

PINNACLE AWARDS WINNERS / HIGH-END AMENITIES

# LUXURY POOLS

THE PREMIER OUTDOOR LIVING PUBLICATION  
FALL/WINTER 2023

## + OUTDOOR LIVING

# 37

ELITE  
POOLS AND  
OUTDOOR  
SPACES



ELEVATE  
YOUR  
BACKYARD  
FUN  
POOLS  
AND SPAS  
FOR SMALL  
SPACES



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LUXURY POOLS  
+ OUTDOOR LIVING

FALL/WINTER 2023

# CONTENTS

Volume 21, Number 2  
DEPARTMENTS

The inspiring winners of  
this year's Pinnacle Awards.  
BY MELISSA C. GILLESPIE  
Page 54



LUXURY POOLS + OUTDOOR LIVING  
PINNACLE  
AWARDS  
2023

54

## INSIDER

14 / **Urban Elevation**  
The inspiration for the House's  
luxury pool deck experience.  
BY MELISSA C. GILLESPIE

### WISH LIST

16 / **Entertaining Outdoors**  
Five outdoor seating sets  
to elevate fall entertaining.  
STYLED BY MELISSA C. GILLESPIE

18 / **Fun Finds for Fall**  
Five handpicked accessories and  
designs for a perfect chilly evening.  
STYLED BY MELISSA C. GILLESPIE

### LP LOVES

20 / **Elevate Your Outdoor Fun**  
Ledge Lounger's games transform  
your backyard into a hub of laughter  
and competition.  
BY MELISSA C. GILLESPIE

22 / **The Best Railing You'll  
Never See**  
Elevate the overall ambience and  
experience of your outdoor space.  
BY MELISSA C. GILLESPIE

### FACES

24 / **Timeless Designs**  
Enhancing outdoor spaces with  
custom hardscapes by System Pavers.  
BY NANCY A. RUHLING

### IN-DEPTH

30 / **Fire Features: The Light of  
the Party**  
From fire pits to heaters, they  
illuminate and warm the scene in style.  
BY NANCY A. RUHLING

## FEATURES

38 / **Taking a Deep Dive on  
High-End Elements**  
Pools are being decked out in  
everything from climbing walls  
and sculptural slides to viewing  
windows.  
BY NANCY A. RUHLING

44 / **Compact Oasis**  
Embracing the versatility,  
creativity, and ease of upkeep in  
small pools and spas.  
BY MARY GRAUERHOLZ

48 / **Fun in the Sun**  
Adding outdoor play areas,  
from pickleball to bocce to golf,  
can add an extra layer of fun to  
your backyard and pool area.  
BY ALEXANDRA PECCI



### In Every Issue

10  
EDITOR'S NOTE  
12  
LUXURYPOLLS.COM  
136  
LAST LOOK

### ON THE COVER

This award-winning outdoor  
living space by DDL A Design  
Landscape Architecture  
seamlessly blends the  
elegance of a transitional  
modern home with the natural  
contours of the sloped terrain.  
Page 55  
Photograph by  
Jeremiah Dearinger,  
Driven Media

# FEATURES

## TAKING A DEEP DIVE ON HIGH-END ELEMENTS

Pools are being decked out in everything from climbing walls and sculptural slides to viewing windows.

BY NANCY A. RUHLING

A water column in a Ryan Hughes Design Build poolscape is set in the cantilevered roof of a pavilion.

→ Whether it's a multi-colored illuminated mosaic, a stone grotto, or a fun feature like a slide or climbing wall, custom is the biggest trend in poolscape design.

One-of-a-kind over-the-top features are design elements that add drama, says Ryan Hughes, founder and creative director of the Tampa, Florida-based design-build firm that bears his name. "In each of our projects, we add what we consider a 'wow' factor," he says.

These "wow" factors include a custom grotto made of boulders that the client had collected during trips around the globe.

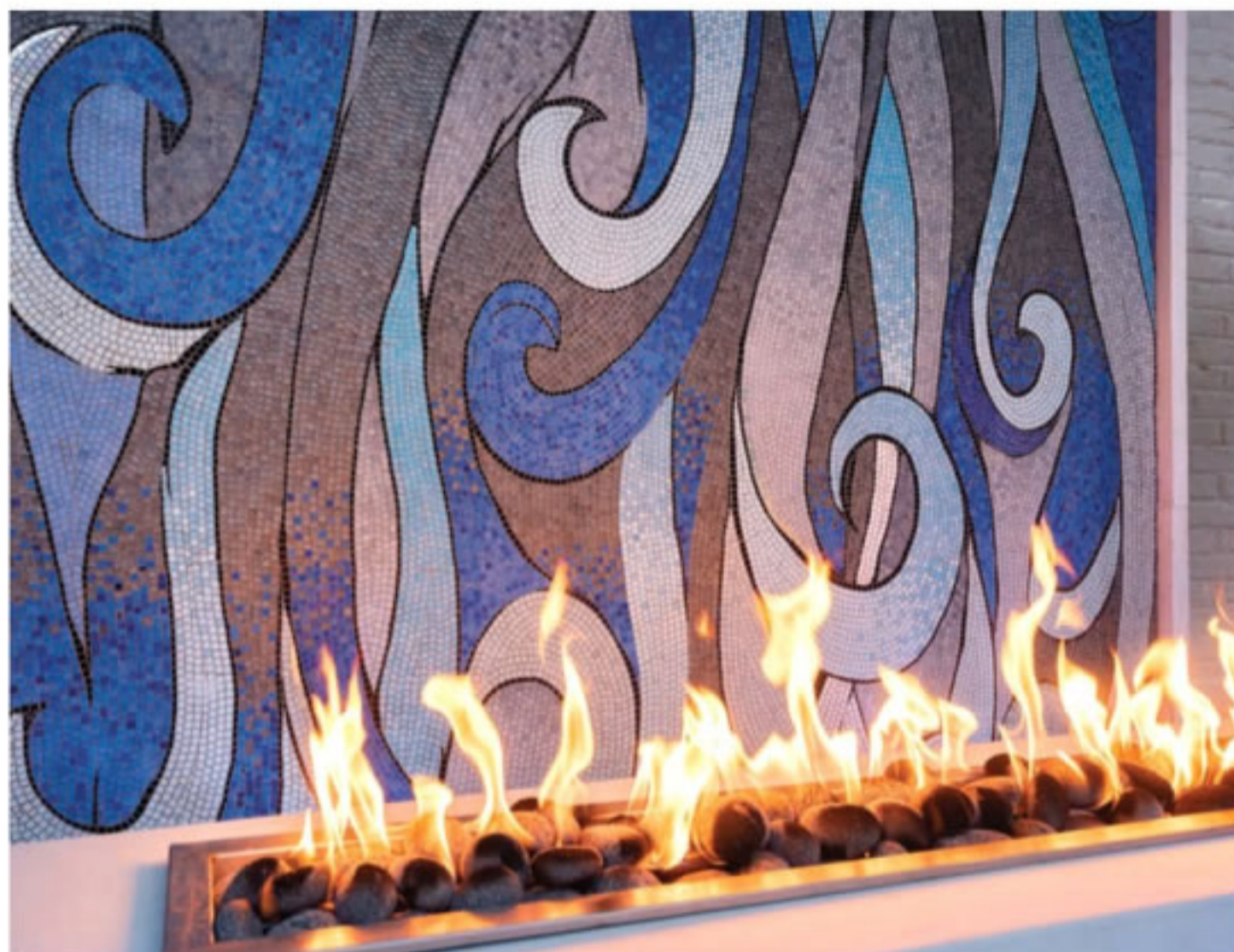
In another project that features five bodies of water and several levels of outdoor living spaces, Ryan Hughes Design Build was called upon to create a water column that fuses engineering and eye appeal.

The illuminated column of water originates from a cantilevered pavilion roof and plunges into the winding river below, an effect, Hughes says, that "makes a major aqua statement. This column pushes 550 gallons of water per minute as it falls to the river."

To create the feel of a personalized resort for another poolscape, Ryan Hughes Design Build used reflective glass tile on the vanishing-edge spa and the large multi-directional pool and on a series of custom wall mosaics that incorporate moving water and dancing fire motifs.

Bespoke features such as vanishing-edge spas, sunken fire pits, intimate grottos, or gathering pavilions, waterfalls, intra-pool windows and sun-lounging shelves create endless possibilities for poolscape.

"A trend we are seeing is as outdoor spaces grow in size, there is more demand and need for pool and water elements to flow between multiple levels," Hughes says. "No longer is a pool one flat rectangle – the design moves with the available space."



**MAKING THE POOL ARTISTIC,  
ONE TILE AT A TIME**

Swimming pools, the stars of the outdoor living space, have become art objects in and of themselves, enhancing the house's architecture.

Elaborate glass-tile mosaics at the bottom of the pool are transforming them to water art that can be seen and enjoyed even after the last cocktail has been served at the swim-up bar.

"People want a living body of water and something more than a pool to look at when they are inside their home," says Ray Corral, the founder/owner of Florida-based Mosaicist, an award-winning company that specializes in the design, manufacture, and installation of glass tiles in pools all over the globe. "This is really trending – the request for designs in the bottom of pools has increased 25 percent this year alone."

The idea is eye-catching and attractive, he adds, because "most people spend more time looking at their pool than they do being in it."

Typically, light-color designs, generally in hues of blue, are set against darker blue backgrounds to make them contrast and more visible.

"We are currently installing a very large pool art design in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, however, where this was reversed – it's the design that's darker, but this is not common," he says.

The most requested color, he adds, is Sea Marine, which he describes as "a dark blue that's timeless and marine rich and has a lush one-of-a-kind, creamy color."

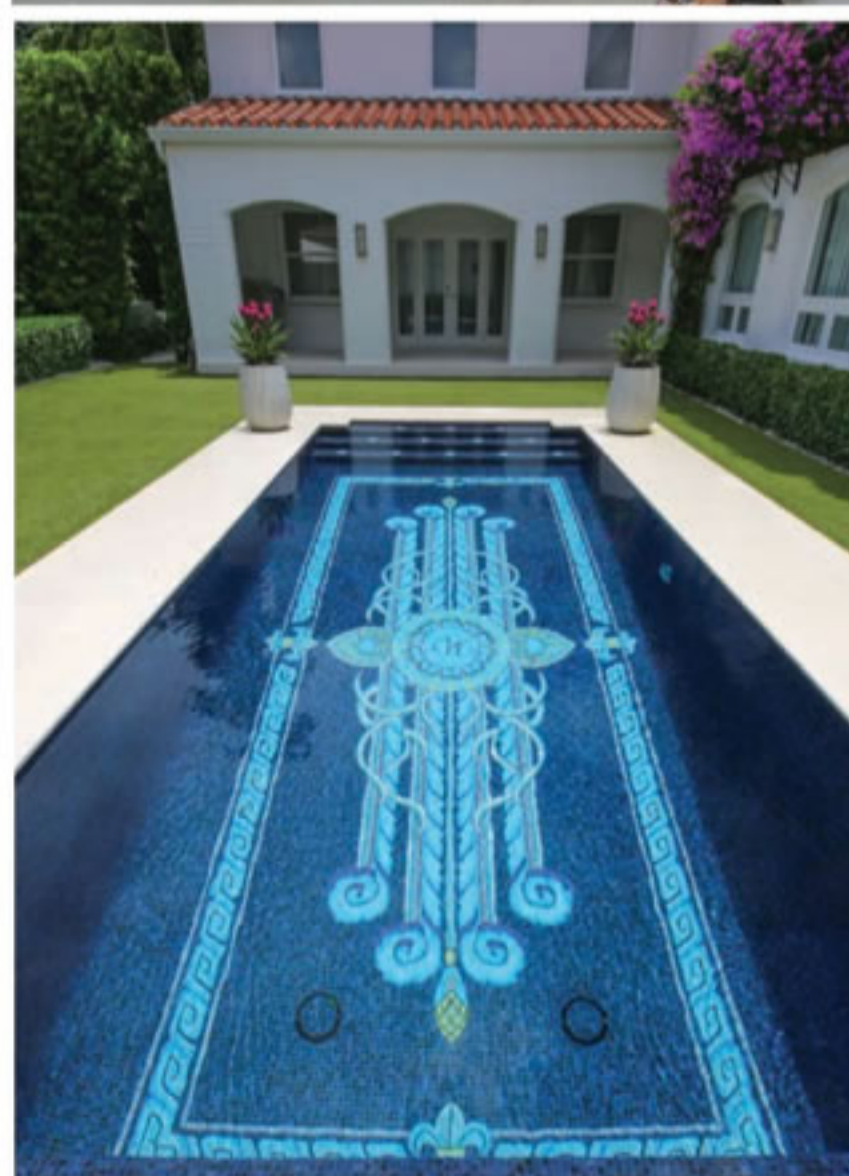
Mosaicist's bottom-of-the-pool murals are designed to fit the architecture of the

Top, In this Ryan Hughes Design Build project, a fire feature dances in front of a mosaic made of reflective glass tiles.

Bottom, Ryan Hughes Design Build created this sunken fire lounge, a custom poolscape feature.



Creating elaborate art murals on the bottoms of pools, such as those by Mosaicist, is becoming more popular.



house, lead times, and the budget.

"The cost of the mosaics increases with the number of strikes or cuts made," Corral says, "but we have come up with a formula that's unique to pools and the pool industry that doesn't break the bank."

**SLIDING INTO SCULPTURE**

Like swimming pools, slides are becoming a key sculptural element in the backyard landscape.

The UK-based Splinterworks, which creates bespoke slides that are fun as well as beautiful, has taken them to a new level.

"Our clients want to have pieces that reflect their sense of style and personality," says Miles Hartwell, who founded the company in 2009 with Matt Withington. "They want unique products that elevate the everyday, that have an

artistic sensibility, and that look good year-round."

Adds Withington, "They are looking for a timeless style that doesn't age with trends; this comes with investing in pieces that have design integrity and a high quality of workmanship."

To that end, Splinterworks' slides, which are outfitted with proprietary water-cooling systems, are site-specific, creating striking sculptural shapes that can even appear to defy gravity.

In a recent project, the company designed and installed a slide on a steep slope that dominated the site.

"We used this to our advantage and harnessed the incline to create a super-fun ride that twists and turns through a steep boulder garden, snaking down the garden into a magnificent indoor-outdoor pool," Withington says.

Splinterworks' new sister brand,



Splinterworks' Vertex in autumn.

Below, Cascade, by Splinterworks, is a key sculptural - and fun element - for the pool.



Poolside Adventures created this climbing wall with translucent panels that make it virtually invisible.



Poolside Adventures created this climbing wall in Las Vegas to complement a mosaic on a pool house. Project Team: Landscape Architect: Cloonan Design Services; Pool Contractor: High-Tech Pools;

Downtime, brings style at a lower price point. The slides have the same striking aesthetic as Splinterworks' custom works, but they come in only one size (the buyer, though, does get to choose from a left or a right turn on the end).

"We are excited about this because, for the first time, we have been able to create slides in beautiful colors that will reach more homes, spreading the fun but keeping pools stylish," Hartwell says.

**CLIMBING WALLS COMBINE ART AND ATHLETICS**

Poolside climbing walls that combine aesthetics with athletics are another amenity that is gaining traction among all age groups of water lovers.

Noting that climbing is now a featured sport in the Olympics, Russell Moy, CEO of the climbing wall manufacturer Poolside Adventures, says that there's been "explosive growth" in the sport in the last decade that has carried over to the pool.

The company's AquaClimb Luxe, its most custom product, is designed to incorporate a jumping platform and/or a

zipline/rope swing.

When fitted with thermoformed clear or translucent blue panels that reflect and are enhanced by the pool water, the walls look like modern art.

"Our residential clients want a structure and climbing profile unique to the pool setting," he says. "They want a wall that can be functional and challenging for multiple ages and varying skill levels and at the same time looks cool and not out of place with the pool's architecture and landscaping."

For a client in Las Vegas, Poolside Adventures designed an AquaClimb Luxe climbing wall that complements a Romanesque pool house decorated with a mosaic mural; it has a zipline/rope swing attached for a 20-foot drop into the pool.

Poolside Adventures is working on incorporating LED lighting systems into its Luxe walls and is developing a climbing structure using a net system that is suspended six to 10 feet over the width of the pool to provide the ultimate water adventure. [aquaclimb.com](http://aquaclimb.com), [mosaicist.com](http://mosaicist.com), [ryanhughesdesign.com](http://ryanhughesdesign.com), [splinterworks.com](http://splinterworks.com)



Poolside Adventures' AquaZip 'N combines a zipline with rope swinging.



### SLEEK INFINITY

This minimalist design in Guatemala boasts a 90-degree vanishing edge paired with a zero edge deck. It features an attached spa and a gentle shallow water entry, complemented by wall-to-wall steps. The pool's interior, adorned with natural cut rock, seamlessly mirrors the surrounding lake.

**Project By**  
Watermania S. A.



### RIVERSIDE RETREAT

This innovative design features a perimeter overflow pool, DMX lighting that can sync to music, and a floating fire feature. The pool seamlessly integrates with the house and pool house, and its infinity edge design makes the pool feel like an extension of the river into the backyard.

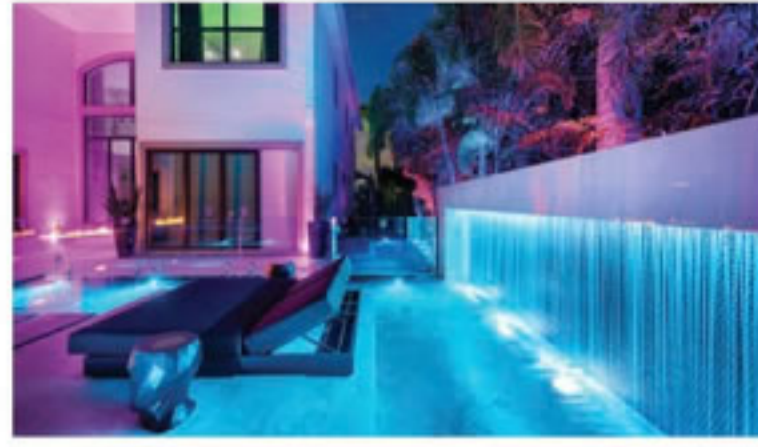
**Project Team**  
Steele's Signature Pools



### MARQUEE

Masterful craftsmanship defines this space, from the pool to the pergola-covered fire lounge. Multi-level entertainment areas blend features seamlessly, including a sunken kitchen with a marble waterfall island and cutting-edge appliances, complemented by poolside bar seating. While classically designed, the project stands out with inventive landscaping and lighting.

**Project By**  
Ryan Hughes Design



**LIGHT UP THE NIGHT**

Inspired by a Miami Beach day club, the lighting features are the stars of the show. From the rain wall to the putting green to the perimeter overflowing fire, this custom project by Ike's Carter Pools truly lights up the night.

**Project by**  
Ike's Carter Pools

**CARMEL ESTATE MARVEL**

Innovative engineering and design underpins the project's five water features. This complex masterpiece by Ryan Hughes Design is equipped with all the elements of a backyard resort, including a 200-foot lazy river.

**Project Team**  
Aquatic Glazing International  
Mosaicist  
PAL Lighting  
Ryan Hughes Design



**AQUATIC GRANDEUR**

This striking design has an infinity edge on two sides and deck-to-water level on the other two sides, all flowing into a catch pool. The elevated spa has a four-sided infinity edge with an all-tile interior.

**Project Team**  
Cloonan Design Services  
High-Tech Pools Inc

**WATERFRONT WONDER**

This energy efficient pool has multiple custom finishes—from custom granite coping stone to the all-tile spa with a custom plexiglass wall. The project is further defined by the architecture and craftsmanship of the surrounding building.

**Project By**  
KrisCo Pools  
Paul Ogilvy Construction  
Roger Katz & Associates



**MOLASSES CREEK MODERN**

Beautiful, modern, and energy efficient, this design incorporates all LED lighting, energy efficient pumps, heaters by Hayward, and utilizes UV sanitizers and a PCC 2000 Paramount in-floor cleaning system.

**Project Team**  
 Atkinson Pools  
 Brakish Builders  
 Ink and Moss  
 Three Rivers Engineering



**INTRACOASTAL ESTATE**

Specifically designed for the complete indoor/outdoor living experience, the designers utilized the covered veranda to provide a transition between the indoor space and the outdoor entertainment area.

**Project Team**  
 Aron Saxon Interior Design  
 KWD Landscape Architecture  
 Paskowski Construction



**IN-POOL ENTERTAINMENT**

This project includes two pools with spas and tanning ledges; both raised and opposite each other and spilling into the main pool body. The design allows for adult and kids' play areas, including swim up bars and volleyball.

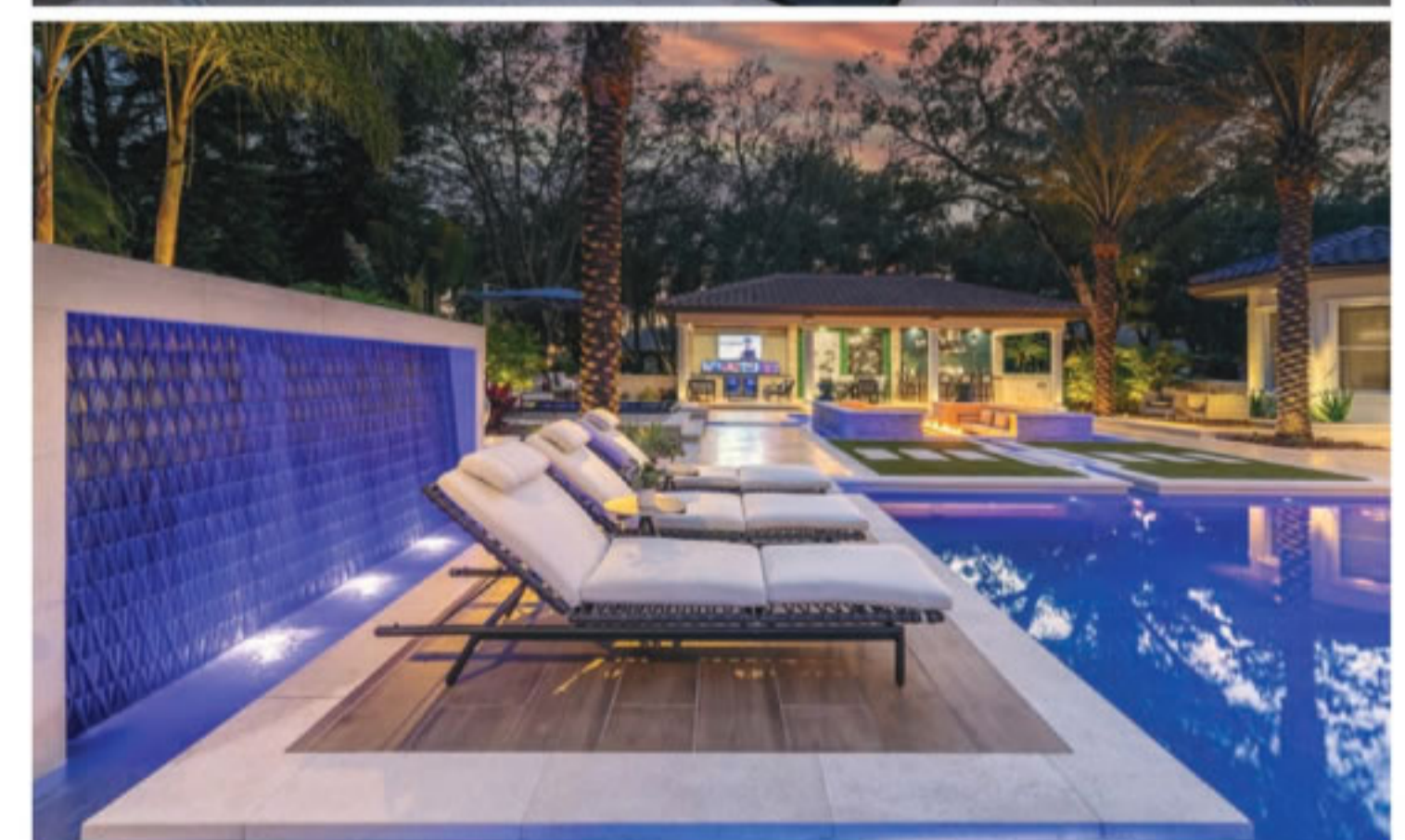
**Project Team**  
 Blankenship Custom Homes, Inc.  
 Old North State Landscape Development, Inc.



**AVANT-GARDE**

Each element within this project incorporates innovation of design and technological engineering for energy efficiency in the pool to rain walls, outdoor kitchen elements to state-of-the-art lighting.

**Project By**  
 All Custom Stone & Tile  
 Aquatic Glazing International  
 Mosaicist  
 Ryan Hughes Design



# Artistry of Space

RYAN HUGHES DESIGN

➔ Offering a fresh new perspective on outdoor living and the spaces that accommodate it, Ryan Hughes Design is a second-generation company reborn for the 21st century. Ryan Hughes and his team's work can be found in intimate to over-the-top outdoor living spaces and award-winning swimming pools across the United States and Canada.

Among the firm's specialties is the ability to capture a client's unique vision. By creating intimate settings that fit beautifully with the surrounding environs, Ryan Hughes has become known for what he terms "artistry of space." Signature

design elements include state-of-the-art water and fire features, custom stonework, and sophisticated landscape plantings—all of which blend together to brilliant effect.

From Hughes signature space-conscious but technology rich environs to multi-million-dollar outdoor living complexes, the term unique is always an understatement. From 10,000 square feet of aqua-centered opulence to luxe, but space limited, man-made beach retreats, creativity and structural complexity are always included. Ryan Hughes has become known for the finest in pools

and spas, sight lines and engineering, artwork and artistry. In the skilled hands of his team, each project comes together in diverse and inspired ways worthy of industry awards and inclusion in international design books.

Offering the services of a licensed pool contractor, as well as landscape design and architectural expertise, the Ryan Hughes team specializes in pool engineering, pool construction and outdoor living space management as well as completing the design with luxury casual furnishings.

With keen insight into the latest and most credible element and features, Ryan Hughes Design delivers to their clients harmonious, logical and aesthetically pleasing extensions of their homes.

With years of collective design-build experience, the firm delivers advanced technical knowledge coupled with top-of-the-line automation systems, progressive outdoor lighting, and advanced smart technology. The team is skilled at creating dynamic outdoor kitchens to engineered marvels in state-of-the-art water movement and enjoyment.

Ryan Hughes also offers his unique pool and outdoor living designs as well as engineering and construction consultation services through collaborative associations with select outdoor living architects.

In short, for the homeowner looking for the ultimate outdoor living space, Ryan Hughes Design is the firm to contact. 📞

**RYAN HUGHES DESIGN**  
A MEMBER OF POOL  
& HOT TUB ALLIANCE

13808 Monroes Business Park, Tampa, FL 33635  
727-940-2653

[ryanhughesdesign.com](http://ryanhughesdesign.com)  
In Business since 1974  
Designs/Builds 25 Pools per Year  
SERVICE AREA: Design: International  
Constructions: Throughout Florida

Top: Encompassing five bodies of water, a one-of-a-kind Ryan Hughes Design project is aglow with lighting, a lazy river, water features, and a collection of outdoor living spaces crafted for enjoyment by all ages.

Right: From glistening water columns spilling from a cantilever outdoor pavilion to elegant infinity spas or lounging shelves with bespoke casual furnishing, Ryan Hughes designed outdoor rooms are full of intricacy and creativity, all built for enjoyment day or night.