

# PHOENIX HOME & GARDEN

*The Magazine of Southwest Living*

OCTOBER 2007

## Outdoor Living

www.phgmag.com \$4.95



0 74470 63104 0





**Left:** Galbraith & Paul designed this new collection of solution-dyed acrylic outdoor fabrics for Perennials. **Above:** With a Sunbrella fabric shade, this resin and iron lamp by Shady Lady can withstand the elements.

nishings, says conversations with client Tami Romano (now Mulmed's business partner) resulted in the creation of functional areas for the sports-minded Romano family. "We put in a putting green, we sunk the barbecue so it's the same height as the swim-up bar in the pool, and we created a covered pergola between the pool and the sport court, where the adults could relax while the kids were swimming or rollerblading," recounts Mulmed.

At another client's hillside home, the designer realized that an underutilized area screening pool equipment from view could do double-duty as an outdoor massage deck. By installing drapes and using composite material for the decking, Mulmed envisioned a space for the ultimate spa experience.

"Most of the time, people stand at the back door and scan the yard," Mulmed notes. "Sometimes they have great side yards, but because the eye doesn't see that from the back door, people miss it and its great potential to create usable, beautiful space for outdoor living."



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SunBriteTV offers a series of all-weather LCD televisions, including this 46-inch model. The set can be wall-mounted and comes with detachable speakers.

outdoor furnishings.”

The variety and luxury of today's outdoor fabrics are phenomenal, according to Mulmed. From velvets to chenilles to brocades, “Any kind of pattern you would see for inside is available for outdoor pieces,” the designer reports.

Stodola also has found this to be true. “I’m doing a project now with a chenille that is an outdoor synthetic, and it is fabulous,” he comments. “You can find great outdoor fabrics ranging from \$40 to \$200 a yard. And the new synthetic fabrics only need to be hosed off and you are ready for your next event.”

Once you have furniture, don't forget to add the finishing touches. Just as the right accessories make an indoor room pop, the same rule applies outdoors. At Southwest Gardener, outdoor rugs are a popular trend, points out co-owner Amy Carlile. She notes that the ones they carry are fade-resistant, easy to clean and durable. Her shop offers colorful rugs made of recycled polypropylene in Contemporary,

Asian and Southwestern designs. Sizes range from 4 by 6 feet to 6 by 9 feet.

### SHOW TIME

If you love being outdoors but don't want to miss the World Series, for example, Tom Wolf may be your new best friend. Wolf is a designer with AVAI Inc., a company specializing in integrating a home's security, data and audiovisual systems. He believes outdoor home theaters are gaining in popularity because of advances in weather-resistant television sets, good quality, low-cost video projectors and screens, and clever ways to hide speakers.

Want a nightclub in your backyard? AVAI already has done it, putting dedicated 15-inch, 500-watt subwoofers three feet into the ground at the home of one client and installing 4-foot-wide boulders to disguise them. Client Eric Crown's alfresco theater features a built-in TV/movie screen with a product called Blue Ocean Glass. “The screen is layered between two lay-

ers of Plexiglas®, which gives the screen depth,” says Wolf. “The homeowner can pull up a movie from his library, watch live satellite TV, or show digital photos he's loaded on his computer.”

And if it's hard to drag yourself out of the pool to catch a sports score, AVAI currently is constructing an audiovisual system in a two-level pool with a waterfall. Duck under the waterfall, and there is a 42-inch LCD TV in the grotto, complete with waterproof speakers. Or, if a pool remodel is in your plans, consider underwater speakers. That way you will never miss a grand slam.

From James Bond-like gadgets to the comfiest sofa on which to catch a snooze, products to enhance outdoor living continue to flood the market. Mulmed thinks she knows why: “We all keep waiting to go on that great vacation or getaway, and we think when we get there, we will finally relax. But if we can create that vacation getaway in our own backyard, that's a five-minute walk away. We all need a place where we can recharge.” ☐

See Sources.



Left: Complementary outdoor fabrics by Galbraith & Paul for Perennials—Vines-Cape Cod and Ripples-Cape Cod—cover the back and seat of this chair. Below: This Contemporary garden sculpture is hand-carved of limestone and is suitable in temperatures above 32 degrees.

