

Outdoor Living

Creating Backyard Getaways

(NAPSA)—For a growing number of Americans, getting away from it all doesn't involve going very far. That's because the latest trend in outdoor spaces involves creating a vacation spot in your own backyard—and it's a trend Americans have taken seriously. In 2004 alone, homeowners spent more than \$62 billion on outdoor living products and remodeling services, according to the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association.

"Backyards have actually become more like 'outdoor rooms.' They give homeowners the perfect opportunity to let their imaginations run wild. People can create areas that remind them of their honeymoons, their favorite travel destinations or even places they've never been but have always wanted to visit," explains Cindy Prest, The Home Depot's global product merchant for patio.

So how do you create your own outdoor oasis? Hampton Bay—a brand of patio furniture, ceiling fans and lighting—offers these tips:

Island Getaway

Homeowners can create a backyard paradise with an island theme. Consider adding authentic island art to your patio. A number of Web sites sell Caribbean, Hawaiian or Jamaican pieces, intended specifically to be displayed outdoors. Next, surround your deck with lush, hearty outdoor plants reminiscent of the islands. If you have a back porch, consider using a ceiling fan to add to ambiance. Hampton Bay makes



Backyards have become gateways to outdoor vacations.

a Nassau Ceiling Fan with blades that resemble palm leaves. In addition, the company's Cabo furniture set has bamboo designs and palm tree decorative detail for a taste of the tropics. You can also use floating pool lights to turn your swimming pool into a relaxing island retreat.

Tour Of Europe

Homeowners can re-create the feel of a relaxing European getaway in a few simple steps. Start with a place for morning tea or cappuccinos. For instance, Hampton Bay has a Riviera Collection of outdoor furniture that is inspired by Mediterranean cafes, complete with patterned upholstery. After seating is arranged, consider an English Garden look. Try using tongue-and-groove boards to fill in gaps on your picket fence. Also, place large copper planters with small trees around the yard. As a final touch, plant shade-loving ivy in the darker corners of the yard.

For more information, visit www.homedepot.com.