



MAKING A *Splash*

Pools, ponds and fountains can provide an elegant outdoor ambiance while also creating a backyard oasis for family fun and entertaining

By Sara Pearsaul Vice

One of nature's greatest gifts may well be the soothing sound and refreshing feel of flowing water, which may be why so many area homeowners are bringing water features into their backyards. From simple plug-in fountains to elaborate custom ponds and pools, water is making a bigger splash in west suburban landscapes this summer than ever before. In fact, many homeowners are incorporating design ideas they have picked up on their travels and enlisting local landscape architects and pool and pond builders to recreate them at home.



Photos courtesy of Rosebrook Pools

FABULOUS FOUNTAINS
Imagine your backyard looking like the Villa d'Este, the famed Renaissance estate outside of Rome, which features a fountain at every turn, including one where you can walk behind the waterfall and not get wet. Although the renowned masterpiece of garden design boasts fountains on a truly grand scale, many of the same design principles are being realized in suburban landscapes.

At Rosebrook Pools, the staff sees a lot of creativity among their customers in the western suburbs when it comes to creating unique water features. One client took components from all his favorite resorts, which Rosebrook then incorporated into his pool design. Laminar-flow fountains, which appear as solid tubes of water, are particularly popular as a pool feature, illuminated with LED lights to create light shows at night.

According to Mike Murillo, sales director of Barrington Pools, one of their clients visited the Bellagio in Las Vegas and wanted to bring their over-the-top fountains into his own backyard, complete with music and dancing lights. Murillo often gets requests to incorporate everything a homeowner likes into one giant water feature, such as a waterfall with a grotto behind, which flows into a spa and then into a pool. The days of the simple

rectangular pool seem to be fading, as popular new concepts such as zero-edge pools take their place.

For those whose budget is a bit smaller than estate size, elegant DIY fountains are available at garden centers such as Heinz Brothers in St. Charles, The Growing Place in Aurora and Naperville, and the Planter's Palette in Winfield. Diana Stoll, retail manager for the Planter's Palette, says that demand for fountains is so strong that they had to re-order twice at the beginning of the growing season. "The traditional look is what is really selling," she observes. Stoll notes that many people are choosing the larger, three-tier fountains this year, which run \$600 and up, as opposed to the smaller, less-expensive fountains that have been popular in the past.

"A lot of fountains have great LED lights, which are beautiful," she says. The fountain comes in pieces so you can assemble it at home yourself. All you need is an outdoor electrical supply. You don't even need an ongoing water supply, as you just add water at the start. Then the water recirculates and only needs to be refreshed as it evaporates.

PRODIGIOUS PONDS

If anyone is personally responsible for promoting water features and ponds in suburban backyards, it must be Greg



Photos courtesy of Aquascapes

Though pools and ponds provide intrinsically different types of ambiance, both can serve as a relaxing backyard escape.