

CONNECTICUT BUILDER

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Significant Homes – *Best Outdoor Feature*

photo by Woodruff/Brown Photography

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Advantage Contracting terraces in South Glastonbury custom home

Builders are using wrap around porches and multi-level decks and balconies. Terraces are often separated into outdoor rooms or areas for cooking, dining, swimming and gathering around a firepit or outdoor fireplace.

“Every job has a firepit,” says Brian Belody of New England Silica. “A gas fireplace and a fire pit keep outdoor living space warm into the fall, and outdoor kitchens and outdoor lighting are extremely popular. There is also a trend to natural stone for walls and terraces.”



The 2013 HOBI Awards certainly emphasized the importance of outdoor living as evidenced by the disarming outdoor living environment with pool porch, (pictured on opposite page) dining porch and outdoor fireplace by Significant Homes.

National home builders have updated their designs as well. KB Homes has added indoor-outdoor great rooms with sliding glass walls that open up to out-

Inside Out

Today’s successful builder must bring the inside out and the outside in

Remember when a seeded front lawn, a few foundation plantings and perhaps a 10’X10’ deck were all that was needed for a new home? That was then and this is now!

Today’s homes must bring the outside in with expanses of glass, French doors and even operable glass Nana Walls, like Jim Blansfield, Blansfield Builders accomplished with his HOBI winning New Old Remodeled Home in New Milford.

But builders must also bring the inside out as Jarrett Kravitz did in his winning custom home in South Glastonbury using Techo Bloc terraces and a screened porch.



Advantage screened porch



Blansfield yoga studio



Significant outdoor fireplace

door living areas on some homes in the \$400,000-to-\$1 million price range. Buyers can choose outdoor flooring to match what they have inside.

Toll Brothers, says that over the past two years, interest has picked up for outdoor “summer kitchens” as well as furnished backyard living areas surrounding fire pits or outdoor fireplaces, as in this photo of the model home at Weatherstone at Avon.

“We used to build a model—we’d put a little table with two chairs and you’d have your pool,” said one Toll Bros. project manager. “Now many models include ‘the summer kitchen, the fire pit, seating areas and the extension of the indoor



New England Silica outdoor patio & kitchen

living area.” Prices for such upgrades range from about \$3,000 to \$40,000.

When you update the specs for your new home’s backyard, keep in mind these top five Outdoor Design Trends:

1. Lighting
2. Dining Areas
3. Firepits & Fireplaces
4. Grills/ outdoor kitchens
5. Installed seating (benches, ledges, seatwalls, steps, boulders)

**2014 Residential Landscape Architecture Trends Survey*

Landscape architects who specialize in residential design across the country were asked to rate the expected popularity of a variety of residential outdoor design elements in 2014. The category of gardens and landscaped spaces received a 94.2 percent rating as somewhat or very popular. Outdoor living spaces, defined as kitchens and entertainment spaces, were second most popular at 92.0 percent. Outdoor recreation came in third at 75.8 percent.

Across all categories, 98.3 percent of respondents rated lighting as somewhat or very in-demand for 2014, followed by seating/dining areas (97.7 percent), fire pits/fireplaces (95.4 percent), grills (94.3 percent) and installed seating (89.6 percent), which include benches, seatwalls, ledges, steps, and boulders.

(continued)



Significant pool & terrace at night



Toll Weatherstone at Avon outdoor room with fireplace