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luxury living

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THE ULTIMATE backyard UPGRADE

*TAKE YOUR PATIO SPACE TO THE NEXT LEVEL
WITH THE ADDITION OF A POOL HOUSE
OR CABANA—SUMMERTIME STAPLES FOR
OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING*

WHETHER you are hosting a few weekend guests or entertaining a crew of 30, there never seems to be enough space to provide visitors with the comforts of home. However, adding an open air cabana or a fully enclosed pool house to your backyard, not only offers guests an inviting space to relax, freshen up and dine, but also makes your own hosting duties a cinch. "The most useful feature of my pool house is having a bathroom and dressing room right by the pool so people no longer track water through my house after they swim," says Susan Berger of the Town of Southampton.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE KICKING OFF CONSTRUCTION OF ONE OF THESE MULTIPURPOSE SPACES. »

Covered cabana areas adjacent to your pool provide shade and a place to relax after a swim. Photo credit: Pembroke Fine Landscapes



CONSIDER THE RANGE OF OPTIONS

Above from top: Pool houses often include storage space for protecting outdoor tables, chairs and umbrellas in the off season. Lighting and entertainment systems are popular amenities to consider adding into your pool house or cabana. Photo credits: Green Island Design.

Outdoor living areas can range from small cabanas with basic amenities like a grill and bar area or outdoor shower, to full-service pool houses, which are often set further away from the main house and can be built with indoor kitchenettes, bathrooms and even sleeping quarters for overnight guests. "Some often include a sauna, too," says Bill D'Agata, owner of Pembroke Fine Landscapes, a landscape design and build firm in the Hamptons. "The biggest trend we're seeing right now in construction is the full integration of indoor and

outdoor space. The structure often includes accordion type doors that open up fully to allow a seamless transition between the outdoors and indoors."

Jason Merz, president of Metamorphosis Landscape Design Ltd. in Smithtown, adds that many homeowners want to bring the comforts of the indoors into their outdoor space. "There is a consistent desire for casual seating areas, true outdoor living rooms with couches and a fire feature, whether it be a fire pit or fireplace." In addition, audio/visual equipment is also becoming much more advanced in these outdoor structures with many new pool houses and cabanas incorporating flat screen TVs, surround sound built-in speaker systems, and automatic lighting controls.

SET A BUDGET

Though the construction of any outdoor living space is a large project that can take anywhere from several weeks to several months to complete, the price range varies widely depending on the amenities you choose to include. According to D'Agata, the starting price for a cabana is typically around \$150,000, but can go as high as \$550,000 for a full-service pool house, depending on the number of rooms and advanced features you choose to invest in. Jon Pappalardi, owner and president of Green Island Design, which builds pool houses and cabanas in Nassau and Suffolk counties, notes that it's important for customers to have a budget in mind before meeting with their contractor to ensure that the contractor develops a plan that fits into those financial constraints. "Budgets are determined by what a homeowner envisions for their backyard," says Pappalardi. "A simple pavilion can be installed at a minimal cost, versus a fully functional pool house, which can be compared to the square footage price of your actual home."

OBTAIN THE PROPER PERMITS

According to Pappalardi, it's crucial to go through your town clerk's office to ensure that your outdoor living space will be up to code. "Cabanas or pool houses are considered structures and will need to comply with all setbacks and local town codes,"