



**HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION**  
of Dayton

## **Outdoor Rooms Rank High on Consumer Lists**

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Now that we are moving quickly into prime outdoor living season, and while laundry rooms still rank the highest in essential features for new homes, the desire for more outdoor living space is not far behind. According to research from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), a front porch ranks fifth, rear deck sixth and rear patio and fenced yard tenth and eleventh on the “must have” list of design and other features that influence new home purchasing decisions.

Further, a recent survey from a national energy research council revealed that consumers across the country are spending more time at home and more time living in outdoor “rooms.” Based in Washington, D.C., the council is a member of the National Council of the Housing Industry (NCHI) — the Supplier 100 of NAHB.

“Building or renovating outdoor rooms illustrates our need to relax and reconnect with family and friends,” said Martha Baker, best-selling author of *The Outdoor Living Room: Stylish Ideas for Porches, Patios and Pools*. “Outdoor rooms increase our quality of life while also increasing a home’s value.

Among the survey results:

- Half of all American homeowners (50 percent) said that they are spending more time at home than they were five years ago.
- Eighty percent said it is important to have an outdoor living space where they can relax and entertain.
- Thirty-five percent said they had a finished outdoor room, and 34 percent said they

were planning to design one in the next one to two years.

- Homeowners identified as their most important reasons for adding or remodeling an outdoor room: creating a space to relax (89 percent); spending more time outside (87 percent); adding value to a home (79 percent); extending a home's living space (78 percent); and creating a space to entertain (74 percent).
- In outfitting an outdoor room, most homeowners said that they were likely to include: outdoor lighting units (94 percent); a gas grill (86 percent); an outdoor fireplace or pit (67 percent); and patio heaters (53 percent).

Citing findings that well-designed outdoor spaces return more than 100 percent of their cost when a home is sold, the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association recommends these five products:

- Commercial-style grills. Most grill owners use natural gas or propane . The grills heat up and cool down quickly, making them safe and efficient, and there is no ash or dust.
- Gas hearths offer a cozy touch and are easy to install. They include a range of fireplaces, gas logs and gas campfires.
- Patio heaters extend the use of an outdoor room into the cooler months. Most models include adjustable temperature controls and safety features, and many are equipped with lights.
- Outdoor lighting fixtures and lamps are available in portable, wall-mounted and post-mounted styles, and are easy to use in remote locations such as outdoor rooms.

Before you start to plan for your new home or any remodeling project to create an inviting and relaxing outdoor living space, you may want to visit the 2008 Homearama to see, feel and experience four beautiful examples of well done elaborate outdoor living spaces. These impressive spaces will help you arrange the features and sense the proper scale for your outdoor living space.

