



LURE

Outdoor Oasis

Extend your living space with a custom-made, at-home resort

BY RUTH PAARMANN

Imagine raising a toast with friends under the stars, warmed by a roaring fire. Or watching the kids swim under the sun while you float in the pool. Several homeowners have embraced these visions, translating them into inspiring and functional outdoor spaces.

“Many people seek to create an outdoor paradise at home that has the look and feel of a resort location,” Dan Power of Power Concrete Construction in North Liberty said. “Whether it’s a custom concrete fire bowl, in-ground pool or outdoor bar, homeowners can experience the feeling of being away from it all.”

Although the Midwest’s weather can constantly change, residents can make the most of the outdoors most of the year.

“Iowa has nice weather for about eight months a year, and people want to extend their



living spaces outside,” architect Greg Sundberg of Sundberg Design in Cedar Rapids added.

He said outdoor kitchens, patios, pergolas, pools, water features, seat walls, raised gardens and fire pits are popular choices for people who want to enjoy fresh air with family and friends.

Sundberg designs a lot of outdoor living spaces with water features, pools and fire pits.

“Fountains and waterfalls provide a sense of tranquility, movement and sound,” he said, noting that incorporating multiple elements in an outdoor setting allows the homeowner to use it more often.

When it comes to helping people enjoy the water, Pool Tech has seen it all. The Cedar Rapids company builds custom pools and spas and sells Jacuzzi spas. Water can be used in many ways to provide a great experience and excellent value.

TOP: Keith and Theresa Bornbach’s wading cement pond, designed by Rick Whiteaker of Pool Tech in Cedar Rapids, is the perfect retreat for them and their grandchildren. Photo Dan Kempf
ABOVE: Steve and Rene Ridge love to host family and friends at their pool designed by Rick Whiteaker of Pool Tech. Photo Doug Thompson

Pool Planner

The experts at Pool Tech, a WGHK Inc. Company, in Cedar Rapids, share some ideas for planning your dream pool area:

TYPES

In-ground concrete
In-ground vinyl
Portable
hot tub
Endless pool
Attached spa

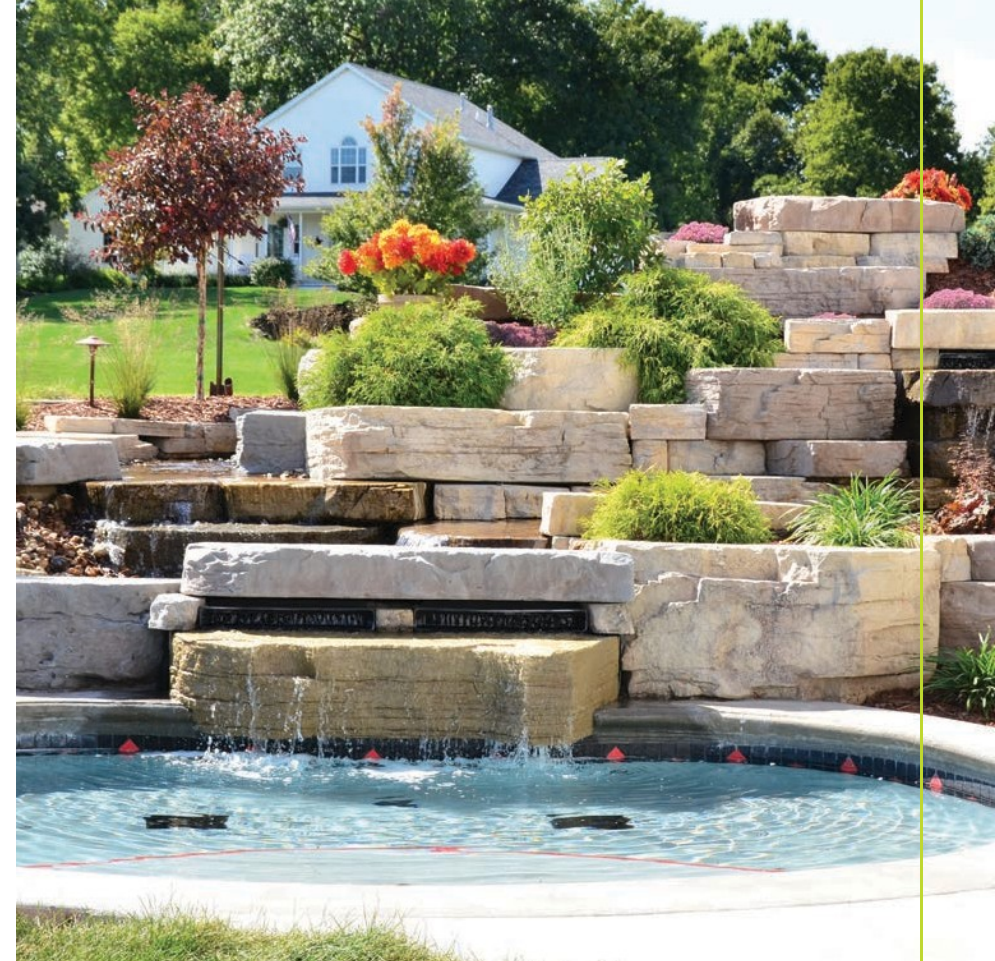
SHAPES

Round
Rectangle
Oval
Freeform
Natural

SPECIAL FEATURES

Benches
Vanishing edge
Waterfall
Fountain
Rain wall
Diving board
Basketball/volleyball
Slide

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TOP: Keith and Theresa Bornbach’s outdoor living space in Marion, designed by architect Greg Sundberg of Sundberg Design in Cedar Rapids, provides an oasis to read, have a drink or just relax. Photo Dan Kempf
BOTTOM: This rectangular pool with fountains in Cedar Rapids, designed by Rick Whiteaker of Pool Tech in Cedar Rapids, includes an ample deck and a pool house designed by architect Greg Sundberg. Photo Tim Schoon





Activities Galore

Rene and Steve Ridge made functionality for their kids and grandkids the priority at their woodland home nestled along Crystal Creek near Cedar Rapids.

“We set out to make Terrace Ridge a destination for our 15 grandkids. The sport pool is situated with full visibility from the four-season porch, the upper deck, the lower patio, the gazebo and the fire pit landing,” Rene said.

The Ridges love the natural setting with its clear view of the night sky and “critters of all kinds.” But their pool is tricked out with a tube slide and basketball and volleyball systems. A climbing wall, swing set and mini golf course are among the other activity options. An app controls the fountains, bubblers and music.

“The pool and recreation area round out our ability to host other families as guests,” Steve said. “This is an estate that could serve many generations.”



Chill Out

Theresa and Keith Bornbach adore their low-maintenance waterfall and stream, wading pond and gazebo at their Marion home. Not only have their grandkids enjoyed the shallow pond, but Theresa enjoys it, too.

“I love putting my lawn chair in the water by the waterfall and plants. It’s great for think time – or not thinking!” she said.

The Bornbachs’ criteria included that it had to be very low maintenance while dressing up the end of the driveway. Friends recommended a water feature as a relaxing part of the plan, and Sundberg and Whiteaker worked with the couple and Smith Massman Landscape & Design in Cedar Rapids to make everything flow together.

“We can be engaged in the outdoors in a very low-maintenance way,” Theresa said. “We can be outside more – reading the paper, having a drink and watching the football games – in a space that is completely different than inside the house.” >

TOP: Garden walls and lush landscaping outline Laura and Duane Smith’s pool, pergola, fire circle and waterfall at their Cedar Rapids home. Photo Tim Schoon

ABOVE: Dr. Charles and Barbara Clark updated their outdoor living space in Iowa City to be more natural. Involved in the remodel were Rick Whiteaker of Pool Tech in Cedar Rapids, Dan Power of Power Concrete Construction in North Liberty and Beale Landscaping. Photo Tim Schoon

Staycation Bliss

Developing a “staycation” environment was the goal for Laura and Duane Smith. Garden walls and lush landscaping beautifully outline their pool, pergola, fire circle and waterfall at their Cedar Rapids home.

“We spend as much time as we can in this space during the warm seasons. We’ve used it for simple family dinners to bigger family events and get-togethers like bridal showers – and even for larger events of 150 people,” Laura said.

Like most of these projects, plans evolved and the scope changed at the Smiths’. The need for showers got wrapped into a “man cave” garage project that can hold more than 10 vehicles.

“Our favorite part of having the space is the family time we’ve spent outside with our children and grandchildren,” Laura said. |



TOP: The outdoor bar area in Cedar Rapids, designed by Dan Power of Power Concrete Construction in North Liberty, provides a natural setting to watch the game or take in a movie. Photo Dan Power BOTTOM: Another view of the Clark’s outdoor living space. Remodeled by Rick Whiteaker or Pool Tech and Dan Power. Photo Tim Schoon



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