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# CREATING THE **PERFECT OUTDOOR** *Kitchen*

The kitchen continues to be one of the best ways to increase a home's value, but I don't mean kitchens in their traditional form. A real estate analysis revealed that homes with outdoor kitchens sold for 25% more than expected (source: Zillow, 2017). As modern homes get smaller in square footage, homeowners are increasingly focusing their

attentions on the outdoors to make the most of every inch of their living space - inside and out. Recently, the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) uncovered what's trending in outdoor kitchen design. Here are some top trends, and how to achieve them.



## PROFESSIONAL HELP

The NKBA report reveals that the vast majority of homeowners (84%) use professional installers for at least part of their outdoor kitchen installation. 64% of homeowners used a designer, 41% used a landscape or garden architect/specialist, while 10% used an architect. Take a cue, and consider working with an expert from the get-go. A kitchen addition involves many moving parts. Add the outdoor element to an already complicated renovation and you can be sure that there will be lots to think about, from functionality and durability to style.

**Designer Find:** A company that specializes in kitchens is worth its weight in gold. Pure Kitchens Inc., based in the Greater Toronto Area, has the knowledge and experience to master any kitchen design, indoors or out, specializing in custom options. Once you have a professional and a plan, now comes the fun part - choosing your features and finishes. Here are some of my design favourites.

## GET BACK TO NATURE

Organic materials are great for outdoor applications, blurring the line between man and nature. But does stone weigh heavily on your mind and budget? Stone veneer is a more economical solution with the same earthy edge; a great finishing option for feature walls, fireplaces and water features. EARTH Coverings offers a variety of stone veneer styles at a range of price points. Did you know? When it comes to outdoor countertops, 57% of homeowners choose stone (source: NKBA).

## STORAGE RULES

Cabinets and storage are key to a well-functioning kitchen, indoors or out. In fact, most outdoor kitchens incorporate built-in storage or cabinets today. Along with countertops, cabinets are what take your space from “barbecue area” to bona fide “outdoor Kitchen,” whether your outdoors are a balcony, a backyard deck or overlooking the lake. ▶







## TOOLS & TOYS

The modern outdoor kitchen is more than the barbecue and folding chairs that inspired it. Much like their indoor counterparts, outdoor chefs are all about their appliances. Most outdoor kitchens feature grills with extra burners, more often now seeing warming racks, and rotisserie. Beyond the barbecue, consider adding a pizza oven or a meat smoker. If these little extras have your mouth watering, fear not as this particular trend also covers liquid refreshments. Adding now into outdoor kitchens are weather proof refrigerators, wine refrigerator, and ice maker, and a beer tap/dispenser.

The only thing better in a home than a really fabulous kitchen, is two really fabulous kitchens! And if you have the luxury of a place with some workable outdoor space, consider enhancing your home - and your life - with an alfresco culinary centre. You could well find yourself indulging in the summer-time staple of fresh air the sweet smoke of the grill on a frosty February day. ♦



**SARA BEDERMAN** is the Principal Designer for Sara Bederman Design. For over a decade this Toronto bespoke design firm has become known for creating stylish, thoughtfully curated and livable interiors. The firm provides residential design services for projects of all sizes. Sara Bederman Design works throughout Toronto, GTA, and beyond.

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