

OUTDOOR LIVING

Outdoor Living Spaces That Make You Want to Step Outside

Inspiring outdoor living spaces that add value by delivering comfort, convenience, and privacy
By Rich Binsacca, Editor-in-Chief | June 26, 2019



“The key is to make outdoor space feel as if you’re still indoors,” says Dan Coletti, president of Sun West Custom Homes, in Las Vegas. (Photo: courtesy Sun West Custom Homes)

Find a new home without a patio and I’ll show you an unsold house. That’s how “must-have” a slab of concrete outside the back door is to homebuyers, according to recent NAHB consumer research.

Beyond that, the picture gets muddier. More extensive and [amenity-rich outdoor living spaces](#) may appear appealing, but a decreasing number of home shoppers “must have” a rear porch, built-in grill, outdoor fireplace, or fully outfitted outdoor kitchen. Those sentiments can vary widely by age, race, and household type (young families prefer an [outdoor kitchen](#), for instance), so the smart course calls for [listening to your buyers](#) before plotting anything beyond a patio or deck.

If your due diligence concludes that a more extensive multifunction outdoor living space will return its investment, the next step is to design one that homeowners will actually use—ideally year-round and often. While pouring a patio is relatively simple, creating a useful and beautiful outdoor living space is high art, with truisms and tactics that deliver lasting value. Miss the mark and you’ve wasted valuable land and money; hit it right and you’ve likely delivered the convenience, comfort, and privacy buyers desire from their outdoor areas.

The projects pictured here are, for the most part, at the high end of the market, but the outdoor living features they include teach valuable lessons across housing types, price points, and even geography about: providing seamless transitions from indoors to out—including lighting, flooring, and fenestration; the variety and proximity of outdoor functions; and the delicate balance between entertainment space and privacy.



- A. MULTIPLE LIVING SPACES/
FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE
OUTDOOR FOOTPRINT
- B. SAME CEILING TREATMENT AND
WALL MATERIALS INDOORS AND
OUTDOORS TO EASE TRANSITIONS
- C. LOCATION OF OUTDOOR AREAS
IS CONVENIENT TO INDOOR
GATHERING SPACES
- D. INTERESTING ROOF FORMS
ENHANCE FEEL/INTEREST

PROJECT: Waters Edge at MacDonald Highlands,
Henderson, Nev.
BUILDER AND DESIGNER: Sun West Custom
Homes, Las Vegas



[DESIGN]

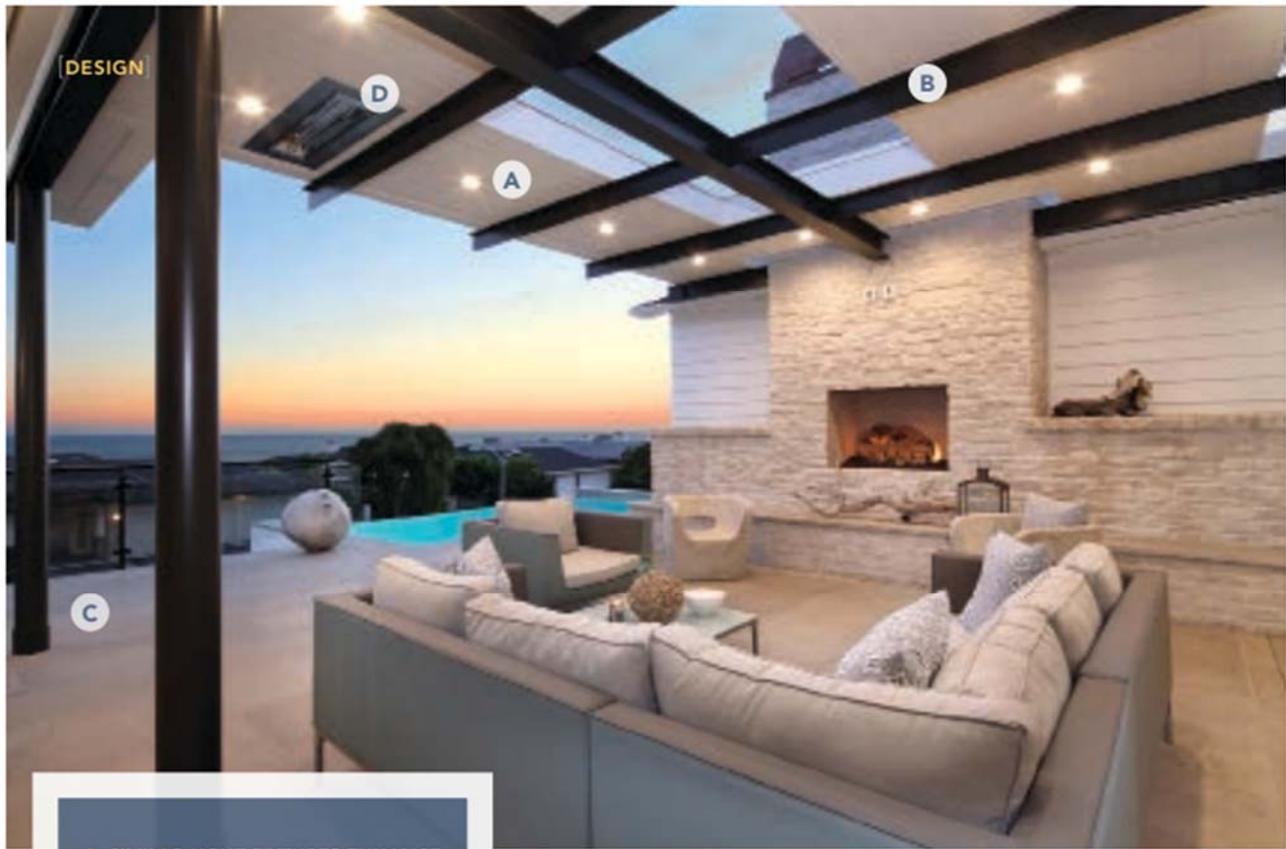
“THE OUTDOOR COURTS, ROOMS, AND LOGGIAS ARE DISTINCT LIVING SPACES THAT ENHANCE THE LIVABILITY AND FUNCTIONALITY OF THE FLOOR PLAN.”

—**GARRETT HOSKINS, AIA**, SENIOR PROJECT DIRECTOR
ROBERT HIDEY ARCHITECTS

- A. MULTIPLE LIVING SPACES/
FUNCTIONS WITHIN
OUTDOOR FOOTPRINT
- B. INDOOR CEILING FINISHED
TO ENHANCE INDOOR/OUTDOOR
TRANSITION
- C. DEEP ROOF OVERHANGS
REDUCE GLARE AND SOLAR
HEAT GAIN

- D. MULTIPLE POINTS OF ACCESS
FROM INDOOR SPACES, FOR
CONVENIENCE
- E. SAME FLOORING INDOORS AND
OUT, FLUSH BETWEEN SPACES FOR
ACCESSIBILITY; SELECTED FOR
DURABILITY IN HIGH-TRAFFIC
AREAS; LARGE FORMAT FOR
MONOLITHIC LOOK

PROJECT: Coral Crest, Newport Beach, Calif.
BUILDER: The New Home Company, Aliso
Viejo, Calif.
ARCHITECT: Robert Hidey Architects, Irvine, Calif.



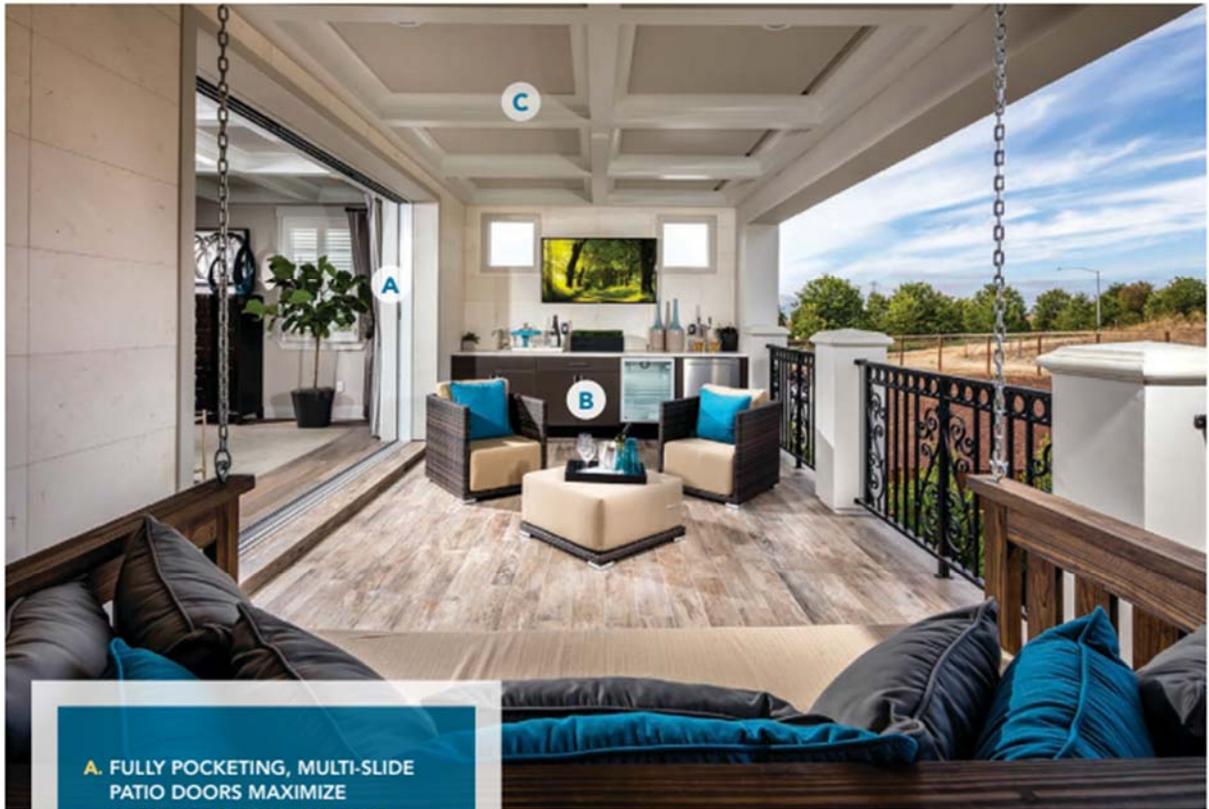
DESIGN

- A. SIMILAR LIGHT FIXTURES ENHANCE INDOOR/OUTDOOR TRANSITION
- B. COMPARABLE CEILING TREATMENT INDOORS AND OUTDOORS PROVIDES VISUAL CONTINUITY
- C. FLOOR MATERIAL(S) FLUSH BETWEEN SPACES FOR ACCESSIBILITY; SELECTED FOR DURABILITY IN HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS; LARGE FORMAT FOR MONOLITHIC LOOK
- D. HEATERS EMBEDDED IN OUTDOOR ROOF OVERHANG
- E. FULLY POCKETING, MULTI-SLIDE PATIO DOORS EASE TRANSITION AND MAXIMIZE OPENINGS/VIEWS

PROJECT: Custom home, Newport Beach, Calif.
 BUILDER: Genova Capital, Ladera Ranch, Calif.
 ARCHITECT: Brandon Architects, Costa Mesa, Calif.



PHOTOS: JENI KEGEL PHOTOGRAPHY



A. FULLY POCKETING, MULTI-SLIDE PATIO DOORS MAXIMIZE OPENINGS/VIEWS AND EASE INDOOR/OUTDOOR TRANSITION

B. COMPARABLE-GRADE CABINETS, SURFACES, FIXTURES, AND APPLIANCES TO INTERIOR

C. SAME CEILING TREATMENT INDOORS AND OUTDOORS FOR SEAMLESS TRANSITION

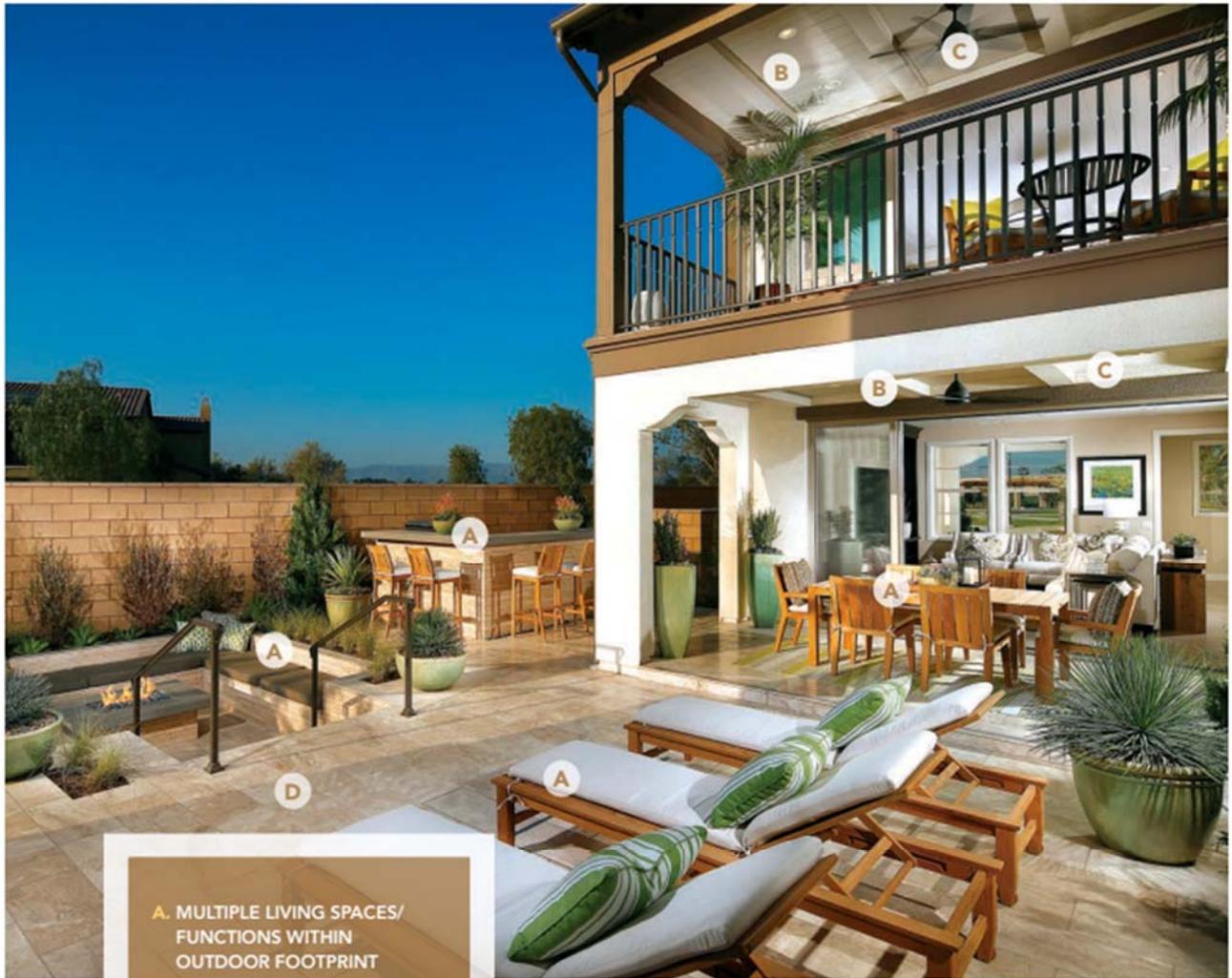
D. DEEP ROOF OVERHANGS REDUCE GLARE AND SOLAR HEAT GAIN

E. SAME FLOOR MATERIAL INDOORS AND OUTDOORS

F. MULTIPLE LIVING SPACES/ FUNCTIONS WITHIN OUTDOOR FOOTPRINT

PROJECT: Dunes, Marina, Calif.
 BUILDER: Shea Homes, Livermore, Calif.
 ARCHITECT: Dahlin Group, Pleasanton, Calif.





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TO EASE INDOOR/OUTDOOR
TRANSITION**
- C. DEEP ROOF OVERHANGS
REDUCE GLARE AND SOLAR
HEAT GAIN**
- D. LARGE-FORMAT FLOOR
FINISH FOR MONOLITHIC
LOOK**

PROJECT: Crawford, Tustin, Calif.
BUILDER: CalAtlantic/Lennar, Irvine
ARCHITECT: WHA, Santa Ana, Calif.

“IT’S IMPORTANT TO SEE THE
OUTDOOR SPACES FROM THE
FRONT DOOR, SO YOU ARE
EXTENDING THE LIVING SPACE
VISUALLY AND PHYSICALLY.”

—BOB WILHELM, SENIOR PRINCIPAL, WHA



Rich Binsacca

Editor-in-Chief

Rich Binsacca is *Professional Builder's* editor-in-chief. He has served as an editor and frequent contributor to several housing and building construction-related print and online publications, and has reported and written about all aspects of the industry since 1987.