

Build an Outdoor Grilling Arena

By JOE SZYNKOWSKI | Green Shoot Media

Who wants to be cooped up inside when the weather is warm? Build yourself an outdoor kitchen to entertain guests and enjoy the great outdoors.

With a little help from an expert local landscaper and a creative design, you might just wish you could spend the entire year cooking outside.

For those who enjoy gathering friends and family together to cook and relax in the backyard, an epic outdoor kitchen is a must. Before you begin your plans, consider the size of the group that typically attends your events. You will want to make sure there is ample space for those close to you to sit back and relax.

CHOOSING A SPACE

You'll need a backyard that offers plenty of space to renovate a grassy patch into a stellar new outdoor kitchen.

Perhaps you already have a deck constructed that would make the perfect area to entertain your guests. If your deck looks dated or worn, consider hiring a professional power-washing service to bring it back to life. Even brand new outdoor appliances cannot shine to their full potential on a weathered backdrop.

For those without a porch and a bare backyard, you have the job of finding a suitable area for a backyard kitchen.



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When looking for an area in your yard, here are some factors to consider:

Make sure the ground is level. This can sometimes be as easy as using sand as a base but may require a professional to run heavy equipment to create a suitable plot.

Try to build your outdoor

kitchen under plenty of shade. If you are unable to build under the comfort of trees consider building a roof, using a portable pavilion or installing umbrellas.

COUNTERTOPS AREN'T ONLY FOR INSIDE

An amazing outdoor kitchen

will feature a beautiful island or bar. Some popular materials used to construct this piece are wood and brick. Choosing wood can save you a lot of money, but brick will give your area a more rustic appearance.

The covering for your bar is where you can really make your kitchen stand out. If you

plan to incorporate your grill or smoker into your island area, try to pick a counter covering that pairs well with its color.

For instance, a granite countertop pops when used with stainless-steel appliances. The two create a reflective shine that will be a conversation piece at your next barbecue.



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REAL ESTATE 101



Know Before You Build

The focal point of your outdoor kitchen will likely be the grill. This isn't the place to cut costs, according to Angie's List, which puts the cost of a good grill at \$1,000 to \$15,000. Add other components, such as an outdoor refrigerator, electrical and plumbing, and the price can quickly get into the tens of thousands. One thing to consider when building your outdoor kitchen is that you might not get a good return on your investment. According to a 2013 survey by the National Association of Homebuilders, 31 percent of buyers say they don't want an outdoor kitchen.

HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

Lien: an encumbrance on property which acts as security for the payment of a debt or the performance of an obligation. A mortgage is a lien. A lender will want most, if not all, liens on a property removed before making a mortgage loan.

SOURCE: Columbia University

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