



# get grilling

by JENNIFER FRIEDBERG

**AND ROASTING, SMOKING, BRAISING AND BAKING IN AN OUTDOOR KITCHEN COMPLETE WITH PROFESSIONAL-GRADE APPLIANCES**

**Back yards aren't just for barbecue grills anymore.**

**ABOVE:** A reflection of your cooking skills is the professional Lynx Outdoor Kitchen featuring a 42-inch grill with ProSear infrared technology, cast brass burners, warming drawer, access doors, double side burner with prep center, storage drawers, Cocktail Pro and outdoor refrigerator and ice machine. Photo courtesy Lynx Professional Grills. Find Lynx products at Barbeques Galore and The Fireplace Man.

While outdoor cooking is an age-old method enjoyed for its ease, flavor and the camaraderie it creates, it has gone upscale in recent years with outdoor kitchens soaring in popularity.

Seeking to maximize the square footage of their homes, more people are transforming the simple plot of grass in the back yard into living space — albeit space with fresh air.

## **A COOKIN' BUSINESS**

Pantelis "Pete" A. Georgiadis, president of Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet, says he has seen the growth as outdoor kitchens went from 5 percent of his business four years ago to about 60 percent in 2007.

People are entertaining more at home, he says, and they're finding it's more fun to be outdoors. When entertaining outdoors, guests can become part of the cooking process and the cooking itself becomes an event, as opposed to preparing a meal before people come over. Also, the cleanup can be easier, and being outdoors is more like taking a vacation than having a dinner party.

"People want to have a retreat, they want to get away from the busyness of day-to-day life," Georgiadis says. "They want to come home and be able to relax outdoors, cook dinner and have fun. As a friend of mine says, 'Let's go out to eat, but in our yard.'"

Pat Victory, owner of Victory Outdoor, says he sees the same thing.

"People are trying to enjoy their homes more and finding more ways to enjoy what they have at home," he says. *(Continued on Page 72)*

## get grilling



“When I started, I thought I was going to be selling \$5,000 outdoor kitchens, but it’s becoming extremely popular,” Victory says, adding that \$5,000 is now his starting price.

### THE BASICS

Outdoor kitchens usually begin with a grill and/or smoker at the basic level and also include a refrigeration unit, ice-maker, sink, storage and counter space. From there, the possibilities are endless.

“Anything you can imagine for inside we can put outside,” Victory says.

And there are some items that work better outdoors anyway, like Victory’s fire pits, which can be set into the middle of countertops or on the end of a bar with seating all around to cook s’mores or anything on skewers.

Prices for complete outdoor kitchens can range from \$5,000 to \$150,000, depending on the products used and the extras.

Mike Logan, owner of Texas Pit Crafters, says most people want the kitchen to blend in with their surroundings and often choose brick, stucco or stone facades to match their house or pool.

“We build outdoor kitchens for people in all different sizes of homes,” Logan says. “I think it really is a function of their interest in cooking outside — for a lot of folks that’s the primary place they cook.”

Unlike some home additions, Logan says outdoor kitchens typically hold up as a solid investment.

*(Continued on Page 74)*



**ABOVE:** It’s always pizza time with your own pizza oven, here built with a kit ordered through Fogazzo Wood Fired Ovens & BBQs.

**LEFT:** You’ll find no such thing as too many cooks in this spacious and well-equipped kitchen designed and built by Texas Sales & Marketing Inc. and including a round Cook-N-Dine cooktop/prep area in the foreground. Photo courtesy Cook-N-Dine

## get grilling



**ABOVE:** Gather 'round this roomy gourmet kitchen by Victory Outdoor, complete with a mesmerizing fire pit. Photo courtesy Calise Outdoor Kitchens

### TOP OF PAGE:

The GE Monogram Outdoor Cooking Center comes with three grill burners, rotisserie, smoker and rack. Complete your center with a GE Monogram outdoor/indoor refrigerator module, shown at the far right. Local GE Monogram dealers include Gulf & Basco, K&N Builders Sales and Kiva Kitchen & Bath on Southwest Freeway .

“If you put a \$5,000 or \$10,000 outdoor kitchen into your back yard, you’re going to get that back pretty much dollar for dollar,” Logan says.

### GO FOR THE GUSTO

After selecting a grill type, cabinets and amenities such as dishwashers and garbage disposals, which typically come in stainless steel for its weatherproof ability, and countertops can complete the look.

The cooking and prep surfaces come in a range of materials including granite, porcelain tile, limestone and finished concrete.

After the basic components, extras range from very cool to who knew?

Texas Pit Crafters has a stainless steel ice chest that drops into a countertop, pullout trashcan and moisture resistant pantry. Victory offers a stainless steel tiki torch, in-drawer paper towel dispenser and outdoor blender constructed to withstand the elements. Kalamazoo add-ons include wok side burners, lobster and crab boils, countertop pizza ovens, warming drawers, wine chillers, dual keg taps and martini glass chillers.

With only a few months left before the sweltering Houston summer , it might be time to turn your back yard into a luxurious, intimate gathering space — and time to send out the invitations.

*(Continued on Page 76)*

## get grilling



## resources

**BARBEQUES GALORE**  
Multiple locations  
www.bbqgalore.com

**BAYOU CITY INC.**  
8684 Louetta  
281.655.0100  
www.bayoucitybackyards.com

**C&D HARDWARE**  
314 E. 11th St.  
713.861.3551  
www.canddhardware.com

**CHENE INTERIORS**  
267 Sawdust  
The Woodlands  
281.292.7300

**THE FIREPLACE MAN**  
5902 Southwest Freeway  
713.785.8399  
www.thefireplaceman.com

**FACTORY BUILDER STORES**  
4242 Richmond  
713.572.4242  
8700 Fallbrook  
281.477.6464  
www.factorybuilderstores.com

**PARAGON POOLS**  
713.869.SWIM (7946)  
www.paragonpool.com

**PITTS & SPITTS**  
10016 East Texas Freeway  
281.987.3474  
www.pittsandspirits.com

**TEXAS PIT CRAFTERS**  
31909 Decker  
Industrial Circle  
281.356.3304  
www.texaspitcrafters.com

**TEXAS SALES & MARKETING INC.**  
4747 Langfield Road  
713.460.2400  
www.tsm.com

**VICTORY OUTDOOR**  
281.797.3427  
www.victoryoutdoor.com

**LEFT:** An outdoor kitchen is a perfect way to extend an afternoon of swimming into a full day of outdoor fun — with great-tasting burgers, hot dogs and more. Photo courtesy Paragon Pools

# PITTS & SPITTS



We build solid Custom stainless steel Smoker Pits, Charcoal Grills, Gas Grills and other accessories for the built-in Outdoor Kitchen Application. We can tailor any of our products to accommodate your particular cooking style and needs.

**Come Visit Our Showroom in Houston**

10016 Eastex Frwy, Houston, TX 77093  
(281) 987-3474 • [www.pittsandspitts.com](http://www.pittsandspitts.com)

## The Garden Gate

*Classical Home and Garden Ornamentation*



**Textiles, Ceramics & Tableware From Europe**

**From Provence, France, handmade, signed ceramic urns and tables.**

5122 Morningside • Houston, TX 77005  
713-528-2654 • Fax 713-528-0074  
[www.gardengateco.com](http://www.gardengateco.com)