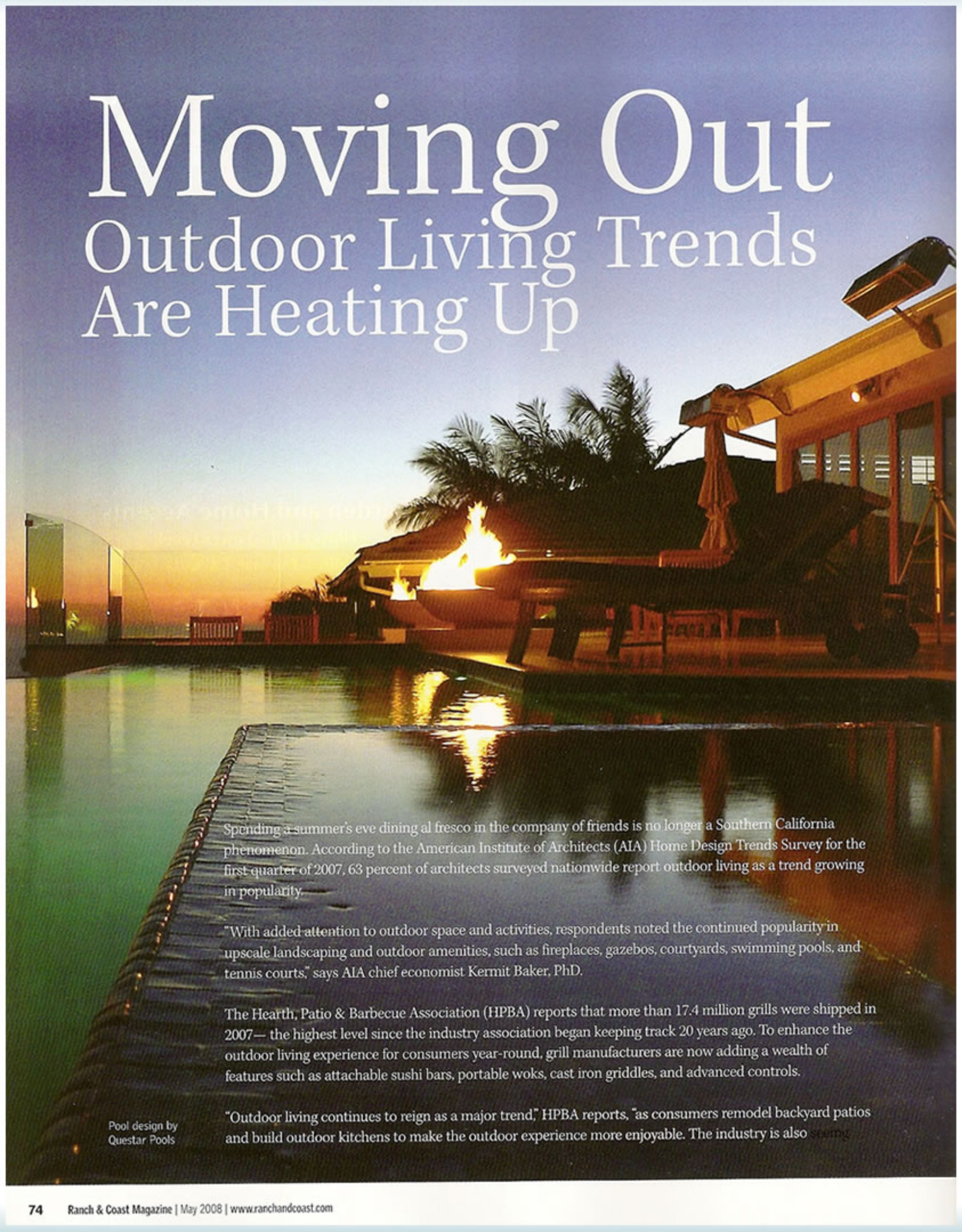


# Moving Out

## Outdoor Living Trends Are Heating Up



Spending a summer's eve dining al fresco in the company of friends is no longer a Southern California phenomenon. According to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Home Design Trends Survey for the first quarter of 2007, 63 percent of architects surveyed nationwide report outdoor living as a trend growing in popularity.

"With added attention to outdoor space and activities, respondents noted the continued popularity in upscale landscaping and outdoor amenities, such as fireplaces, gazebos, courtyards, swimming pools, and tennis courts," says AIA chief economist Kermit Baker, PhD.

The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA) reports that more than 17.4 million grills were shipped in 2007—the highest level since the industry association began keeping track 20 years ago. To enhance the outdoor living experience for consumers year-round, grill manufacturers are now adding a wealth of features such as attachable sushi bars, portable woks, cast iron griddles, and advanced controls.

"Outdoor living continues to reign as a major trend," HPBA reports, "as consumers remodel backyard patios and build outdoor kitchens to make the outdoor experience more enjoyable. The industry is also seeing

Pool design by  
Questar Pools



Maia  
daybed

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Maia outdoor  
furniture

seeing outdoor rooms becoming an extension of the family and living rooms. Outdoor kitchens are becoming a traditional feature for builders to include in new home plans, as opposed to an optional room."

Outdoor furnishings have also come of age.

"Contemporary is a really strong trend in outside design," Juli Risner, owner of Shop Grounded in Encinitas, reveals. "Almost every manufacturer that we talk to is showing huge increases in that end of their business. A lot of them are hiring big-name designers."

For example, she notes, "Barlow Tyrie has issued a collection of outdoor furniture by Vladimir Kagan that shows the strong influence of his past work, but reinterprets it for a new generation of hipsters." Best known for his iconic mid-century furniture designs featured in permanent collections at the Smithsonian and the Museum of Modern Art, Kagan has now created a curvaceous outdoor daybed and ottoman that fit together, resembling yin-yang symbols. »



Pool design by  
Questar Pools

« Patricia Urquola, a Spanish architect famed for her striking indoor furniture designs, recently unveiled the Maia collection of outdoor furnishings made with high-tech fiber and aluminum.

The Maia relax chair "is incredibly comfortable and comes with a lightweight mesh cushion in your choice of colors," says Risner. Designed for Kettal, the line features an open, spiderweb-like weave. "You can customize metal elements, powder-coated to the exact color you want and choose glass back-painted to the same or a contrasting color."

### Phillips...sees a strong shift toward Americans adopting European customs of outdoor dining and socializing.

Skip Phillips, owner of Questar Pools in Escondido, says the trend toward outdoor living has gone global. "Even in Canada, where pools have typically been viewed as utilitarian and doomed to be closed for eight or nine months of the year, they have completely bought into leaving pools open year-round despite the cold environment," says Phillips, who has twice been named the world's most influential pool designer by the *Robb Report*. "They are also taking to heart the premise that if you have an exterior destination, there are three things that drive you to that destination: fire, food, and water."

While vanishing-edge pools remain popular, Phillips sees increased sophistication in water features. "People are gravitating away from contrived, fake elevation changes with pounding water and going for more tranquil, audible qualities," he says.

Phillips, who recently designed an



Outdoor design by Torrey Pines Landscape



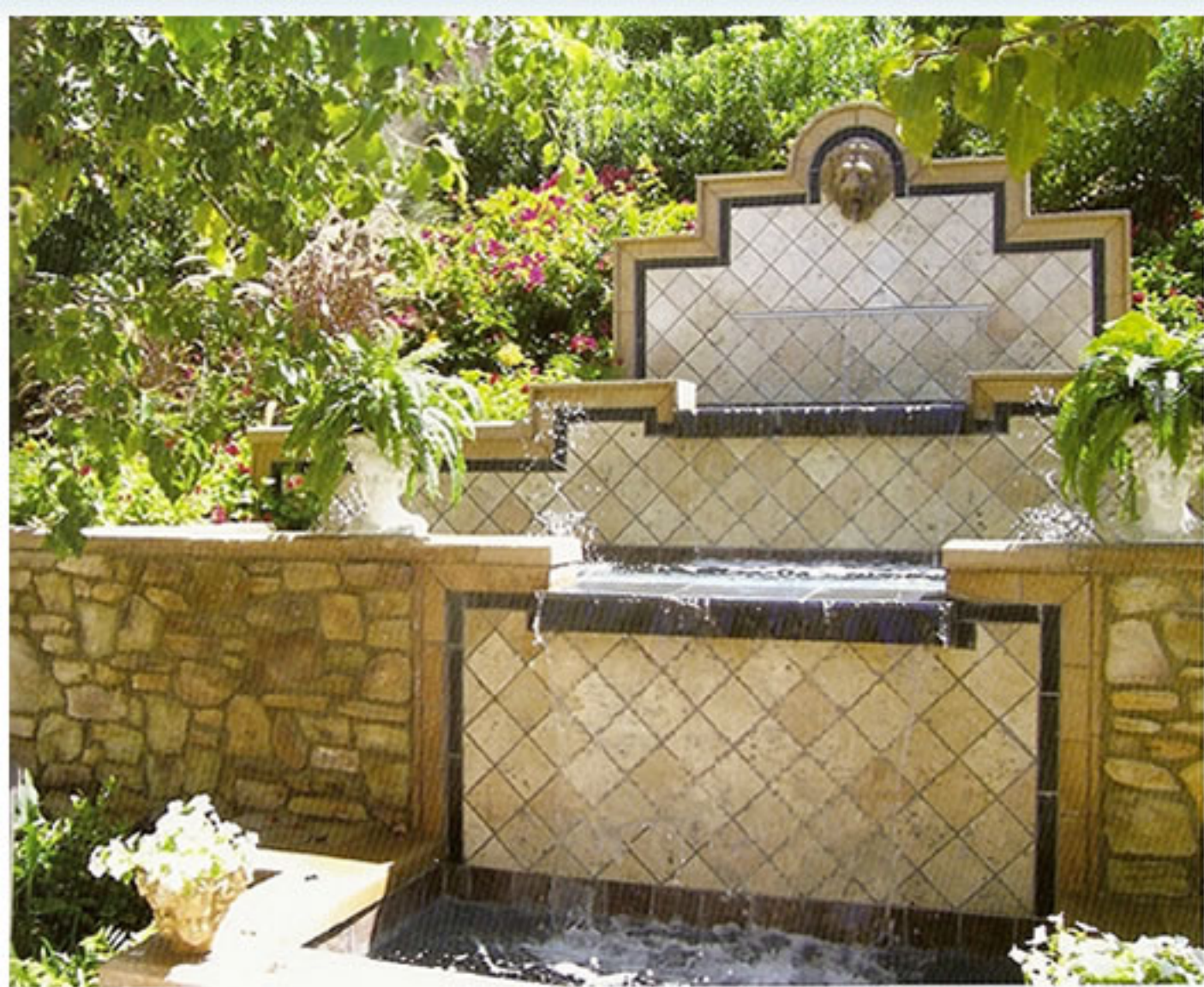
oceanview outdoor entertainment space for restaurant owner Ralph Rubio, sees a strong shift toward Americans adopting European customs of outdoor dining and socializing.

"One thing I noticed the first time I left the U.S. was how important the social structure was at dinnertime," he observes. "Now we are seeing that same approach here in the U.S., a sensitivity to slow down and enjoy each

other's company at dinnertime, along with good food and wine."

Homeowners are also opting for walls of doors that slide open or fold back. One recent project by Questar included Nanadoors. (www.nanadoors.com) "The entire side of the house opens up to create indoor-outdoor living," says Phillips. "Their project personifies what's happening in the U.S., where they

Pool de  
by Miss  
Valley I



cascading down the front.”

Mixing fire and water features has gained popularity, he confirms. For example, one recent project features a wall of water cascading down stone behind a fire pit with flames rising out of sand, creating a Zen-like effect.

“What’s really nice with landscaping now is there is a whole array of hybrid plants,” Thompson notes. For example, Monrovia Nursery created dwarf varieties of red-blooming Callistemon (bottlebrush) and Royal Cape Plumbago, which has blue blossoms.

Water-conscious consumers are opting for less lawns and more ground covers, such as Mondo grass, creeping thyme, ornamental strawberries, sedums, and for areas with lower lighting, vincas.

When designing a garden environment, he says to keep three elements in mind: Good draining — including an underground drain system; soil preparation — San Diego’s native clay and granite soil generally need amending; and water control — create separate irrigation systems to water each microclimate in your garden.

For decks, check out new exotic woods on the market. “Ipe is a wood with the oil content of teak. It’s more expensive than redwood but a fraction of the price of other teak,” Thompson advises. “It’s a tropical wood and quite hard.”

Consider a design professional to help you lay out an outdoor living area, create an overhead projection scale drawing, and devise a budget.

Finally, create an outdoor living area that suits your needs and environment, not the latest market fads. “We encourage people to respect that site and the architecture,” Thompson concludes, “as well as the client’s lifestyle.” —Miriam Raftery

extended material from inside to outside.” Travertine stone tiles serve as indoor flooring and outdoor decking in a back yard that includes a pool, spa, fire bowls, multiple seating areas, and a teak dining table. An elaborate outdoor kitchen includes a snow cone center, wine cooler, refrigerator, icemaker, outdoor grill, and warming oven.

Green design is another trend among homeowners. “Cisterns are common in the Caribbean and we’re now using them in California,” says Phillips.

Solar heating systems are being installed in 50 to 70 percent of all pools built by his company, estimates Bob Cunningham of Mission Valley Pools. “If you heat your pool to 80 degrees regularly, you could return your investment in a year and a half.”

High-tech pool equipment now allows homeowners to perform a magnitude of functions from a single control panel including turning on waterfalls, changing color of lights, or heating up the spa. “We live in a computer-generated, energy-efficient world — and the pool industry has caught up,” Cunningham observes.

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His company recently created an elaborate natural environment including a 5,000-square-foot pool for a Rancho Santa Fe homeowner overlooking a golf course. “It’s the biggest vanishing edge pool I’ve ever built,” Cunningham says. “It’s 85 feet long and also has 110 feet of curved vanishing edge. It looks more like a lake than a pool.”

Harry Thompson, owner of Torrey Pines Landscape Company, says his company is installing many stone and tile wall fountains with custom water features. “Water falls from different elevations,” he adds. “Some have built-in planters with ferns and ivy

Fountain design by Torrey Pines Landscape