



SHOWPLACES

Inground Pools with a Designer's Touch

By Katie Beamer



Photo courtesy of Waterscapes

Americans increasingly view their backyards as extensions of their homes, with an inground pool often forming the stunning centerpiece of an outdoor family recreation setting.

In the coming year, pool dealers expect to build more recreational pools with shallow areas at both ends. These sport pools create ideal playing fields for water volleyball or basketball. During construction, the builder can place holes in the deck for the net or hoop. Dual shallow ends also provide a place for tired lap swimmers to rest.

Grecian and Roman pools will remain popular for people seeking a classic look, perhaps to complement a more traditional home. For a seamless transition, some families will choose to carry the same coping and tile found inside their homes to the pool and surrounding outside areas.



Photo courtesy of Prestige Pools, Inc.

Alternately, with property at a premium in some urban markets, backyards will shrink, necessitating smaller pools that offer the ambiance of an aquatic retreat while consuming minimum space. Many of these smaller pools lend themselves to a natural look, as if

someone built a house next to a charming pond. Earth tones will dominate the color scheme of tiles and pebbled surfaces, and stone may replace colorful waterline tiles.

Lagoon-style pools, with faux or natural rock grottos and manmade streams connecting pools and spas,

will remain in vogue. More homeowners will likely opt for in-pool bar areas or caves, with water cascading over the cavernous area.

Expect more and varied water features in 2006—everything from in-deck fountains to sheer walls of glistening water to laminar jets, spraying illuminated arcs across the pool.

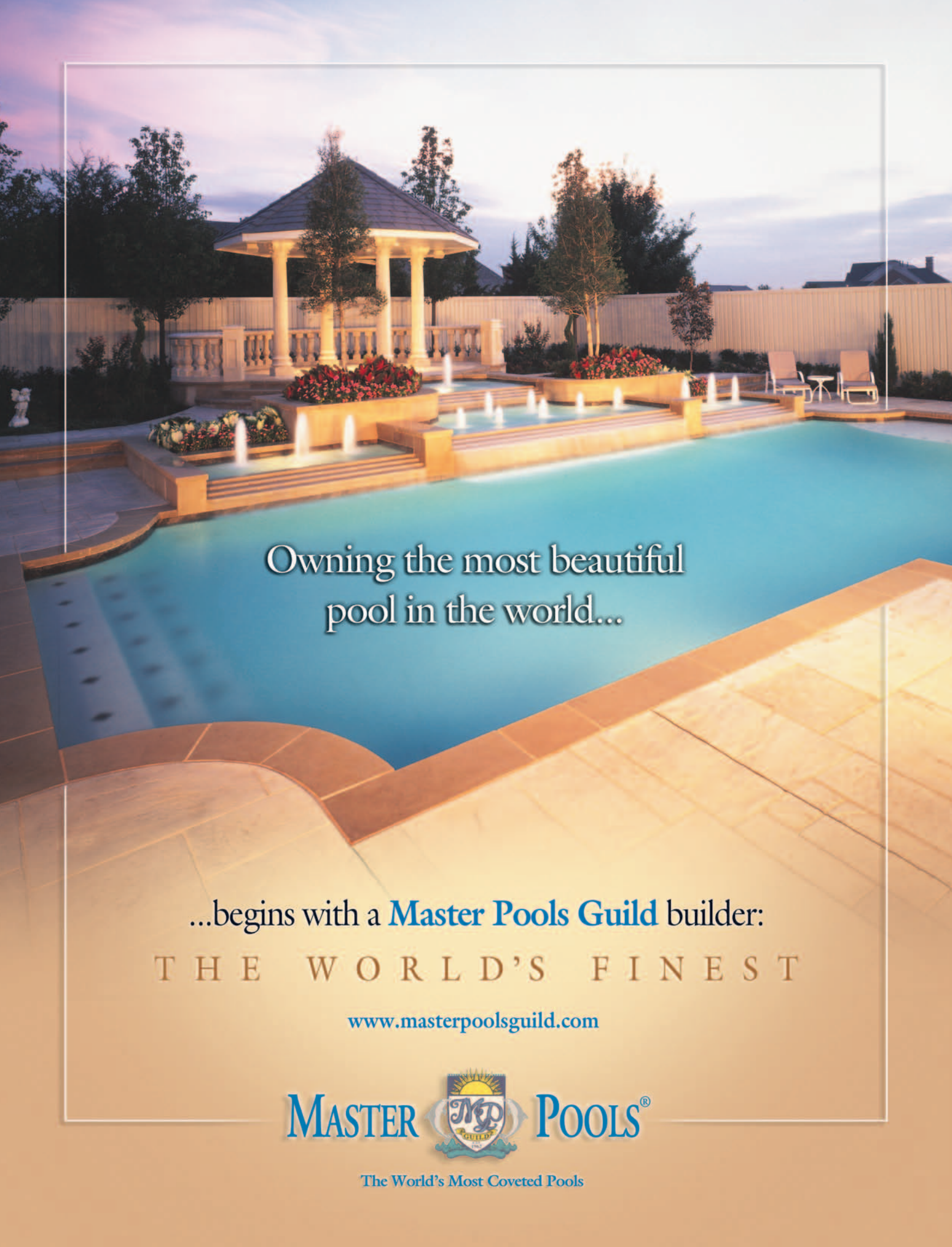
Tanning shelves, areas where two people can soak up the sun while cooling in a few inches of refreshing water, are also popular. In homes with small children, builders tend to place these in the shallow end.

Vanishing-edge pools, in which the water appears to drop off into the surrounding environment, are

“**W**e are continuously reinventing ourselves and our pools. The biggest trend we see is master planning the backyard to create a backyard environment that helps families capture their dreams. There will be areas for everyone—play areas for children, as well as quiet spots for mom and dad to relax. We also expect to add multiple water features to many pools this coming year.”



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