

Outdoor Kitchens

More and more homeowners are beginning to create outdoor kitchens in their backyards. While pools were once the focal point and often still are, outdoor kitchens are increasing in popularity. The weather in the north Texas area, especially spring & fall, is very conducive to being outdoors. Whether it is a large gathering of friends or a relaxing evening with the family, outdoor kitchens seem to serve as a natural gathering area that draws people together.

If you are considering an outdoor kitchen, it is important to do some thoughtful planning prior to coming up with a final design. Proper planning will save you from regret once the project is complete.

A well-designed outdoor kitchen should meet the cooking and entertaining needs of the homeowner. The possibilities are endless and sometimes overwhelming. Following are some considerations that might be helpful in planning an outdoor kitchen.

Placement in Yard

- Is there an area that works best? Many parties are indoor/outdoor gatherings—so typically outdoor kitchens are relatively close to the house.
- Will the area be shaded or will a shade structure be needed?

With the summers that we experience, shade is an important factor to consider, as is wind direction.

- Does an area of the yard have a better view or provide better privacy from neighbors than other areas?

Theme/Style

- Do you have a theme or style that you have seen that you like? It might be a good idea to go online or look at magazines that include outdoor kitchen areas. Incorporate some of these ideas in your outdoor kitchen.
- What is the architectural style of your home and landscaping? It is important that the style of your outdoor kitchen is consistent with the architectural style of your home.
- What types of material do you prefer for the structures—stone, travertine, tile, brick?
- What type of flooring do you prefer for the flooring—plain concrete, acid stained concrete, patterned concrete, travertine, brick, stone?

Entertaining Needs

- How many people do you typically entertain outdoors? What is the smallest size (such as family only) and the largest group? Perhaps your entertainment area can have a smaller area for the small group and an over flow area for the largest group.
- How many people need to be able to sit at any one time?

- What features will you need—fireplace, fire pit, bar, shade structure, etc.?
- What kind of furniture do you see in your outdoor area? And more importantly, how much space will the furniture require?

Equipment Needed

- How large of a grill do you need?
- What other appliances do you need? There are many available—rotisserie, smoker, side burner, warming drawers, refrigerator, ice maker, storage drawers, sink, trash receptacle, pizza oven, cutting board, towel rack, etc.

Miscellaneous

- Will you be outdoors on cool nights? If so, and outdoor fireplace or fire pit might be a good heat source.
- Will some of the entertaining be at night? If so, lighting is a very important consideration.

Like any project, proper planning and research will help ensure that your outdoor kitchen fits your needs.

Note:

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