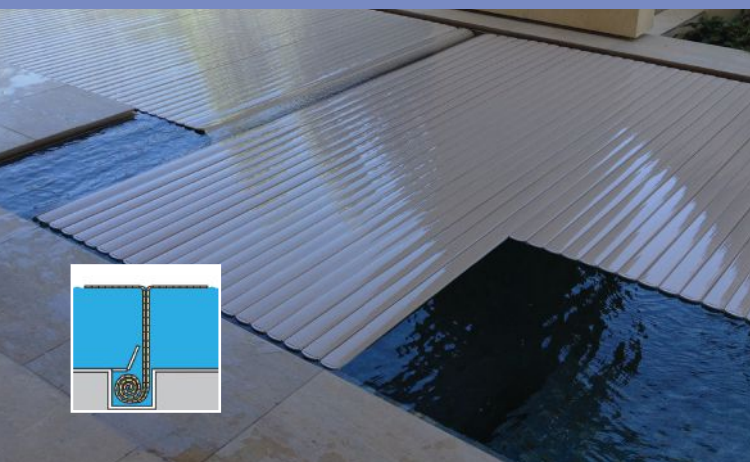


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PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE

This design blends modern-day flourishes into a backdrop of traditional architecture.

Lee Russell, Owner

Lee Russell Design and Consulting, Baton Route, La.

Chase Ruddell, Project Manager

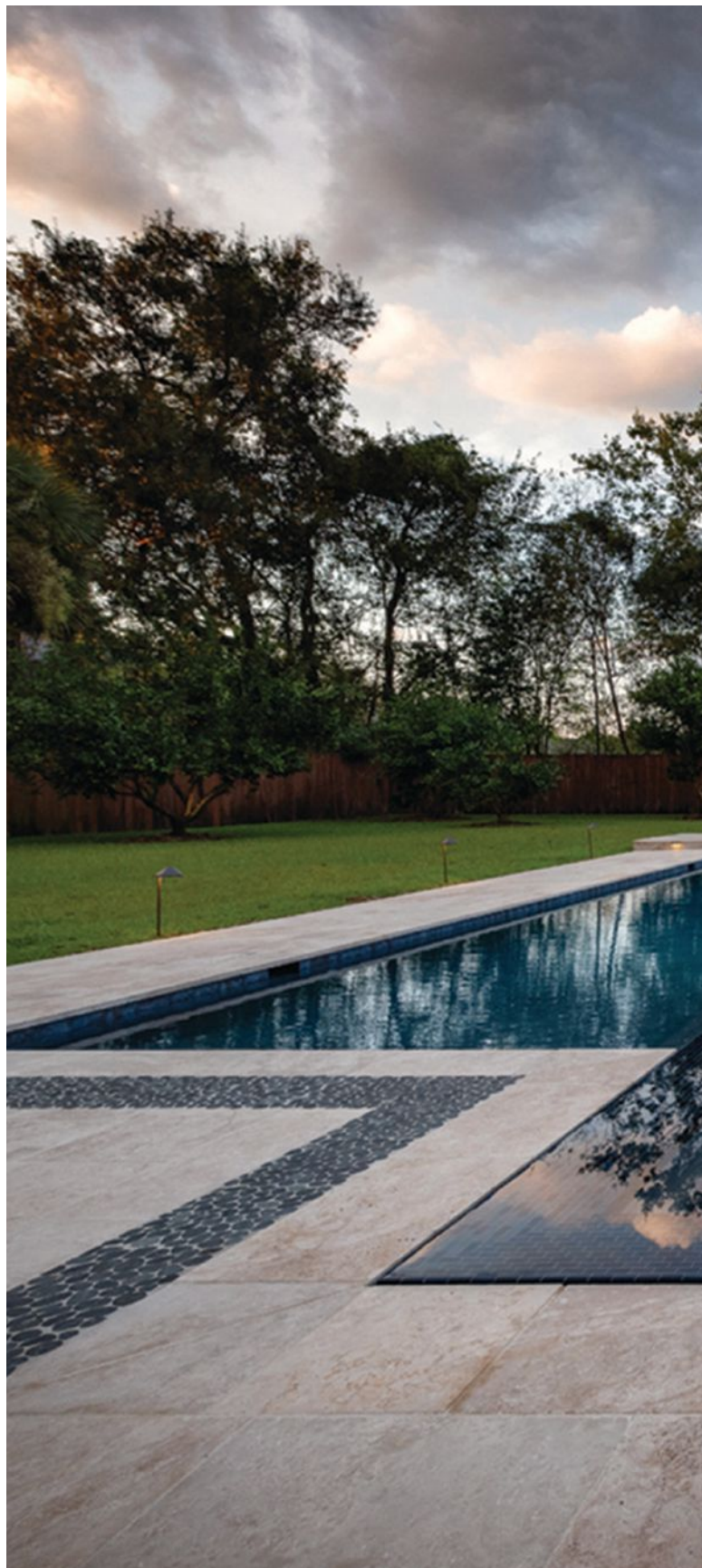
Russell Pool Company, Baton Rouge, La.

This homeowner was looking for a backyard to impress.

"[The client] said, 'I want my friends to walk back here and ask 'Who the hell designed and built this?'" says Lee Russell, owner of Lee Russell Design and Consulting, in Baton Route, La.

This meant including a perimeter overflow spa flush with the deck, along with fire features and water features added to a modern design cloaked in luxury materials such as stone and glass tile.

The design also needed to preserve an existing, mature palm tree. To establish the layout, Russell used this specimen as a focal point from the home interior. The palm somewhat aligned with the kitchen's center line, so it and its reflection would provide the perfect vignette from that room. The pool is positioned so its longest wall runs in the direction of the tree, helping lead the eye



PHOTOS BY JIMI SMITH



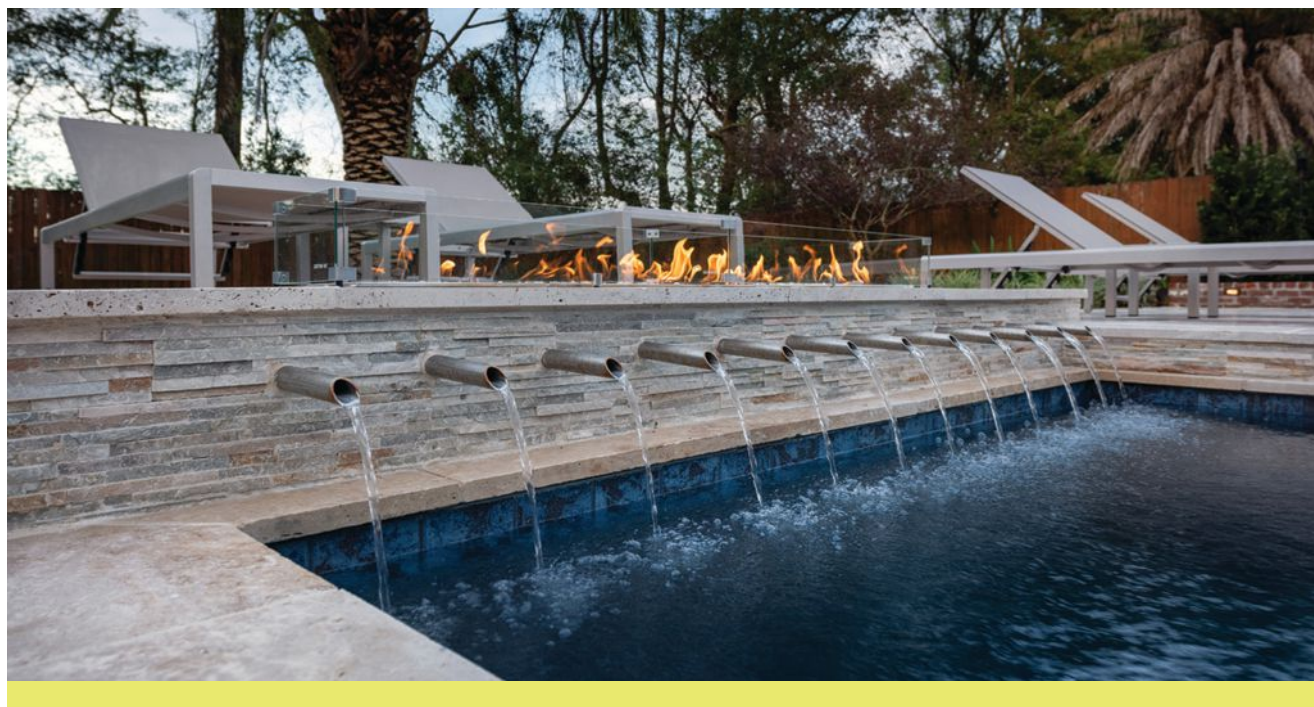
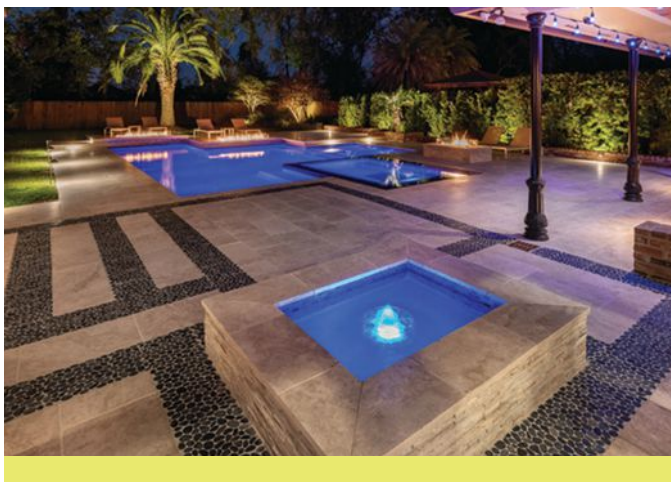
directly to it.

“I wanted him to be able to sit in his kitchen and look out the back and see the palm tree, and see its reflection in the pool,” Russell says. “Everything else — the fires, the water feature — everything else was going to be peripheral to that tree as the centerpiece of that pool.”

They sought to balance the homeowner’s preference for modern design with the brick and neutral materials predominant in the area. So, while the client had requested white stonework, Russell determined that a more neutral palette was appropriate for the home. An ivory travertine was used instead. The modern touch came from the design’s clean lines, straight-edge coping and stone (rather than bullnosed), along with the choice of scuppers and fire features — both made of stainless steel.

Step pads edged with black pebble form the path to the master bedroom and help break up the deck.

Twelve stainless steel cannon scuppers form a line under one of the fire features. Located about 150 feet from the equipment pad, they required



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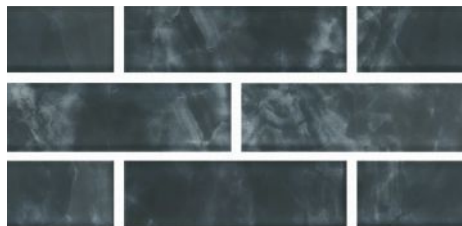
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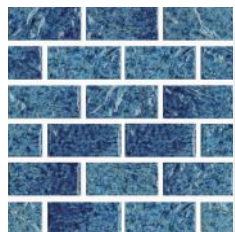
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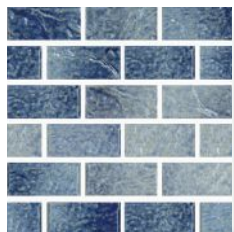
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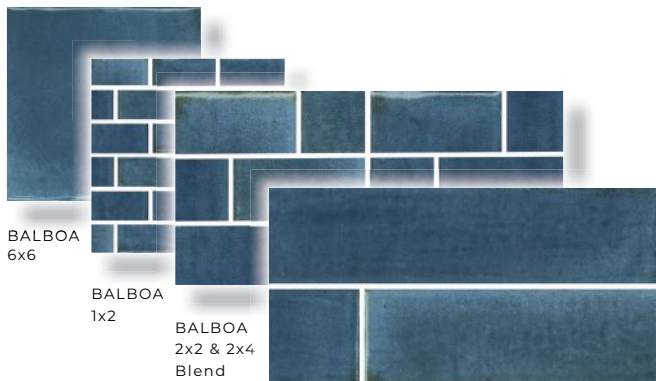
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valves close to the pool for control and to save on plumbing. A bank of 12 ball valves, along with feed line and grounding wires, sits in a vault constructed underneath the fire feature pan directly above.

The homeowner wanted to create a unified destination area by joining a fire pit with the spa. To that end, one of the stainless steel fire features and accompanying loungers are set by the spa.

Off to the side, Russell utilized another existing element for the design. To the small, square fountain, he added short, 3-inch-tall bubblers and lighting. Russell didn't just keep the fountain in place for the sake of recycling.

"When you walk through the front door, you can't really see the pool yet, but you can see that water feature, so you know there's something back there," Russell says. "And that moving water reflects on the walls inside the little courtyard area."



WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

The low-slung elevations and stair-stepping of the pool's outline to create individual coves results in a backyard that appears both sprawling and intimate.

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Scott Cohen, Garden Artisan
TR Mills, Vice President of Design
Jose Hernandez, Estimator
 The Green Scene, Chatsworth, Calif.

Despite the relatively small yard, the clients had a sizable wish list. They wanted a nice view from inside to the backyard, then from the backyard out to the sunset. For entertaining, they wanted a fire feature, as well as an outdoor kitchen with barbecue, counter and bar.

As far as water goes, they requested falling water and really enjoy vanishing-edge effects.

"I said, 'You've seen the size of your yard, right? How are we going to fit this all in here?'" says Scott Cohen, garden artisan with The Green Scene, in Chatsworth, Calif.

To conserve square footage, Cohen and his team designed this raised perimeter-overflow spa. A sheet fall coming off the adjacent stone-clad wall, spills heated water from the spa. "The sound is just right — it's not too loud or crashing, because it's not falling that far down," Cohen says. It also features an LED color-



changing light bar.

He finished the vessel with a 1-inch ceramic mosaic tile mix containing blacks and browns, with pops of deep ocean blues. A cast-concrete bridge provides entry. Ridges at the edges of the bridge make it more visible and add traction.

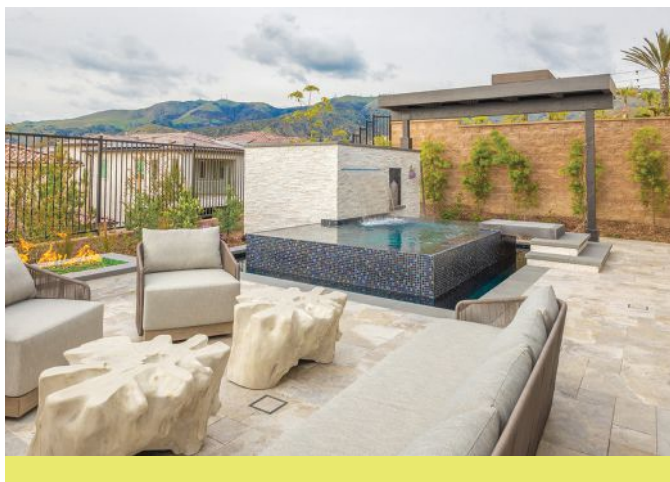
Raising the spa 18 inches helped create the illusion that the space was more open. “It makes the back wall look smaller — it doesn’t look like a 5-foot-tall wall anymore, because it’s not — it’s a 3-foot-tall wall,” Cohen says.

Adding to the sense of spaciousness, Cohen sprawled the major elements in the yard, around the perimeter. The raised, stone-veneer fire pit sits by the back fence, creating another gathering spot away from the spa. The low-slung feature preserves views of the sunset. The outdoor kitchen remains unobtrusive at the side of the yard.

A wisteria-covered arbor by the spa shields it from the next-door neighbors. “That vine is going to be dripping with lavender flowers, and will grow another foot and a half over the height of the arbor, which will give us additional privacy,” Cohen says.

WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

The clean design and sleek materials contribute to this serene space. The cast concrete bridge leading into the spa makes a nice touch, both practically and aesthetically speaking.





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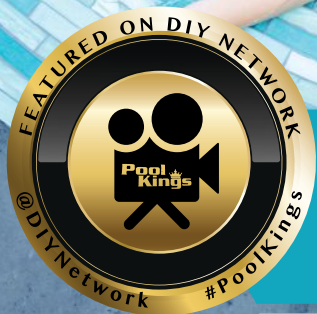


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Plunge Pool/Spa

GARDEN POND

Structured like a reflecting pool, this combination plunge/spa anchors a garden getaway appropriate for the Southern town.

Michael Gesmond, Owner/Designer
Heritage Pools, North Charleston, S.C.

This residential property is set in a vibrant area of downtown Charleston, S.C.

“When I think of downtown, I think of horseback and carriage rides, old architecture, military — plenty of history,” says Michael Gesmond, owner of Charleston-based Heritage Pools. “There is definitely a lot of older brick — brick roads and driveways, a lot of sidewalks are brick, a lot of old arches and buildings. And there are a lot of trees and plants.”

At night, the area displays plenty of interesting lighting.

The clients asked for a luxury pool that included multiple elements, such as a spa, small swimmable space, turf and decking. It quickly became clear that, for this backyard, a pool surrounded simply by hardscape wouldn’t fit.

Instead, Gesmond created this cross-shaped combination plunge pool/spa surrounded by

MASTERS OF DESIGN

Other

turf, to fit both physically and aesthetically.

Gesmond knew that a walkway of step pads set in the lawn would be needed to carry users down the length of the yard, beginning at the opening of an existing edge.

The pool sits off to the side, its center line placed at the halfway point between the walkway and the side wall to perfectly nestle it in that corner. The vessel's cross shape allowed the designer to evenly segment the functional zones — spa at one end, tanning ledge on the other, with the small plunge pool in between. Entry steps on one side of the plunge, and a bench on the other form the cross bar.

"The point was for everybody to be together and not feel distant," Gesmond says. "The cross helped with that, because you can still be in the middle of the pool and people can be close by in the spa, or by the sun ledge."

To border the water, Gesmond chose a heftier stone — 2-inch-thick silver travertine with squared edges — to add a more substantial look.

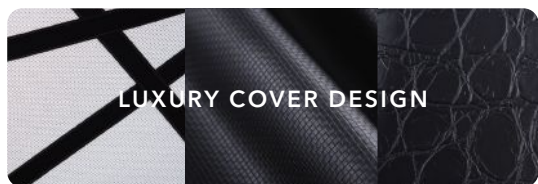
White lighted spheres behind the tanning ledge carry the vibe from the downtown night life.



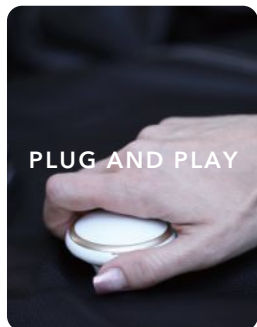
WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

A great example of a pool that harkens back to classic reflecting ponds, with a design update to enhance usability. As a classic form, the cross fits this space perfectly for a cozy garden getaway.





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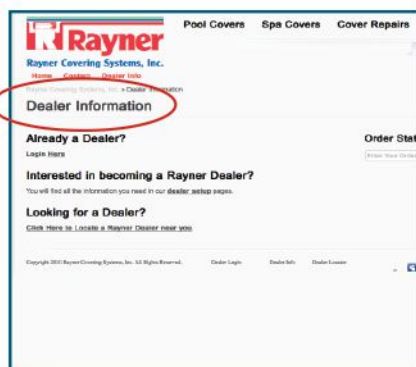
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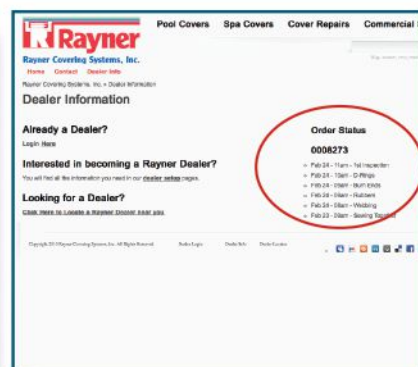
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Vinyl

TIERED EXPANSION

When tackling a substantial grade change, this team took a gradual approach.

Jon Foshee, President/CEO
Mike Giovanone, Advisory Board Chairman
Richard Fenwick, Vice President
Forest Smith, Senior Vice President
Ralph Moore, Construction Manager
 Concord Pools & Spas, Latham, N.Y.

Dave Orsini, Owner
 Orsini Landscaping, Schenectady, N.Y.

A challenging yard coupled with specific client requests might cause some companies to pass on a job. In fact, some did.

But this builder didn't let a steep slope and challenging logistics compromise his ability to deliver. Rather than shy away from the complex project, Jon Foshee, president & CEO of Concord Pools in Latham, N.Y., decided to collaborate with a nearby landscaping firm.

He didn't just choose any landscaper. "We like to marry the client with the landscaper based on what they're looking for," Foshee says.

He knew Orsini Landscaping would fit the homeowner's style well. "The customer was looking for a pool with a spillover spa set in the patio," Foshee says. One of the key requests was to have the spa set into the patio.

Set behind a newer home, the backyard was graded into the woods with a very sloped back. Concord and Orsini worked together to get the pool orientation and elevation just right.

MASTERS OF DESIGN

Vinyl

They decided to employ a more gradual approach to the grade change. “We used multiple tiers and multiple walls to eliminate the need for an 8-foot wall and create more space in the backyard,” Foshee says.

Placing the pool in the lower end of the yard allowed the team to build a series of stone walls, which became a key part of the poolscape. They added a sunning patio as a transition point between the pool and patio closest to the house to break up the walls. The spa and waterfalls were built into the sunning patio and spilled into the pool.

This tiered approach allowed the client to maximize their space. It also reduced cost by eliminating the need for a huge retaining wall.

“We made the yard bigger, and it worked,” Foshee says.

A firepit was kept close to the home for easy access at night.

Ultimately, the collaboration delivered everything the client wanted without sacrificing aesthetics or function.



WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

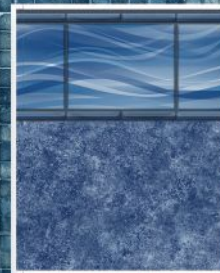
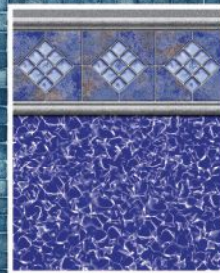
The tiered design and use of multiple textures creates depth and leads the eye to the pool as the yard's focal point.



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Vinyl

DRAMATIC ENTRANCE

Entry steps run the entire 48-foot length of the pool to allow for entertaining large groups.

Sean Hussey, Owner/President
Guilford Pools, Archdale, N.C.

Next to Nature Landscape Design, Greensboro, N.C.

John Anderson, Architect

Modulus Engineer Walls

Stairs don't typically take up a lot of space on a pool, but this client wanted to make an inviting statement.

The unusual request was to have steps running across the entire length of one side of the pool to allow easy entry. A lap lane, fire element, and privacy wall also ranked highly on their design list.

The whole outdoor aesthetic needed to fit with the house, which was built in 1928. For a classic look, Sean Hussey selected a rectangular shape with sharp corners — a tricky design to pull off with vinyl. He partnered with an architect, landscape designer, structural engineer, and many artisan craftspeople to complete the backyard look.

"The first big hurdle was designing and making sure we could fit the vinyl over the steps," Hussey says.

He used a steel frame for the steps, then filled it in with stone. The very top edge of the step is hand-troweled with vermiculite.

MASTERS OF DESIGN

Vinyl

The yard had a significant slope, so the team did the construction in multiple phases. This included building a large retaining wall that would give them a level space to put the pool on.

The clients had requested a 10-foot privacy wall on the pool's far end. Because of the slope, 16-feet ultimately was required. "We had a lot of changes while we were building the pool, but the end result speaks for itself," Hussey says.

An onyx liner pattern paired with silver-gray travertine creates a balance between dark and light that draws attention to the water.

Safety was a consideration with such large steps, especially if the client wanted to entertain at night. "We built lights into the steps," Hussey says. "That vinyl pattern is one of the darker patterns available, so we wanted to make sure it was well-lit and safe at night."

The fire element included three fire pots on pedestals with built-in sheet waterfalls. Stone veneer on the columns reflects the stonework on the house.



WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

Sharp rectangular lines framing the pool echo the lines and angles on the historic home. Combined with the travertine deck and stone veneer columns, it creates an integrated aesthetic.



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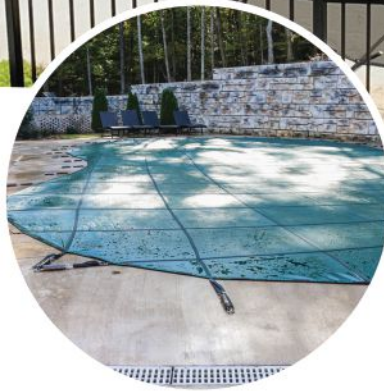
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Fiberglass

ELEVATED CREATIVITY

The designer worked with easement restrictions and existing elevation to conceptualize and build a backyard entertainment area for a young family.

Phil Copher, Owner
Epic Escapes, Geneva, Ill.

“It was a different project from the start,” says Phil Copher, reflecting on when he first set foot in the client’s backyard. He had a clear vision of what the design concept should be right away, which doesn’t happen often.

The property was a blank slate where the pool would go, but it came with a good amount of elevation and a zoning restriction on how close the pool could be to the back of the property line.

“There was already an elevation established with an existing seating area and pavers, he says. “The rest was blank canvas.”

Copher was tasked with creating an entertainment space for a young, active family. The client asked for a pool and spa combination, fire feature, outdoor kitchen, lounge space and seating.

“I like elevation projects because they’re a challenge,” he says. “You’re using what’s there, and you’re creating something really cool when

you're done."

He took advantage of the existing grade by elevating the spa 24 inches. To make all those grades work, he had to drop the top patio down from the home, using a small edging wall to do this. This allowed for an extra 7 inches to help with the grade.

The limited space meant Copher had to use every inch. To make the design work, an old patio was joined with a new one.

"It went from being an open backyard to now being completely full of hardscape," Copher says.

A mix of dark and medium grays on the patio help draw attention to the bright blue pool and spa, making them the focal point of the space.

Although this design seemed meant to be, it almost didn't happen. If the neighboring house had already been built, Copher explained, he probably wouldn't have been able to get the fiberglass pool onto the property. The cost to move it would have been prohibitive.

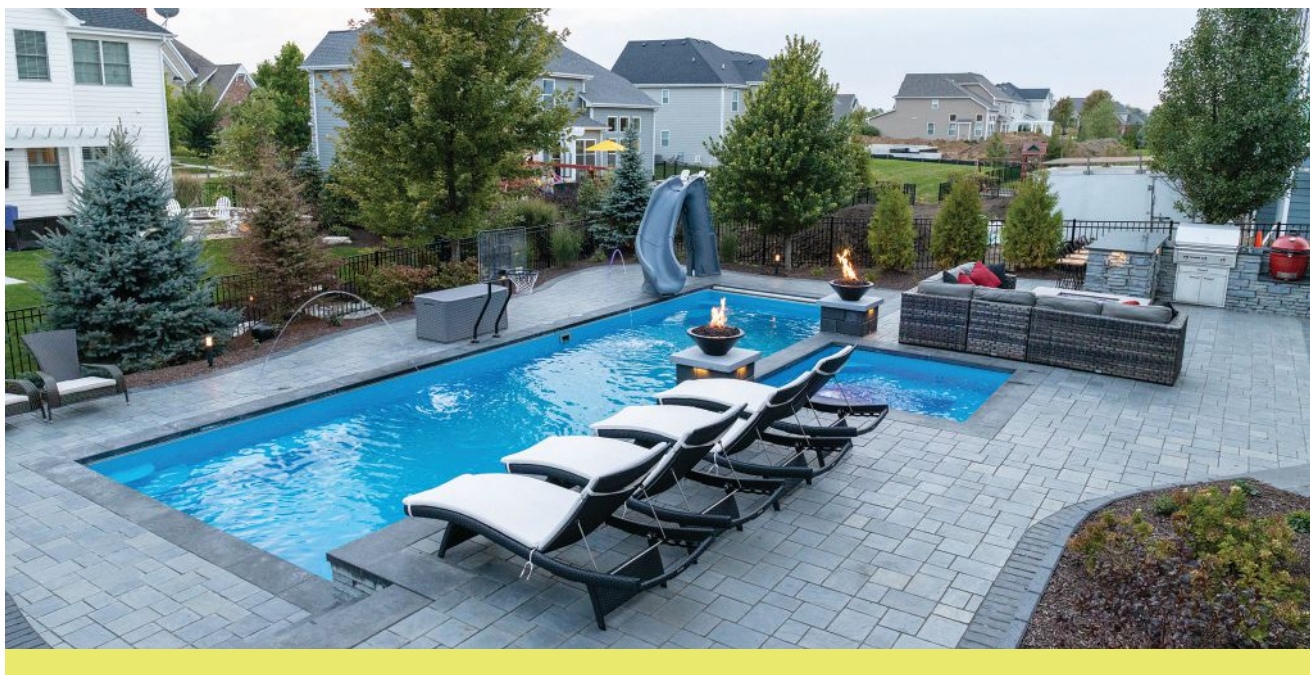
"Once we got the pool in, they started excavation a month after and then we had no access. We got in before the other house got put in, so it worked out well," he says.

Luckily, Copher's vision fell into place.



WHAT THE JUDGES THOUGHT

This fiberglass installation makes full use of the space without compromising functionality. The elevated spa with spill-over and fire features add drama to the design.



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How to Keep Your Pool Owners Happy and Swimming During the Chlorine Shortage

Now more than ever, AOP pool systems offer pool pros and owners a golden opportunity. Here's what to look for in an alternative sanitation method.

Wait times, staff retention and chlorine shortages, oh my! Just like nearly every other industry, shortages continue to put a strain on the pool and spa industry. But even during chlorine-shortage uncertainty, smart pool professionals have an untapped wealth of opportunity.

If there's a silver lining to the chlorine tablet shortage, it could be that customers are more open to new alternatives to chlorine than ever. But, not every alternative pool sanitation method has the "Midas touch" that's worth offering to your customers.

YOUR "GOLD MINE": ALTERNATIVE POOL SANITATION

What is your golden opportunity this summer? Equipping your existing customers with a high-performing chlorine alternative. Lately, many options have been introduced to the market. However, today's alternative sanitation category is led by AOP (Advanced Oxidation Process) pool systems that safely deliver powerful hydroxyl radicals to the water. This summer, offering the right AOP pool sanitation can improve your customer relationships, while saving you five to seven times the costs associated with finding new customers with your existing offerings.

To keep your customers' trust, here are three things your alternative pool sanitation method must have:

1 | Industry-leading product protection.

First off, your alternative pool sanitizer should be backed by a substantial manufacturer's money-back guarantee and warranty. Why? Because today's shoppers are willing to pay more for products with industry-leading money-back guarantee and warranty windows. You'll inexpensively increase your sales by assuring customers that their products are backed by you and the manufacturer. Market-leading warranties for



pool sanitizers, such as AOP, are five years, and money-back guarantees up to 90 days. These assurances lower your cost of doing business, while raising your customers' confidence.

Flexible, customer-centric product production policies, like the AOP pool system, communicate quality. Make sure to check other competing alternatives' policies.

2 | Proven to scale from spas to water-parks. Customers trust products that are proven to work in the most challenging environments. Alternative sanitizers that work on all types of water bodies, from high bather load waterparks to tranquil spas, means it will work on their pool.

To earn your customers' trust, make sure your alternative sanitizer's water treatment capability is proven and effective on all types of applications, including:

- Waterparks
- Olympic-sized competition swimming pools
- Professional sport teams' hydrotherapy training centers
- Hotels and resorts
- Splash pads
- Cold-plunge pools
- Home pools and hot tubs of all sizes

After all, you should feel comfortable offering your customers an alternative sanitizer that can reliably deliver drinking-water levels of chlorine

that just work. Best-of-breed AOP pool solutions have been proven to do just that.

3 | Help your customers swim more, maintain less. When your customers bought their pools and spas, they rarely thought about the upkeep involved. They just wanted to enjoy themselves. By giving your customers an alternative sanitizer that does the hard work for them, you're doing both your business' reputation and customers a favor. Your alternative sanitation system should be easier to use than traditional chlorine or salt water pool systems. Remember, your alternative sanitation should fit your customers' lifestyles, not the other way around.

Leading alternative sanitizers, like AOP pool systems, will have:

- Easy system maintenance that takes five minutes or less each year
- No required special tools, lamp handling or professional training to service
- A live customer support team that's U.S. based, ready to call, and available to you and your customers
- The availability to reliably deliver and install this pool season

Now that you know what to look for in an alternative sanitation method, it's time to equip your pool business with the right techniques needed to sell them. ■

To learn how to sell and explain AOP pool sanitation to your homeowner customers, download our free guide here: clearcomfort.com/aop-sales-guide.

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Missy*

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MODERN OASIS

Cajun Pools & Spas, p. 22

Pump: Hayward VS950
Filter: Hayward C5030
Heater: Hayward H500FDP
Controller: Hayward OmniLogic
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: CMP Powerclean; Hayward Hydrapure
Tile/Coping/ Deck Finish: Del Conca Chamonix 2
Waterproofing: Miracote
Interior Finish: Pebble Sheen Turtle Bay
Fire Features: Retro Fire Linear Fire Bar
Lights: Hayward Colorlogic 320 & 80
Drain Covers/Fittings: CMP
Autofill: AquaStar
Skimmers: Hayward
Outdoor Elements: Teak Wood

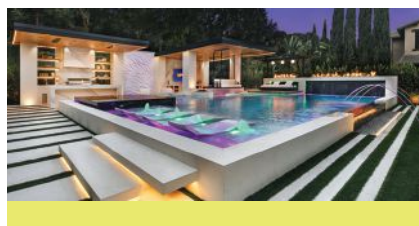


ELEGANT ENGAGEMENT

Creative Environments, Shasta Pools, p. 30

Pump: Pentair Intellipro XF
Filter: Pentair Sta-Rite; Pentair Cyclone Prefilter
Heater: Pentair Sta-Rite Max-E-Therm 400k BTU NG Heater
Controller: Pentair IntelliTouch I9 +3
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: A&A Quik Dek Chlor Sanitation; Quik-Pure QP3-50
Tile: National Pool Tile GMS Silver
Coping: QDI Philadelphia Travertine

Deck Finish: QDI Philadelphia Travertine; Arizona Tile More Wood Noce
Interior Finish: Shasta Sand Newport Sky Blue
Waterfeatures: Bubble Jet
Fire Features: Creative Environments
Automatic Cleaner: Quik Leaf Vac Tank & Lid; Pentair QC G4 HP
Lights: Pentair Intellibrite 5G Color LED Pool Lights; FX landscape lighting
Jets/Swim Currents/Spa Components: Pentair VS Pump with a blower
Drain Covers/Fittings: A&A AVCS Single Port Channel Drain
Autofill: Pentair Quik Water Level
Skimmers: Ultra Skim
Pool/Spa Cover: Spa Colar Cover-Up
Outdoor Elements: Shade Structure by Creative Environments; BBQ equipment by BBQ Island; artificial turf by Turf & Sort



BACKYARD FIREWORKS

Foxterra Design, p. 38

Pump: Pentair 3HP 230v Pentair Intelliflo
Filter: Pentair 520 Clean and Clear Plus
Heater: Pentair Mastertemp Low NOX
Controller: Pentair Intellcenter
Interior Finish: NPT Mini Pebble
Lights: Pentair Intellibright

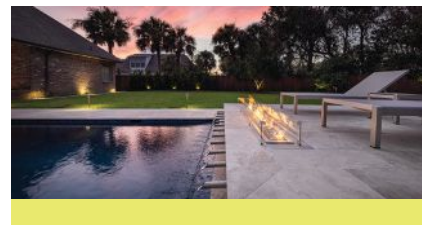


WOOD-GRAINED GEOMETRY

Southernwind Pools, p. 44

Pump: Jandy E-Pump
Filter: Jandy DEV 60
Heater: Jandy JXI
Controller: Jandy RS - iAqua Link
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: Jandy Nature Fusion 2
Tile: Noble Tile
Coping: Leuders Lime Stone Eased Edge

Deck Finish: Del Conca Pavers
Waterproofing: Acuron
Interior Finish: Pebblesheen Ocean Blue Luminous
Waterfeatures: Grand Effects Copper Scuppers
Fire Features: Outdoor Plus Firepan
Automatic Cleaner: A&A Infloor Circulation
Lights: Jandy Nicheless
Drain Covers/Fittings: A&A Pebble Top Channel Drain
Skimmers: A&A Quick Skim Venturi
Outdoor Elements: IPE Deck



PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE

Russell Pool Co., p. 50

Pump: Pentair Intelliflo XF 022056
Filter: Pentair Clean and Clear Plus 520 160332
Heater: Pentair Mastertemp 400NA 460736
Controller: Pentair IntelliCenter 5PS 521907
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: Paramount UV2 and O3; CMP Powerclean Ultra Inline Feeder
Tile: NPT Tondela Blue and Oceanside Muse; Offset Custom Blend
Coping: StoneMart Ivory Travertine 12x24x3cm Eased Edge
Deck Finish: StoneMart Ivory Travertine 16x24x3cm paver; Island Stone Level Pebble Medan Charcoal
Waterproofing: Basecrete Intercept
Interior Finish: Marcite Custom Color Russell Blue
Waterfeatures: Arizona Fire and Water Stainless Steel Cannon Scupper; PAL Lighting Bubbler
Fire Features: American Fireglass
Automatic Cleaner: Paramount PCC2000
Lights: PAL Lighting
Jets/Swim Currents/Spa Components: LASCO Venturi Tee
Drain Covers/Fittings: Paramount MDXR3; A&A Mfg. AVSC Channel Drain
Autofill: Pentair Water Fill T40BG
Skimmers: Waterway Renegade

MASTERS OF DESIGN

Suppliers

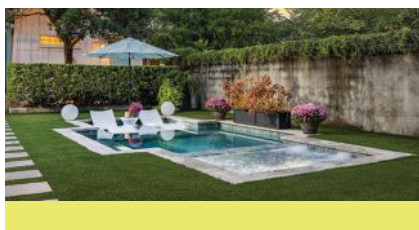
Other: Thorntree Woodridge Mini Wall Ledge



BRIDGE TO TRANQUILITY

The Green Scene, p. 59

Pump/Filter/Heater/Controller/ Automatic Cleaner/Skimers: Hayward
Tile: Fujiwa Saga 661 and 112
Coping/Deck Finish: Bellecrete Midnight
Interior Finish: Pebble Brilliance Tropicana
Lights: Hayward ColorLogic
Jets/Swim Currents/Spa Components: CMP Jets, 8' Sheer Descent for Waterfall
Drain Covers/Fittings: Pour A Lid
Pool/Spa Cover: Solar Cover
Outdoor Elements: Bellecrete Bridge Midnight; Sunstone BBQ Equipment; and Arbor 5' x 16'



GARDEN POND

Heritage Pools, p. 65

Pump: Pentair Intelliflo VSF
Filter: Pentair Clean & Clear 420
Heater: Pentair Mastertemp 400k BTU
Controller: Pentair Easytouch 4 Pool Spa with Screenlogic
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: Pentair IC20 Salt
Tile: Classic Tile Oxford Marine
Coping: 12x24 2-inch Eased Edge Silver Travertine
Deck Finish: Artificial turf

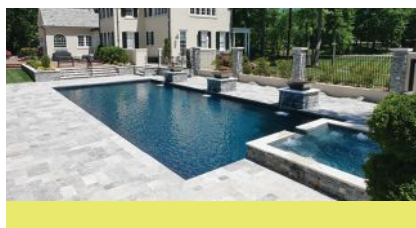
Interior Finish: Luna Quartz Montego - Pearl Plaster
Lights: Pentair White Lights
Autofill: Pentair
Outdoor Elements: Ledge Lounger Signature Chairs with 14-inch table and umbrella



TIERED EXPANSION

Concord Pools & Spas, p. 71

Vinyl Liner: Latham
Pump: Pentair Intelliflo
Filter: Pentair SD-80 with Glass Media
Heater: Pentair MasterTemp
Controller: Pentair IntelliCenter
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: Pentair IntelliChlor IC40
Coping: Techo-Bloc Bullnose Cap
Deck Finish: Techo-Bloc Blu60 Pavers; Allan Block for walls
Waterfeatures: CMP Natural Wonders Water Falls
Fire Features: Rosetta Hardscapes Belvedere Circular Fire Pit
Automatic Cleaner: Maytronics Dolphin
Lights: Pentair IntelliBrite
Spa Components: Latham Shasta Series Spillover Spa
Drain Covers/Fittings/Skimers: Hayward
Pool/Spa Cover: Latham Safety Cover
Handrails/Slides/Diving Boards: S.R. Smith

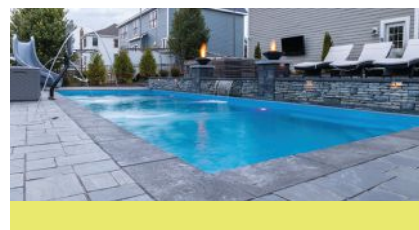


DRAMATIC ENTRANCE

Guilford Pools, p. 75

Vinyl Liner: Latham Onyx liner pattern with rectangle shape steel walls
Pump: Pentair VSF
Filter: Pentair Clean and Clear Plus Cartridge
Heater: Raypak 009219 NG 399k BTU

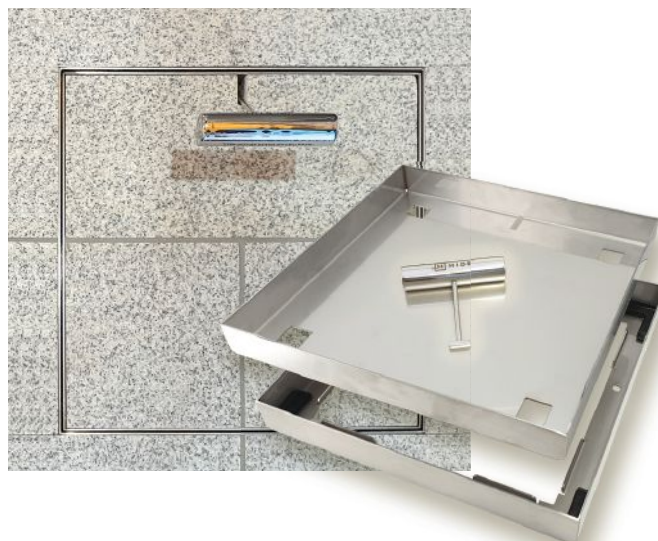
Controller: Pentair EasyTouch with Screenlogic
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: Pentair IntelliChlor
Coping/Deck Finish: Travertine by Atlantic Stone in Silver
Waterfeatures: Pentair MagicFalls Sheet-Style 36" Wide
Fire Features: Bobe/CMP fire pots 36" in custom volcanic black finish
Automatic Cleaner: Dolphin M500
Lights: Pentair Glo-brite
Spa Components: Latham Hilo Falls Fiberglass Spa with spillway in River Rock finish
Drain Covers/Fittings: Hayward Main Drains 1048 AV
Autofill: Jandy Levolor K-1100
Skimmers: Hayward SP-1080 Wide-mouth
Pool/Spa Cover: Latham Auto-cover with walk-on lid finished in travertine decking
Fencing: Aluminum Rail



ELEVATED CREATIVITY

Epic Escapes, p. 79

Fiberglass Pool: Thursday Pools Goliath 41/9x9 Spa
Pump: Pentair VSF
Filter: Pentair System 3 450
Heater: Pentair Max-E-Therm 400k BTU
Controller: Pentair IntelliCenter
Chemical Feeder/Sanitation System: Pentair IC40 Salt
Coping: Techo Bloc Raffinato 14x28
Deck Finish: Unilock Richcliff
Interior Finish: Thursday Pools California
Waterfeatures: Pentair Waterfalls
Fire Features: Top Fires Bowls
Automatic Cleaner: Dolphin M400
Lights: Pentair Microbrite Color
Drain Covers/Fittings: CMP Gray
Skimmers: Thursday Pools
Pool/Spa Cover: APC Cover; Belite Spa Cover
Handrails/Slides/Diving Boards: S.R. Smith Typhoon
Fencing: AlumaGuard
Outdoor Elements: Linx Grill; Kamado Joe Smoker



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New Products

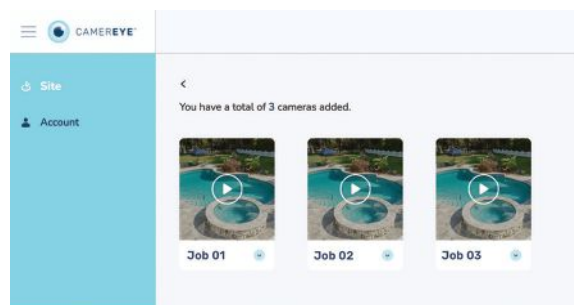
BY PSN STAFF



Fluidra

The new Jandy TruDose Chemical Controller is engineered to automatically keep pool water consistently balanced. It monitors levels as water flows through the pool's plumbing, and doses the appropriate chemicals in the amounts needed, maintaining proper pH and chlorine levels based on actual demand.

Contact: fluidrausa.com



CamerEye

CamerEye's builder portal is designed to streamline job oversight and project management for pool builders. It allows users to monitor all job sites and construction progress from start to end. It then transitions to provide ongoing pool safety for homeowners after the job is done.

Contact: camereye.ai/construction-monitoring



Nature's Care

Nature's Care offers an 'Open-Close' product that's formulated with a concentrated enzyme to naturally break down and remove non-living contaminants and prevent hard-to-clean waterline rings and staining. It also helps keep liners supple and protects other vulnerable surfaces from decay.

Contact: naturescarepool.com



ProTeam

The new and improved Winter Mix is a simple, one-step product designed to help protect pool surfaces from staining and scaling over the winter and provides added water softeners that make pool openings easier. A single application treats up to 15,000 gallons.

Contact: proteampoolcare.com



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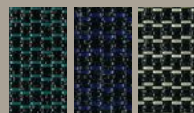
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