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# Pools and Spas

The luxury upgrade that soothes and relaxes!

» WILLIAM MILLER

Homeowners strive for pampering amenities in their homes, and the No. 1 reward is a pool or spa, or both. A benefit at all price ranges, a pool or spa lets homeowners slow down and reward themselves in today's hectic world.

Pools and spas are increasingly popular—particularly in warm climates. Despite a slow economy, regional pool-building trends help many builders experience continuing sales growth. Consumers are spending more time at home and want to invest in their properties while being able to enjoy their leisure time.

For the environmentally conscious, advances have been made in heating systems and pumps by the introduction of more efficient motors, using less power and low water pumps. Energy-efficiency strides have also been made by the production of cycling pool and spa heaters. As to water efficiency, recent research has shown that installing a swimming pool does not necessarily mean increasing water demand. In some regions, the same size area taken up with automatically irrigated grass can use more water than a swimming pool.

Energy-efficient filters and pumps can often qualify for power company rebates and generally are cost efficient in the long run. A trend toward smaller pools, in

combination with heat pumps, make for energy-efficient backyard retreats.

Thermal pool blankets and solar covers have become very popular and provide an energy- and cost-saving benefit to pool maintenance. Lightweight and relatively inexpensive, the covers attract the sun's heat and can increase a pool's temperature by as much as 10 degrees. There's even a new liquid solar blanket that can be thrown in the pool to form a layer to attract heat.

Top design trends in pool and spa design range from exercise spas, promoting fitness and healing, to LED color lighting, accent tiles and design elements that create uniqueness and personality.

Some of the most recent popular pool ideas are omitting walls. This means that the pool can be accessed via beach entries or shallow "water ledges." The beach entry is just what it sounds like—a gently sloping sandy entrance to the pool that mimics a beach in appearance.

Water ledges provide a shallow surface covered with about four inches of

water. These very shallow areas provide a comfortable reading or lounging area and are also ideal for supervised water play for young children.

The vanishing, infinity or negative edge pool or spa design is a trend that adds drama and features at least one section of the pool over which water continually flows into a catch basin below.

This water movement over the edge makes it appear as if the water is connecting with the landscape elements behind it, creating an illusion of uninterrupted space. Europeans have been building these types of designs for over 100 years. The first infinity edge pool in the U.S. was built in the 1950s, when architect John Lautner designed a private residence in Silver Lake, Calif.

Another design trend is fountains of various types that provide soothing sound and dramatic interest. One popular style is the laminar flow fountain.

Laminar flow fountains shoot a stream of water about the thickness of your finger through the air. The water holds together to create a moving, watery tube that will carry the glow of fiber optic lighting. Foaming fountains mix water and air for a frothy, mushroom-head effect. Lots of manufacturers are offering adjustable nozzles to let you control how high and how far your fountain will go.

## Pool Buying Comparative SOURCE: SAN JUAN POOLS

FEATURES	FIBERGLASS	VS. GUNITE	VS. VINYL LINER
<b>Product Durability</b>	All-weather tolerant, stress-free, pet-friendly, seventeen times stronger than concrete (flexural strength)	Rigid, cracks with movement	Punctures and tears (not pet-friendly)
<b>Product Quality</b>	Manufactured, controlled quality assurance process	Onsite constructed, quality dependent on work force	Prefabricated liner, site assembled walls
<b>Repairs</b>	Smooth, silky feel	Very rough, equal to 80-grit sandpaper	Slippery, rough seams
<b>Algae Treatment</b>	Algae-resistant, cannot adhere to pool surface	Constant, grows through walls, attaches to pores	Troublesome, grows in seams, mildews into soil through liner
<b>Care &amp; Maintenance</b>	Less than an hour weekly	5 hours/week	5 hours/week
<b>Chemical Usage</b>	Minimal required	Considerably more required (water and vessel)	Slightly more required (water and vessel)
<b>Design Options</b>	sixty-five plus models	Unlimited	Can be limited
<b>Electrical Usage</b>	Circulate 4 to 6 hours/day	Circulate 10 hours/day	Circulate 6 to 8 hrs/day
<b>Installation Time</b>	Within days (dependent on site conditions & options)	8 + weeks	2 - 5 weeks
<b>Pool Access</b>	Seamless stairs, swim outs, benches, sundecks	Shallow end stairs (additions at a cost)	Drop-in type or ladders
<b>Warranty</b>	25 year (structural) not pro-rated	Commonly only one year by contractor	Only if seam separates/ pro-rated



### LIGHTING

The right lighting will enhance any pool and will add to landscape safety at night. Perimeter lighting will make a pool look magical at night as well as define the pool's edge.

High-tech fiber optics have made major advances in pool lighting. This efficient light source requires some planning ahead, but it can have a stunning effect in any pool or spa design. Fiber optic lighting offers colors to suit any mood. These high-tech yet accessible systems work by transmitting light—from a source located away from the pool—through high-quality glass or acrylic fiber optic cables. Color wheels make coloring your world as easy as flipping a switch.

Floating, color-changing solar lights are whimsical, inexpensive and energy efficient, soaking up the sun's rays during the day and turning on a floating light show in your pool or spa at night.

Pool tiles are a great way to add some distinctive touches to pools and spas. Tile textures range from the very smooth to very rough, and patterns can range from multicolored art deco tiles to simple designs. Italian glass mosaic tiles are very popular as water line tile as well as to define steps into a pool or spa. Pool tiles today can even simulate stone or marble if that is the look you want.

As far as pool surfaces, there is a definite trend toward natural-looking materials. A smooth and comfortable pool finish is preferable, and many finishes and color tones are now available to suit any style and taste. The latest pool-surfacing materials have one thing in common: They are as easy to maintain as they are on the eye.

Automated, computerized controls provide easy centralized operation of pool equipment and features, as well as flexibility of controlling various pool elements that make using your pool simple and efficient.

There's automatic equipment to meet any need. Just program them and relax. Turn on your waterfalls, light your night or warm your spa. Most of these controls are computer-friendly, allowing you to telelink to your system. You can then operate pool functions via telephone from the office or your mobile phone.

### SALTWATER POOLS AND SPAS

With a trend toward Green design and natural processes, salt water pools are definitely taking the lead over traditional chlorine pools.

Comfort is one of the main advantages of saltwater swimming pools. Salt is softer on your skin than chlorine. Also, chlorine has the tendency to cause red eyes and itchy

skin. These symptoms are eliminated with the use of salt water systems.

Lower maintenance and reduced use of chemicals are also advantages of saltwater spas and pools. They virtually clean themselves and require much less attention than pools that use chlorine. People who own saltwater "pools" don't have to store and handle toxic chemicals on a regular basis. This means that a saltwater "swimming pool" is more environmentally safe.

The chlorine generator converts salt into chlorine, so you don't have to keep a constant check on the water sanitation. It also stops the growth of algae throughout the year. 🏡



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# RESOURCES / NEW PRODUCTS

## » JACKSON HAYDEN



Merlex Stucco introduced its newest color chart collection called "Color by Nature." The company now offers 40 colors: 30 Standard and 10 Premium.

MERLEX.COM  
714-637-1700



Rollman Tools introduces SkatePlate, a new base plate that can be retrofitted to all major brands of circular saws. SkatePlate's design features two rollers that extend the full width of the plate. The result is the use of a flat plate design with a saw that glides across surfaces without leaving a scratch.

310-980-2346



Makita introduced the 10-inch Contractor Table Saw. The 2705 features a toolless modular blade guard system with adjustable side guard, two on-board independent stowable anti-kickback pawls and a riving knife/spreader. The 15 amp motor delivers 4,800 rpm and includes an electric brake.

MAKITA.COM  
800-4-MAKITA

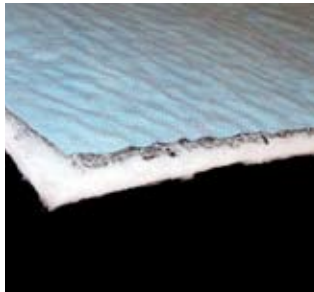


The new 2009 Vanguard hot tub by Oregon HotSpring Spas costs less than \$17 a month on average for a typical household in energy costs compared to competing spas on the market. Fully foamed and insulated to an R40 level, the Vanguard maintains its heat with efficiency, using less energy than a 40-watt light bulb.

ORHOTSPPRINGSPPAS.COM  
503-533-5603

Perfect Products offers the DoorSaver2, which eradicate the need for rubber bumpers. The DoorSaver stop replaces one hinge pin on any residential or commercial door, interior or exterior, and enables the door's motion to be absorbed into the hinge.

DOORSAVER.COM  
877-DOORSAVER



Keene's Muffler Technology Sound Control Mat is a nominal 1/4-inch "U" Groove entangled core mat designed to limit impact noise between floors. This muffler almost completely compresses when installed with a 1 1/4-inch gypsum concrete floor underlayment.

KEENEBUILDING.COM  
877-514-5336

Bosch's Vibration Control 12-pound Demolition Hammer features slightly longer air cushion between the piston and the striker pin, which reduces vibration at the point of impact while increasing impact energy by about 10 percent. The 11321EV5 utilizes a shock-absorbent main handle that further isolates the user from vibration.

BOSCHTOOLS.COM  
877-BOSCH-99

