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THE HAMPTONS

ARCHITECTURE, ART AND ATTITUDE ON THE SOUTH FORK

COVER STORY

Peter Bohlin designed this masterpiece in the Hamptons

OUTDOOR LIVING

INSIDER TIPS TO TRANSFORM YOUR LANDSCAPE INTO LUXURY LIVING SPACE

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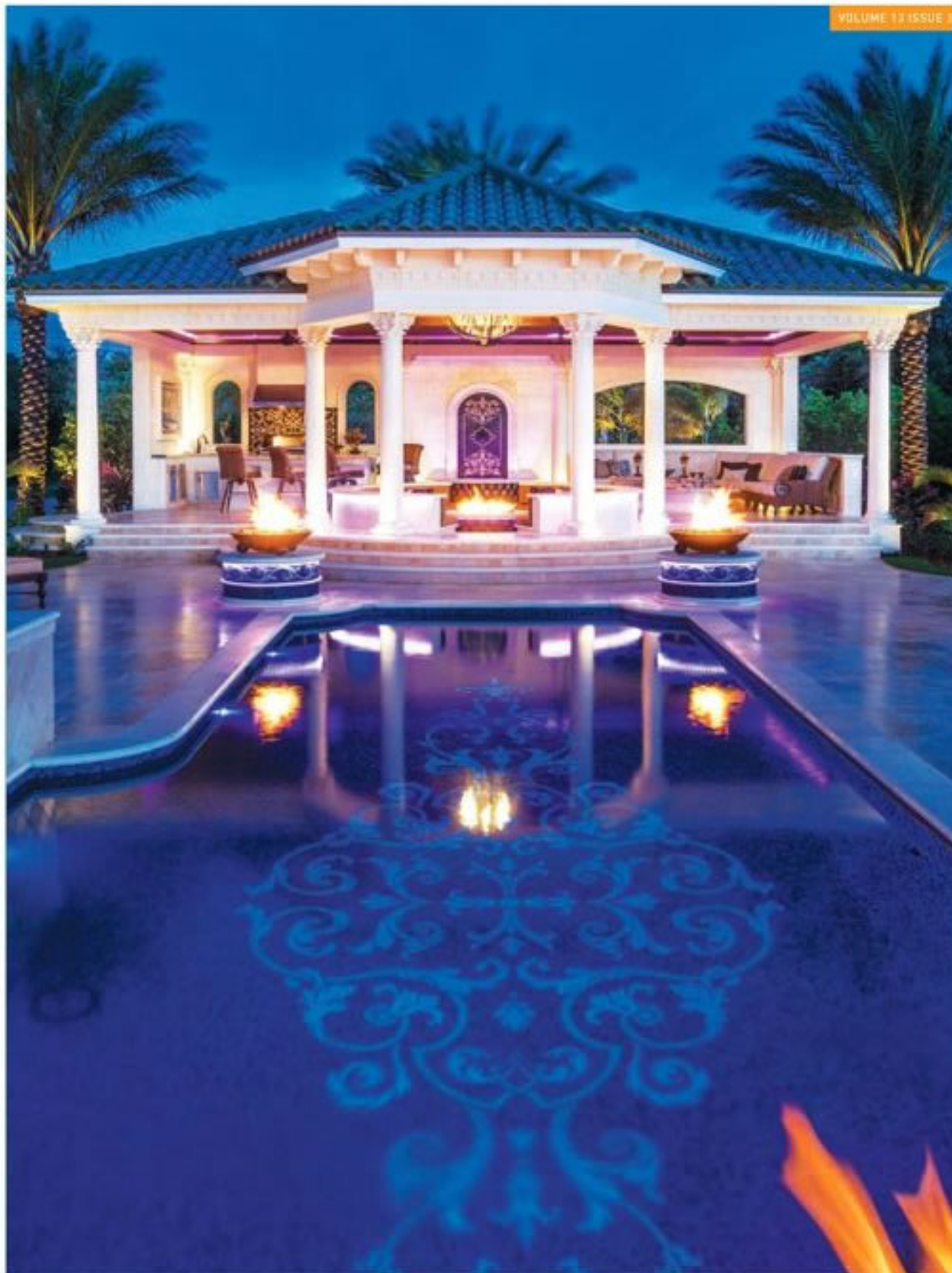
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BACKYARD BLISS

Here's how leading outdoor living manufacturers transform ordinary backyards into exceptional outdoor living spaces

BY SHAUN TOLSON





Outdoor spaces in exclusive ocean home design often feature water, fire, sun, and shade elements that elegantly integrate with the architecture.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM TITUS



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"Outdoor areas are no longer a second thought," says Ryan Hughes about the design trends he sees.

THERE WAS A TIME NOT TOO LONG AGO WHEN A HOME'S LIVING SPACE WAS SET BY ITS INTERIOR

boundaries. But those days are long gone. "Outdoor areas are no longer a second thought," says **Ryan Hughes**, the president and creative director of his namesake design firm. "Especially for our high-end customers. Making an investment in their outdoor living area is considered as important as the indoor living."

Innovative technology, captivating architecture, and eye-catching accent pieces, such as luxurious outdoor furnishings and fire elements, inject excitement into the best outdoor living spaces. Most important, these spaces are designed and built to blend seamlessly with the indoors. Continuity is key.

Today, even the general layout of a backyard is viewed through the lens of an interior designer. Distinct spaces are separated for specific uses, much like the rooms of a house. "There are always elements for relaxation and gathering, dining, and entertaining incorporated," says Hughes.

And that's only the beginning. These leading outdoor living product manufacturers know what it takes to take a backyard from ordinary to exceptional. And here's how they do it.

POOLS RULE

A spectacular coastal backyard nearly always features at least one pool. Pools are not just a focal point; they also help define the shape, size, and location of other living and entertaining areas. "We approach each pool design as one component of the overall outdoor living space," says Hughes. "And we utilize a design style that's a mix of science and art. The science is all about the strategic planning required to make the space functional. The art is about how the space makes you feel."

These days, outdoor design is all about adding drama through architectural structures and engineering, as well as through the incorporation of innovative materials. Hughes points to a recent multi-million-dollar project (shown here) in Tampa, Fla., that best encapsulates those ideals. The 10,000-square-foot outdoor space is set only 15 feet from the Gulf of Mexico and features four distinct pool levels with numerous fire elements and other architectural structures.

Because the home's interior is ornate and palatial with golf-leaf moldings, Hughes and his team accented 4,000 square feet of one pool's surface with intricate designs using inlaid mosaics and tiles covered in a thin, 24 carat gold foil, all of which measure no more than half an inch in size. And because the entire pool's inspiration was the soothing nature of water in motion, he implemented a deceptively powerful hydraulic system. "It looks like it is gently moving over surfaces all working in one direction," Hughes says. "The appearance of still and slow-moving water is deceiving, as a closer look at the hydraulics plan shows six pumps moving the water at an enormous speed."



This page, LaCapina's retracting walls of glass blur the border between indoors and outdoors.

