

What's In For Outdoors

(NAPSA)—If you want to get more enjoyment out of your yard, you can consider creating attractive outdoor spaces that are both easy to take care of and good for the environment.

American homeowners are increasingly drawn to adding outdoor rooms for entertaining and recreation on their properties. That's what the most recent Residential Landscape Architecture Trends survey conducted by the American Society of Landscape Architects discovered. The survey results also show demand for both sustainable and low-maintenance design.

Landscape architects who specialize in residential design were asked to rate the expected popularity of a variety of residential outdoor design elements. The category of outdoor living spaces, defined as kitchens and entertainment spaces, received a 94.5 percent rating as somewhat or very popular. Ninety-seven percent of respondents rated fire pits and fireplaces as somewhat or very in demand, followed by grills, seating and dining areas, and lighting.

Decorative water elements—including waterfalls, ornamental pools and splash pools—were predicted to be in demand for home landscapes. Spas and pools are also popular.

Terraces, patios and decks are also high on people's lists.

Americans prefer practical yet striking design elements for their gardens including low-maintenance landscapes and native plants.

In addition, more people are opting for food and vegetable gar-



Photo credit: Stephen Stimson Associates

Outdoor kitchens and food gardens are growing in popularity in the American landscape.

dens, including orchards and vineyards.

Good To Know

If you're thinking of joining them, a few food-growing facts and hints may help:

- Food gardens can be easy, rewarding and sustainable. For starters, you can use fallen leaves and grass clippings in spring and summer as mulch and weed suppressant.

- Perennial plants can be low maintenance—they come back every year without replanting. Some great examples include asparagus, blueberries, blackberries and rhubarb.

- Herbs can make for an especially sustainable food garden, as many prefer hot and dry areas of your yard, with chives, sage and tarragon returning every year.

Learn More

Additional information on the survey and on residential landscape architecture in general can be found at www.asla.org/residentialinfo and (888) 999-2752.