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Embracing the Outdoors

By Jonathan Sweet, Senior Editor

Welcome to our annual decking and outdoor living supplement, your guide to one of the hottest parts of the building and remodeling market.

Despite the slowdown in the residential construction market, outdoor living projects continue to grow in popularity. Survey after survey of homeowners, remodelers, architects and builders shows that this is one of the favorite ways to increase living space, especially in upscale homes.

According to a recent NAHB survey, 66 percent of building professionals expect demand for outdoor kitchens to significantly increase in upscale homes, with grills, sinks and cooking islands being the most popular features.

And the trend is going beyond the kitchen. Homeowners want to bring the indoors outdoors as the outside living space is becoming the home's new entertainment space. About 70 percent of respondents to the NAHB survey said they expect to install significantly more outdoor audio and TV equipment. Sixty percent said the same for outdoor fireplaces, and 57 percent are seeing rising demand for decorative water features.

In this issue, we take a look at this "indoors outside" trend and see what some of the leading outdoor contractors are saying about it. We also examine the latest decking trends, as we look at the new kid on the block, PVC, as well as the newest features in composite decking and what's going on with that old standby, natural wood. We also talk to leading decking contractors about choosing the right materials for a deck and learn what you need to know about working with each one.

Finally, be sure to check out the product section, featuring the latest and greatest in decking and outdoor living products.

And of course you can always find more information 24/7 on our Web site at www.housingzone.com.

Decked Out

New materials, vibrant colors and a wider range of choices set the pace for the decking market

By Jennifer Block Martin, Contributing Editor

Last year, the big story was composites versus wood. Now the big names in decking have introduced a new contender, PVC, yet they are harkening back to their roots by emulating tropical hardwoods and variegated colors. Read on for all the trends.

1 **Purely Plastic**
“It used to be all composites,” recalls Trex marketing manager for the trade Lance Bunch. “But not anymore. Now the market is segmented: subtle wood grain, smooth board, wood grain, exotic hardwood look and now ultra-low-maintenance PVC.”

Trex partnered with Veka Innovations, a company specializing in PVC blending and extrusion technology, to introduce the Trex Escapes line in January. Besides enhanced stain-, mold- and scratch-resistance, this new generation of PVC decking can be mitered and routed just like wood, and also has the ability to reflect and not absorb the heat on hot days.

Kevin Brennan, TimberTech’s senior vice president of sales and marketing, agrees that composites and wood still dominate the marketplace, yet his company is also diving into the PVC niche. XLM (“Extreme Low Maintenance”) is TimberTech’s 100 percent plastic offering. Brennan says it doesn’t look like wood and tends not to stain or scratch. As an added bonus, the new board is 40 percent lighter than TimberTech’s wood-plastic composite planks.

“Sales are growing in the Midwest and East Coast,” he says. “West goes toward natural and wood composite; XLM is just starting out there but sales volume will start to pick up.”

Azek Building Products also entered the fray by acquiring Procell Decking Systems in 2006. Its new



More natural wood tones are gaining in popularity. Photo courtesy of Trex

offering, called Azek Deck with Procell Technology, is a cellular PVC product that does not contain wood fillers or fibers. “This allows our boards to cover the 3 S’s: stain-resistant, scratch-resistant, split-resistant — yet be workable like wood,” says President Ralph Bruno.

Another mover and shaker is Fiber Composites, which recently acquired the Meridian, Idaho, manufacturing assets and WeatherBest brand name from Louisiana-Pacific Corp. and now produces the PVC-based WeatherBest High Performance Decking. Marketing director Craig Sherrett notes, “Time- and maintenance-free fuel these consumer trends.”

2 A Taste of the Tropics

Emulating the feel of dark, exotic hardwoods, Brennan says, has “taken off in the last five years and is truly a nationwide trend.” Sherrett agrees and sees this as being spurred on from more homeowners wanting living space outdoors. “People are moving big-screen TVs, couches and expensive grills onto the deck to create sophisticated outdoor living spaces, so the deck needed to be equally as sophisticated,” he says. “We took the interior hardwood floor concept right out-



side. There’s a real niche for the tropical hardwood product because it’s easy on the environment and low-maintenance.” (For more on this, see related article on page 21.)

The whole industry is moving toward more realistic looking products that use multi-hued variations. For example, TimberTech’s Earthwood composite plank “uses a new color streaking process that looks like tropical hardwood,” says Brennan. Its XLM line comes in three rich colors (Mountain Cedar, River-Rock and SandRidge) with a different grain pattern on opposite faces for added versatility. WeatherBest’s



Decking manufacturers are expanding into railing as well.
Photo courtesy of Trex

Sherrett says no two of its Tropicals boards are alike. “Consumers are really responding to all this.”

In addition to Burnished Amber and Cayenne, Trex’s Brazilia composite line also has a new color, Espresso. “It has a dark exotic look that weathers great,” says Bunch. “Trex has also taken the colors consumers wanted in composite and put them into PVC — darker colors, not shiny, with looks like weathered wood,” he says. Trex Escapes features a natural wood-grain pattern in three long-lasting, rich colors: Pewter, Sahara (beige) and Acorn (brown).

3 Beyond the Deck

Several deck manufacturers are expanding their lines to encompass all that used to be wood, including railings, fencing, exterior trim and porch planks. “Originally the industry kind of ignored railings,” says TimberTech’s Brennan. “But in the last four years it’s really taken off. People who spend a lot of money on a deck want cool railings too.” To prove this theory, the company has three different styles of railings now, when five years ago it had none.

WeatherBest’s just-launched White Composite Railing product comes in 6- and 8-foot sections that can

Decked Out

be snapped together in as little as five minutes without hardware and have two rail-top options.

"Trex is turning into an outdoor living products company," says Bunch. "The inside is expanding with outdoor great rooms on the deck, kitchens, hot tubs, sitting rooms." Now, he says, people can create their own outdoor living look by mixing and matching the entire Trex line.

Contrarily, Azek built its brand name on trim and expanded to offer decking, porches, railing and molding. It recently acquired Toronto railing manufacturer Composatron which sold its products under the Trademark and Premier brands. The railings are co-extruded with a wood composite core



Manufacturers are building a full line of products around the deck.
Photo courtesy of Azek

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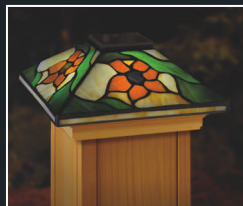


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Railings that replicate traditional wood are replacing the usual white railing in many applications. *Photo courtesy of Trex*

and vinyl capstock and come in white and five other colors to match Azek Deck.

Next up for the company is a porch product. Maureen Murray, Azek Building Products representative says, "Our Procell Technology reduces expansion/contraction, making it possible for Azek Deck to spin off the new Azek Porch. These planks are thinner, like indoor flooring, and tongue-and-groove for easy installation," adding that the front porch is making a big comeback in traditionally planned communities.

The last frontier seems to be fencing. TimberTech's new FenceScape is made from reclaimed wood fibers and pure plastic resins, so it's consistent in color, shape and size. WeatherBest promises a line of fencing out later this year.



Natural wood, like this cedar deck, is still popular. *Photo courtesy of Sun Forest Construction*

4 Fasten Your Fasteners

"The last thing people want after they've spent a lot of money on a deck is screws showing," says TimberTech's Brennan. "2007 was our first year with our own hidden fasteners system, and we've been blown away with the results." XLM's grooved planks are designed to work with ConcealLoc, TimberTech's new stainless steel hidden fastener that provides quick and consistent gapping while keeping a fastener-free surface.

Trex has partnered with Tiger Claw, a pioneer in the deck fastener industry, to manufacture its Hide-away Hidden Fastener System, which is designed to be used exclusively with its new grooved boards. Tiger Claw also manufactures Fiber Composites' private labeled Phantom II hidden fastener system.



Hidden fasteners are the hot new trend for installation.
Photo courtesy of Trex



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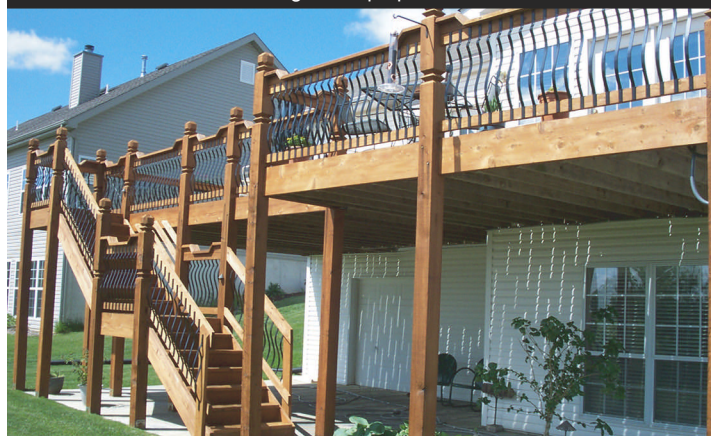


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Decked Out

5 Working With Mother Nature

"Especially in the West, the concept of being green is important," Sherrett of WeatherBest, says. "We use recycled materials, reuse plastics and don't cut down new timbers. And since our composite and PVC decking has a longer life cycle, they don't need to be stained or painted yearly."

As public awareness of deck safety and compliance grows, decking manufacturers meet expectations by building stronger products. In addition to being able to withstand greater wind loads and hurricanes in the East and South, decking is being built to combat wildfires on the other coast. TimberTech's PVC boards have received a Class A Fire Rating, the most stringent rating available for exterior fire resistance, and WeatherBest is in the process of producing a PVC line to meet the standards. Trex Accents exceeds the strict fire regulations set by the State of California and San Diego County.



PVC decking offers lower maintenance and more stain resistance than composites. *Photo courtesy of Fiberon*

New Directions for the Original Decking Material

Rarely does anyone ask, what's new in wood decking? On the contrary, there are several noteworthy additions this year. Brand new on the market is PureWood, thermally modified Southern Pine wood decking created in a process patented by Finnish R&D company Stellac Oy. PureWood is chemical- and metal-free, noncorrosive and nontoxic. Richard Kleiner, director of treated markets for Southern Pine, says the end product is a "toasted brown color, making a beautiful wood even prettier." The high kiln heat converts the wood sugars into a natural substance that cannot be digested by insects or eaten by fungus and mold, dramatically reducing rot and decay, according to the company.

In addition, Kleiner is excited about the evolution of wood preservatives, which won't slow down anytime soon and are taking many concerns off the table, especially when it comes to corrosion. For above-ground outdoor use, Viance's Ecolife is protected with a non-metallic preservative and a wood stabilizing polymer, and Arch Chemicals' Wolmanized L³ Outdoor wood is protected by a nonmetallic, carbon-based solution that degrades in soil.

Micronized copper azole preservative is replacing the traditional alkaline copper quaternary (ACQ) in the marketplace, with less copper, less bioaccumulation and less corrosive on fasteners. Plus, it's OK for contact with aluminum.

Kleiner also notes that, as home building, remodeling and the overall economy slows, wood decking also offers cost advantages over alternative materials.

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Entertainment Center

By Ann Matesi, Senior Contributing Editor

Homeowners want indoor/outdoor living at their fingertips, and you can help them get it

From modest grilling stations to lavish outdoor kitchens, from cozy fire pits to beautifully detailed masonry fireplaces, adding outdoor living space has become a priority when it comes to the home improvement project consumers most eagerly consider when they want to boost the livability of their home.

For Eric Kent, president of Archadeck of Charlotte, it's all about homeowners looking for a sense of "vacation" in their own back yards, he says. "There are a big number of people not taking trips these days. Instead, they're putting their money back into their homes in something that they can enjoy and feel good about as a long-term investment."

Tune into any home program on TV and you'll find outdoor living areas featured. That brings consumer awareness that takes their requests for outdoor amenities to new levels.

Don Gwiz, principal with Lewis Aquatech, a premier outdoor living environment specialist headquartered in Chantilly, Va., notes that the market segment has evolved into its own lifestyle product. "Our clients come to us looking for outdoor space that will improve the quality of their lives.

"Magazines, home improvement centers and design-oriented television programming, have all raised the bar on awareness and expectation on the part of our clients when it comes to outdoor space. Homeowners are more knowledgeable and sophisticated than ever before about everything 'high end' for their



The outdoors is becoming the new living room as homeowners look to capture more space. *Photo courtesy of Phil Kean Designs*

homes. When it comes to their outdoor living space our clients want everything that they have indoors outside, including plasma TVs, full-function kitchens, surround sound systems, and warm and inviting fireplaces,” Gwiz says.

Porches are making their way into homes so much so that builder Jim Sasko, president of Teakwood Builders in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., refers to 2007 as the “year of the porch” for his company. “We built all kinds of screened

porches and sun porches for our clients who were also into incorporating two-way fireplaces in their outdoor living areas in a big way.”

Making the most of decks

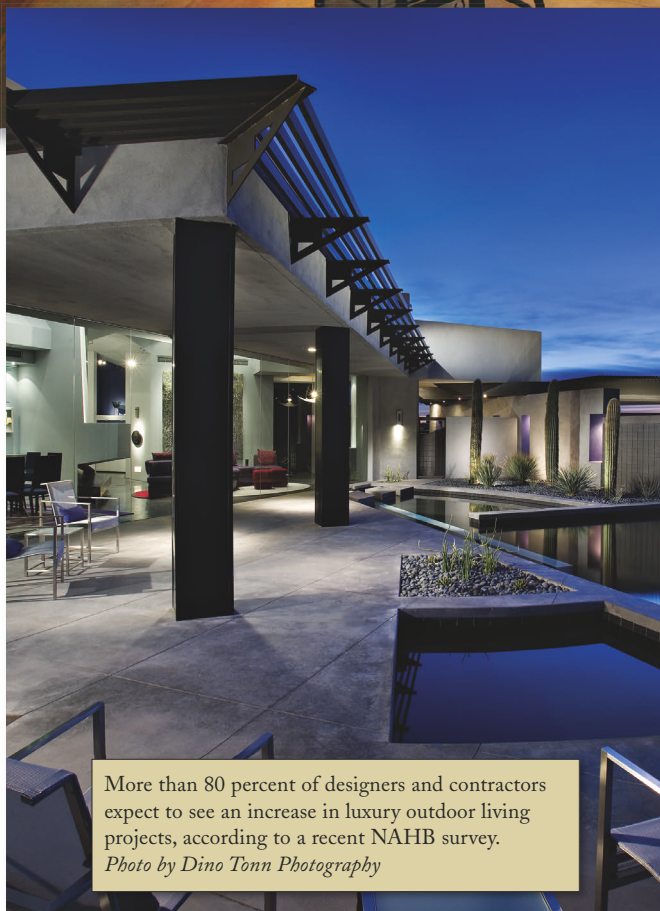
Many homeowners still look to their decks as a gathering point, says John Burns, president of American Deck of Winchester in Winchester, Va.



Indoor spaces that flow into the outdoors allow homeowners to take advantage of more space without adding on. *Photo by Eric Figge*



Kitchens are the most popular high-end outdoor feature. *Photo courtesy of Magee Construction*



More than 80 percent of designers and contractors expect to see an increase in luxury outdoor living projects, according to a recent NAHB survey. *Photo by Dino Tonn Photography*

The difference, he says, is that his clients now come to him with much more of a plan in mind. "It is very similar to the way they plan the living space inside their homes," he says.

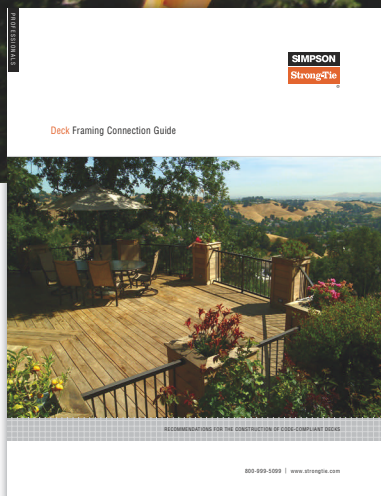
Along with the changes in the way homeowners use their decks, sizes have grown as well. "The size of our typical deck has increased by about 40 percent over the past five years," says Kent.

Decks are also taking on all kinds of unique shapes these days, according to Burns. "Curves add flair and interest while bump outs provide definition for the spaces reserved for cooking and seating."

"About one-quarter of my clients have flipped through magazines and have some idea about what they want in their outdoor living space," says Burns. However, the design really comes to life as the result of an intensive interview process, he says.

Designing an outdoor space to satisfy the lifestyle your homeowners want is all about asking the right questions, say the experts.

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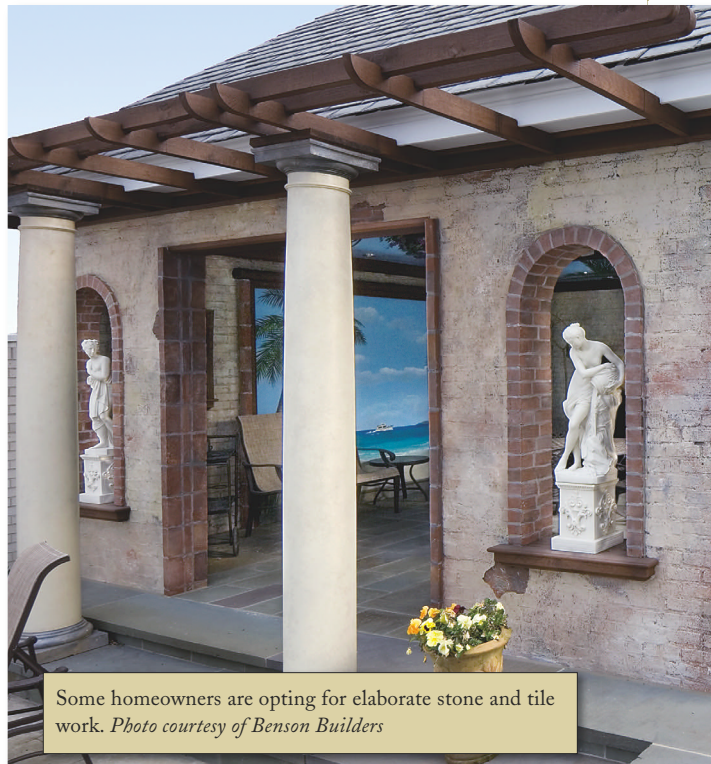
These include:

- How do you intend to use your outdoor space?
- How often will you use it?
- Will it be used for large gatherings?
- Do you want a particular amount of exposure to the sun? Do you need shade?
- Will you need sound or outdoor lighting for evening entertaining?
- What are your maintenance requirements?

"My goal is to bring these things together for the client," says George Drummond, owner of Casa Deck in Virginia Beach, Va. "The most important thing, however, is to build the deck so that the client will want to use it. It should have that 'wow' factor but also be functional at the same time."

The right accessories

The patio or deck is just the beginning, though. It's the finishing touches that set one outdoor living space apart from another.



Some homeowners are opting for elaborate stone and tile work. *Photo courtesy of Benson Builders*

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"There are so many options on the market today for outdoor living spaces for such things as railings, lighting and decking," says Drummond. "This can really change the character and appearance of the deck."

Beyond that, it's accessories like fireplaces, grilling stations and water features that take an outdoor space from simple to luxury.

Fire features are probably the most requested outdoor amenity these days and they can be installed anywhere from a patio to a screen porch or even on a deck, Kent says.

For wood deck applications, Dave Tibbetts of Atlanta Decking and Fence recommends using a modular assembly that can be trimmed out to look like a full masonry fireplace at significantly lower cost and weight.

"Using an off-the-shelf firebox provides you with the opportunity to give people the look they want at an economical price. Many stock fire pits can also be built into a deck because the heating element is actually raised up off the deck surface," he says.

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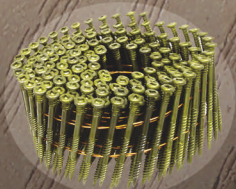
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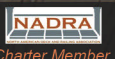
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Water features are a popular addition to outdoor spaces.
Photo by Brian Vanden Brink

Tibbetts also recommends opting for gas versions of outdoor fire pits and fireplaces because they require minimal clean up and eliminate the danger of popping cinders

“Outdoor kitchens, on the other hand, are projects that you have to throw some money at,” says Tibbetts. “To do them well you have to have the right mix of client, space and money.”

A nice alternative to fireplaces, Tibbetts notes, is to create a dedicated grilling station with its own counter. “This is something that most people can afford.” He recommends an area that has at least 5 by 9 feet of space, that the cooking area is partially covered and that you choose an all-weather material such as quarry tile or natural stone for the countertop.

Water features including pools, hot tubs and ponds continue to be desirable features for outdoor living areas, says Tibbetts. However, homeowners tend to want these to be tastefully done so the features provide privacy and blend into the landscape.

Hot Outdoor Features

Here's what leading contractors identify as some of the most popular features in outdoor living projects:

- Outdoor kitchens, grilling stations and pizza ovens
- Ice makers
- Gas fire pits and fireplaces
- Alfresco living spaces with a protective ceiling and open sides
- Finished, rather than beamed, ceilings in covered areas
- Mixing materials and colors: for example, wood, composite or PVC decking and powder-coated aluminum, glass or copper balusters
- Weather-resistant furniture and fabrics
- Heated towel racks for pool and hot tub decks
- Radiant heated pool decks



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Wood vs. Composites

What you need to know to choose your decking material

By *Ann Matesi, Senior Contributing Editor*

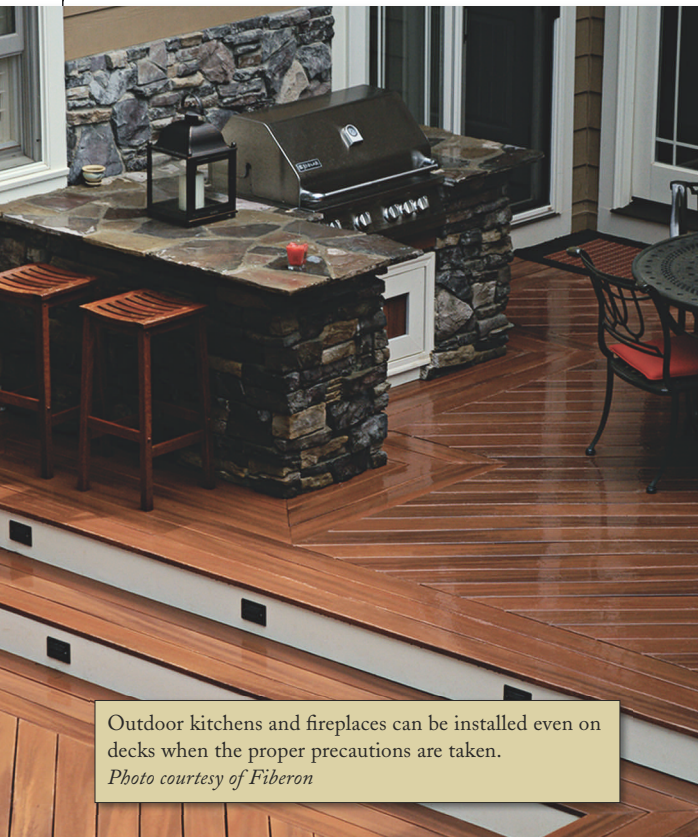
When it comes to selecting the surface material for their outdoor deck, homeowners' options are better looking, better performing and easier to install.

This includes traditional wood decking materials such as pressure-treated pine, redwood, western red cedar, or imported hardwoods; composites made from a blend of reclaimed and recycled materials that typically contain a percentage of wood fiber designed to mimic natural wood without the maintenance; and the new-comer to the market, vinyl — or PVC — decking products that promise a virtually zero-maintenance deck surface but so far have not been able to replicate the beauty of real wood.

All have their pros and cons in terms of appearance and performance that must be considered carefully job-by-job to give customers results that best suit their lifestyle and budget. For this reason, most deck construction specialists work closely with their clients to determine their needs, then specify, design and build what materials best suit the project rather than using a single material.



Wood, composite and PVC decks all offer advantages to the homeowner. *Photo by Clark Marten*



Outdoor kitchens and fireplaces can be installed even on decks when the proper precautions are taken.
Photo courtesy of Fiberon

Natural Wood Decks

Natural wood decks continue to be the benchmark for aesthetics. "I'm still a big fan of all wood decks, and my clients still seem to prefer the look of a wood deck," says Dave Tibbetts, owner of Cumming, Ga.-based Atlanta Decking and Fence. "But the reality is that a wood deck requires a good deal of effort in terms of cleaning and sealing to keep it beautiful year after year."

Composite and Vinyl Decks

Decks constructed using composite materials are more expensive than natural wood decks, adding about 35 percent to the total cost of the project. But the extra investment can be a worthwhile tradeoff for homeowners who are looking to quickly boost the market value of their home. When using vinyl decks, customers can expect to pay 5 percent more than composite prices. "These low- or no-maintenance decks can be a very good value if the owner is planning to be in their home for more than five years," says Tibbetts, who today



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builds about 20 percent of his projects using composites.

Nearly 80 percent of clients of deck specialist John Burns, owner of American Deck of Winchester in Winchester, Va., opt for a composite deck. "Our typical composite customer has already had a wood deck in the past, is well aware of the maintenance requirements and does not want to deal with those again," he says. "They come to us requesting composites because they are ready to make the upgrade."

"Composites have come a long way in the past five years," continues Burns. "There have been tremendous improvements in terms of their performance and aesthetics."



Wood decks still offer unmatched aesthetics, but there's trade-off in maintenance and longevity.
Photo courtesy of Southern Pine Council

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Installation tips

Here are some tips on working with the different types of decking:

Wood Decking

- Minimize the spacing between boards to account for material to shrink with weathering.
- Use fastening systems that are compatible with the wood species, sealers and preservatives.
- Consider diagonal installations to minimize splices and add visual interest.

Composite and Vinyl/PVC

- Check code approval in your area.
- Understand the framing requirements for spans during the design stage of the project.
- Use only manufacturer-approved fastening systems.
- Recognize these materials can not be used for structural framing.
- Consider how you will finish the edges of the deck, treads and risers.

Composite materials also bring an added element of design flexibility to a project, says Jim Sasko of Teakwood Builders in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., which really pleases his clients with upscale projects. “You can do some really interesting things like bending the deck around trees much more easily using composites.”

Sasko builds about 90 percent of his deck projects using composite materials and reserves all-wood decks for sheltered, undercover applications such as gazebos, screened porches and three-season rooms.

Installation, presentation challenges

All decks — wood, composite or vinyl — are constructed on a pressure-treated wood foundation, but design and installation techniques vary. Experience is the best teacher.

“There definitely is a learning curve associated with working with composites and vinyls as you make the changeover from building all-wood decks,” says Burns. The most important thing to keep in mind, he says, is in the planning of the deck: “The spans must be designed correctly depending on the surfacing material that you are using.”

“Composites require a slightly beefier substructure to handle the spans,” agrees Eric Kent, president of Archadeck of Charlotte. “Composites require 12-inch on center construction as opposed to 16-inch on center for wood.”

Hidden fastening systems, which eliminate the appearance of screws or other hardware on the deck surface are available for both wood and composite decks and becoming more popular and user-friendly these days, says Burk. “Nobody really wants to look at fasteners.”

“Use of hidden fasteners really takes the appearance of the deck so much further than just the use of colored screw heads, which is what we did in the past,” he says.



"Almost all composite manufacturers have developed or improved upon their own hidden fastener solutions these days. Because they are designed to be used with the manufacturer's pre-grooved deck boards, they can really save a lot of installation time once you are familiar with the product."

"Do your homework," advises George Drummond of Casa Decks in Virginia Beach, Va., "particularly when experimenting with new products or materials, including the new hidden fastening systems." Drummond says that he uses hidden fasteners on about 30 percent of his projects. A simple mistake such as over tightening the screw in the fastener can ruin its integrity.

"The most important thing is to make sure that you read and understand all of the manufacturer's instructions on how to install any decking product before you start the project because that can make all the difference. Remember, it is your reputation that is on the line as well."



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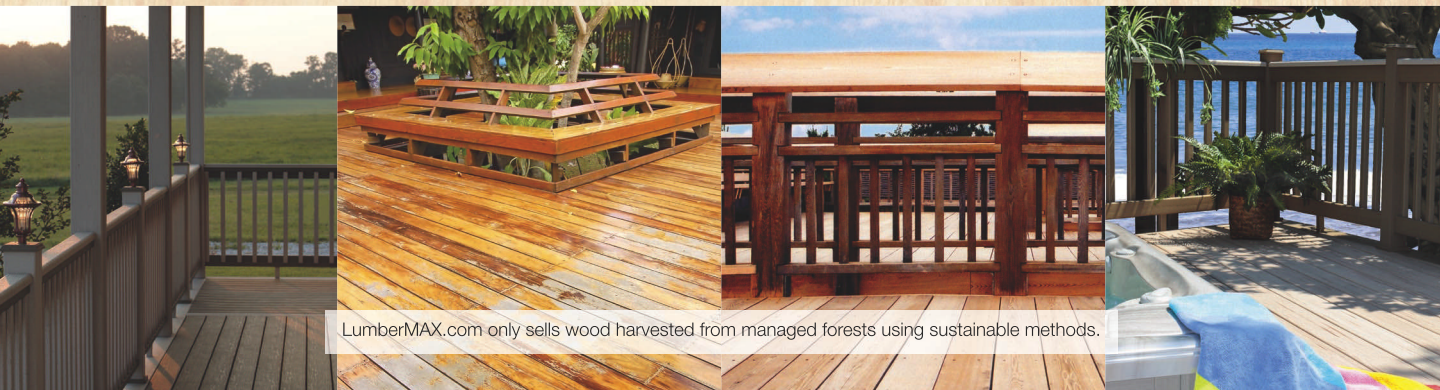
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New Products

By Nick Bajzek



Oldcastle Architectural

The latest addition to the Belgard Environmental series' line of permeable concrete products from Oldcastle Architectural is Subterra Stone.

Whereas traditional paver products merely allow water to runoff, Subterra uses a

9.5 percent void ratio,

allowing rainwater to naturally drain through the paver into the soil.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-75>



Fiber Composites

The latest in cPVC from Fiber Composites falls under the fiberon line. Called Sanctuary, the deck boards mimic the variations found in wood. Made with a cPVC core without fiber fillers, the boards' surface is made of durable layer of acrylonitrile styrene acrylate, a material used to protect automobile bumpers and outside mirrors.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-76>



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Wolman

Wolman made its new DuraStain Semi-Transparent Neutral Base to give your decks that extra edge. The formula features an alkyd/acrylic blend that penetrates like oil and protects like acrylic. You can use it on all exterior wood surfaces, and it creates a rich, semi-transparent matte finish.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-77>

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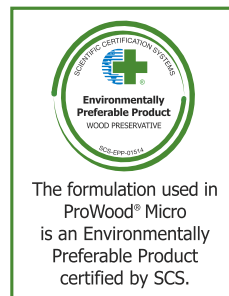
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Deck Images

These easy-to-assemble railing systems by Deck Images come in aluminum and glass. Dubbed the E2A, the 36-inch-high kits are available in both 6-foot line and 6-foot stair sections. The E2A is made from high-grade aluminum to ensure strength, durability and rust resistance. The powder-coated components come in green, clay, white or black finishes.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-78>



Crane

Crane's BellaStone Architectural columns feature the texture of quarried stone without the need of a professional stonemason for installation. The new system uses Crane's low-maintenance dimensional non-masonry stone technology in a durable column design for landscaping, fencing and porch railings.



For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-79>

TimberTech

Offered in 12-, 16- and 20-foot lengths, TimberTech's new XLM decking planks are made from a low-maintenance polymer decking material that uses a proprietary blend of mineral enhancements for structural integrity. The grooved planks work with the company's stainless steel hidden fasteners.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-80>



AERT

The Juniper collection is a unique organic cedar composite decking material made from heartwood cedar fibers from Juniper Mexicana or Texas Cedar. Made by AERT, the line has a deep wood grain and uses 90 percent pre- and post-consumer recycled content.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-81>



McFarland Cascade

If you're doing work on an elevated deck, consider installing this new drain system from McFarland Cascade. The DrySnap system is made of vinyl ceiling panels that collect and direct runoff from the space below decks. The joist brackets attach to the bottom of the joist, eliminating inherent problems with inconsistent joist spacing.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-82>



Viking

Those customers who demand luxury will be quite satisfied with Viking's Outdoor E-Series gas grills. A new porcelain-coated cast iron grate design retains heat better than steel and guards against rust — making cleaning easier. The redesigned burner throws 28,000 BTUs into the mix, and LED lighting in the control panel makes cooking at night easier.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-83>

AZEK

Available since April, AZEK's Porch planks provide an easy-to-clean surface that resists stains, moisture, scratches and fading. The planks can be used in covered or uncovered areas because they don't expand or contract as much. The tongue-and-groove 1-foot by 4-foot planks install easily with traditional wood-working tools and are up to 40 percent lighter than wood composites.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-84>



Deckorators

Deck installers looking for some punch will do well with Deckorators' new Estate aluminum baluster. The ¾-inch baluster is 26 inches tall for a 36-inch rail height. Available in black or bronze, the Estate accommodates 2½ balusters per linear foot. A five-step installation guide is included.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-85>

Simpson Door Co.

A new choice offered by Simpson Door Co. on its French doors is the WaterBarrier Technology, the newest innovation from the company's Performance Series of weather-related products. The doors combine one-piece medium density overlay and PVC on the outside of the door to stop water leaks.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-86>



Hoppe

Contractors looking to combine interior and outdoor living can use Hoppe's Fold & Slide hardware. Made for openings up to 48 feet wide, the system uses wood or aluminum panels up to 3 by 10 feet and can sustain 165 pounds per panel. The concealed bottom channel blends with the floor.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-87>



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Trex

Trex's Accents Fire Defense decking was developed for outdoor living spaces that are vulnerable to fires. The planks are self-extinguishing, even under extreme heat and flames. Like the original Trex Accents, the Fire Defense planks are reversible with either a wood grain or a smooth finish.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-88>



Integrity

Made from an extremely hardy pultruded fiberglass material, the All-Ultrex Sliding Patio Door from Integrity is a low-maintenance door that features factory-applied jamb extensions and a drywall return for installation flexibility. A special folding nailing fin makes the job even easier. The doors come in standard sizes up to 8 feet and come in stone white, pebble gray, bronze, cashmere and evergreen.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-89>

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Homeowners want consistency and clean lines on their fences. FenceScape's new rail brackets do just that; they are powder-coated and match the colors of the company's Mountain Cedar product line. The composite materials are culled from reclaimed wood fibers and pure plastic resins made in a realistic, weather-resistant wood pattern.

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Photo of actual deck in Santa Rosa, California.

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For FREE info go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-69>



KitchenAid

The latest line of 27-, 36- and 48-inch built-in and freestanding grills by KitchenAid has a weather-resistant stainless steel construction and commercial-style handles. Select freestanding models have an electric warming drawer and the company's U-shape 22,500-BTU burners and W-shape stainless steel sear plates.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-91>

Travis Industries

You have to admit this looks pretty hot. Designed solely for dramatic effect, the Tempest Gas Torch by Travis Industries works in outdoor living spaces, front walkway pillars mounted on deck posts, stone pillars and a variety of other applications. The ceramic glass housing directs oxygen to help create the spiral presentation.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-92>



Daltile

Grouped under Daltile's exteriors collection is the Willow Canyon (shown) and Castanea tiles. The Willow Canyon resembles quartzite and comes in mesa sunset and cliffside colors, both of which sport some excellent color variations. The tiles come in four sizes. A trim package is also available.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-93>

Diamond Spas

Who said outdoor spas were on their way out? This Custom Copper Spa by Diamond Spas sports an inlaid barn board skirting on the outside and a private therapy seat, two loungers and bench seating on the inside. This model measures 84 by 114 by 36 inches and can also be crafted in stainless steel.

For Free info, go to <http://pr.ims.ca/5659-94>



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A man in a blue plaid shirt and green t-shirt is sitting on a wooden deck, leaning back against a wooden railing. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. A pair of work gloves and a red toolbox are on the deck next to him. The deck is made of dark brown composite material and has a white railing. The background shows a body of water and trees.

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