

BACKYARD RENEWAL

MAKING THE MOST OF A SMALL SPACE



A combination open-air bar and kitchen space with a barbecue, lounge area and wooden canopy.

Photos courtesy The Pool Craft Company Ltd.

There has been a dramatic shift in how homeowners perceive their backyard. Today, it is considered an extension of the house, with a swimming pool becoming an integral part of the landscape.

This is what the owners of a new home in Newmarket, Ont., wanted when they hired The Pool Craft Company Ltd., of Richmond Hill, Ont., to build a pool and landscape their yard.

The client debated between buying a cottage in Muskoka or transforming their backyard into an aquatic oasis—a cozy environment, with all the creature comforts, where they could relax and entertain. Considering the time and expense of travelling back and forth to a cottage, along with their children's weekend and evening sports commitments, the homeowners ultimately decided investing in their backyard was the best option for their active lifestyle.

BIG PLANS

The owners had an extensive list of architectural and design elements they wanted to add to their redesigned backyard, including a custom cabana, spill-over spa, outdoor shower and kitchen and extensive landscaping. Unfortunately, all of these features had to be completed in a relatively small area, thanks to a 15.2-m (50-ft) buffer zone in the yard, where no construction could take place. Every project has its challenges, but this particular undertaking was more difficult than most due to this restricted space.

Homeowners typically have a great deal of difficulty envisioning a pool in their backyard and rely heavily on their pool builder for guidance and direction. In fact, one of the biggest challenges of presenting a pool/landscape project to a customer is providing those consultations. For this reason, it is customary to spend a great deal of time exploring all options, in order to optimize the existing space.

After several discussions with Pool Craft about various pool shapes and sizes, the client settled on a 4.8 by 10.3-m (16 by 34-ft) 'Sierra' (free-form) vinyl-lined pool, with 1.8-m (6-ft) grey granite in-wall steps.

FALLING WATER

A 2.3-m (92-in.) spill-over spa (in grey, to match the in-wall steps and composite deck) was also included in the backyard redesign. It sends a gentle stream of water into the pool below, while three deck jets spray arcs of water to create a dramatic effect.

Over a period of six weeks, the pool and landscaping were finished, with enough space left over for a lawn, cobblestone patio and elevated deck, suitable for dining, at the rear of the house.

Additional features include a combination open-air bar and kitchen space, with a built-in barbecue. A nearby lounge area, sheltered by a large wooden canopy with evergreen trees, plants and accent rocks, provides the finishing touch to the property. ■



With 12 years experience, Jason Mitchell is the president of The Pool Craft Company Ltd., in Richmond Hill, Ont., a pool construction and landscaping business. For more information, visit www.poolcraft.ca.

The site included a 15.2-m (50-ft) buffer zone.

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