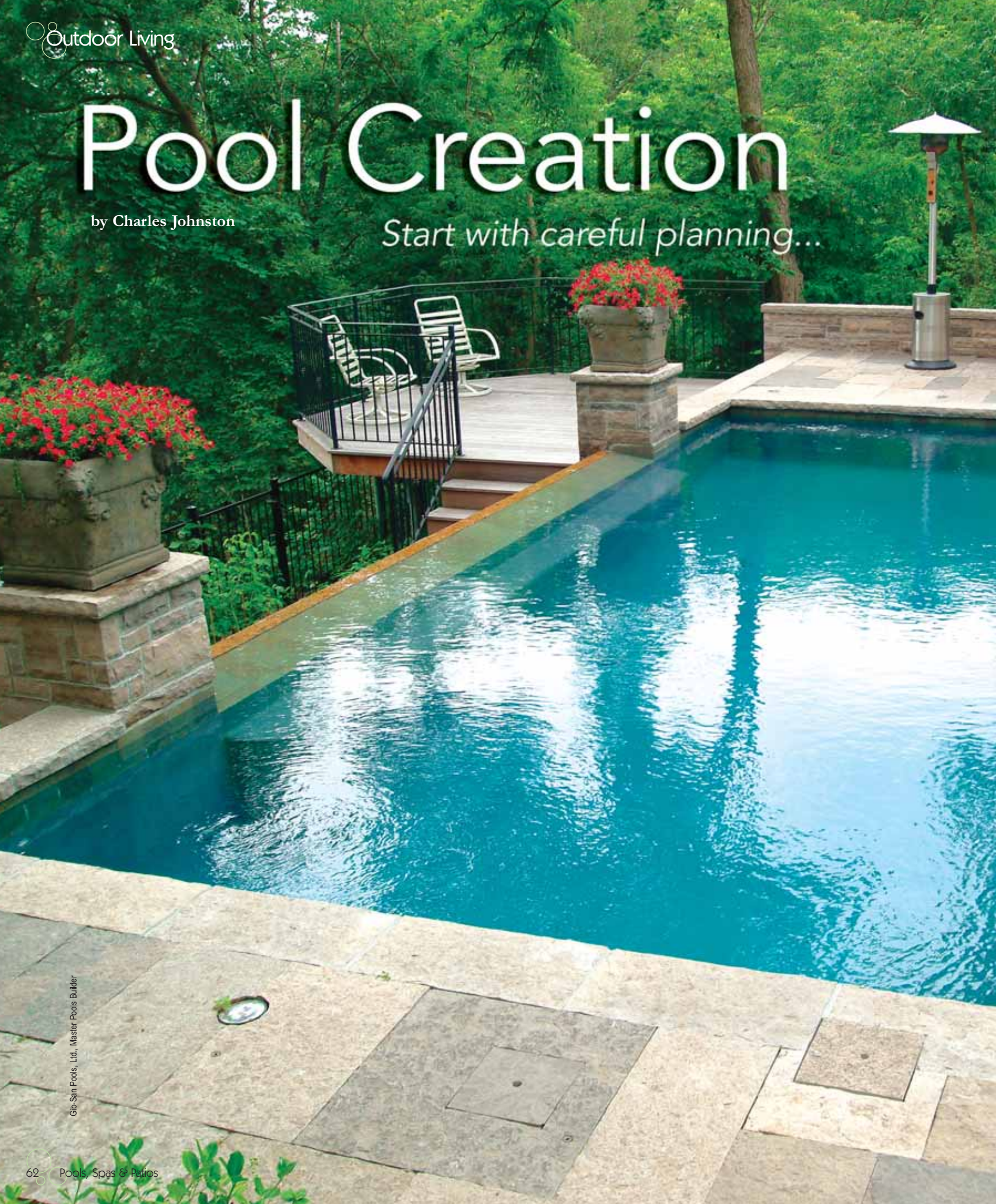


Pool Creation

by Charles Johnston

Start with careful planning...





Water is the most mesmerizing element on earth. Whether on holiday or a weekend hike, we gravitate to water to soak up its silence, its music, and to watch its ever-changing surface reflections. So why not create your own waterfront property – one without the hassle of weekend commuting to get there?

Amaze yourself at the new life in your backyard by adding water. The pool is just one part of your new outdoor living area dynamics, and the way it is planned is paramount to its success. Following similar rules in planning your exterior living space as you've done with the interior of your home provides the most gratifying results. Both require introspection into your lifestyle and determination of a theme or feel you want. Each room or area must work with those adjacent to it to create an overall look and easy traffic flow.

Over the past few years outdoor living expectations have changed, mainly because of lifestyle changes. Busier lives and more crowded neighbourhoods have put more emphasis on creating a space that we can control and call our own. We want a place where we can relax and entertain family and friends. However, because family lifestyles and budgets vary, poolscape designs will be different even for the same yard space.

The role of the pool has changed over time as well. Once purchased primarily for the kids to swim in, the backyard pool is now designed as much for its beauty and landscape focus (which can be appreciated by the whole family), as it is for its exercise possibilities. A poolscape can truly change the dynamics of the whole outdoor living space and be appreciated whether you are a swimmer or not. It can add the excitement of a resort with activities for all ages or be as restful as a health spa with the soothing trickle of water masking out the world beyond your fence.

Backyard Resort Starts With Your Dreams

The backyard resort starts with your dreams – how you envision your poolscape to be when relaxing or entertaining there. Your lot size and natural terrain are fixed and must be



Hollandia Gardens, Master Pools Builder

Transposing Your Vision Into A Plan

Transposing your vision into a plan can be a challenging task. Start with your family lifestyle, both today and over the next few years. How many children are likely to be in the pool at any given time? Are they at the stage where a large shallow area with water jets would be fun to play on, or would a slide and water sports be the turn-on? Do you like to sit around the pool and sunbathe or read? Do you entertain a lot – and if so, with what size of groups? What décor fits your style – a fun setting with entertaining features that offer a ‘wow’ factor or a more formal and traditional setting? Is your yard private enough for you to relax in – or do you need to mask-out the sounds of nearby traffic and voices? Answers to these questions help to establish a checklist of features to be considered.

“A good plan anticipates the changing needs of a family as children grow up,” states Jay Middleton, head designer at Gib-San Pools in Toronto, Ontario. “Pool features can be designed with a timelessness about them so they will continue to be enjoyed as family lifestyles change.”

Locating the pool where it can be seen from inside the house – even a glimpse – adds enjoyment. Similarly, make sure it is visible from your patio area when lying on a lounge chair or enjoying a meal at the table. Monitor the path of the sun and consider the family traffic flow both to and from the house and between the pool, outdoor kitchen, and play areas. And more importantly, capitalize on any landscape feature or vista your property offers.

“These are all factored into a plan by a quality pool designer who considers the whole backyard lifestyle and not just the pool,” says Carla Sovereign-Pawella of Alka Pools in Burnaby, British Columbia.

worked with or around, as is your neighbours’ proximity. You need a plan, and one of your first challenges is finding a pool builder who can help you create one.

You need a professional company that is accomplished at more than just the technical aspects of building your pool – one that can provide creative options and tie the overall pool and landscape concepts into an integrated master plan.

Having three or four contracting companies – pool, decking, landscaping – all working independently, with each adding its own interpretation and creative style – or not – is generally not the best approach to creating a winning backyard design. It makes sense that an integrated master plan done up-front with your lifestyle in mind will produce better results – something exceptional.



Gib-San Pools, Ltd., Master Pools Builder

Indoor Amenities... Outdoors

Many of us want the same amenities outdoors that we have indoors. Outdoor kitchens have no bounds – from modest BBQ centres to full blown grilling stations with stainless steel appliances and a pizza oven nestled into the brick, rock, or granite counters of entertainment cabanas. Let's face it, the kitchen is usually the most popular room when entertaining inside, so it makes sense to give it the same prominence outside as well. Everyone likes to be close to the source of food and drinks – to see what secrets they can glean about the tasty hors d'oeuvres or the latest gossip.

Today's outdoor entertainment systems surpass what you have inside. Why not watch your favourite team on a plasma television camouflaged into the landscape while sitting in your spa or pool? Listen to music while doing laps with bass from the underwater speakers helping you keep pace.



Piscine Bonaventure Inc., Master Pools Builder

Water Features Add An Exciting Focal Point

Water features add an exciting focal point to your backyard. Imagine the added intrigue of viewing your wooded ravine or a distant body of water across a vanishing pool edge where one becomes the extension of the other. How about a waterfall –



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