

Home&Garden

SECTION R

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A wide flagstone terrace surrounds the kidney-shaped pool and hot tub in Tom and Helen Fraser's sloping lot. Landscape architect Cla Allgood used a variety of durable materials to create an expansive backyard wonderland.



A oak bench sits on a brick patio in Henry and Jean Snowden's new courtyard.

FLOORS ALFRESCO

Different textures and materials for outdoor surfaces create interest underfoot

By Mark Stith
Staff writer

It's the definitive Southern migration. If it's a nice day, folks in these parts head outside to play. Most often, such outdoor excursions are short trips — like out to the back yard and a favorite lawn chair. You would be hard pressed to find a home or condo in Atlanta without some sort of outdoor floor — a patio, deck or terrace. Any inviting space starts from the ground up, as Atlanta residents and outdoor types Tom and Helen Fraser could

tell you. Employing the skills of landscape architect Cla Allgood, the Frasers turned a sloping, uncivilized 1 1/2-acre back yard into a series of outdoor nooks and recreation areas. Mr. Allgood integrated durable materials such as flagstone, tile and pressure-treated wood to create an expansive wonderland featuring a hot tub-pool combination, multi-level patio areas and a lighted tennis court. A 20-by-30-foot covered terrace off the kitchen is surfaced in adobe, a reddish-gray Mexican tile with the look of natural stone. Matching stairs descend from the terrace to a small patio

► Planning on resurfacing an outside space? Read on. **By** paved with blue-gray flagstone. The patio steps down to the kidney-shaped pool and elevated hot tub, flanked by wide, curving flagstone borders. A short flagstone pathway leads to a 12-foot-square patio overlooking the tennis court. This curves back to the house, where 12 six-quarter-inch round, treated timber Soviet beds and steps that end in a 14-by-20-foot patio done in rough-textured adobe. Viewed from the kitchen terrace, the



Photo: Bruce-Hall

David and Arlene Taylor had a thin strip between their wooden deck and property, so they paraded into a unique flagstone patio.

layout of pool, paths and patios resembles a small amusement park. "We got tired about not wanting to go anywhere for a vacation," 35-year-old Fraser says.

Small space was big challenge

On a much smaller but no less impressive scale, David and Arlene Taylor's outdoor living area behind their 11-year-old Atlanta home is a perfect example of getting the most from the least amount of space. The Taylors' "back yard" is more along the proportions of an alley — a

thin rectangle extending a mere 17 feet from the rear-most projection of the house. Yet the Taylors enjoy a variety of living spaces through a creative blend of wood decking and flagstone.

Instead of going with the standard deck offered by the builder, they opted for a more spacious option that extends across the back of the house about 40 feet — nearly the width of their lot — and wraps around to one side. A hot tub off the master bedroom and an arbor

Photo: Don DUTSKE, 89-8

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It's the definitive Southern migration: If it's a nice day, folks in these parts head outside to play. Most often, such outdoor excursions are short trips - like out to the back yard and a favorite lawn chair. You would be hard pressed to find a home or condo in Atlanta without some sort of outdoor floor - a patio, deck or terrace.

Any inviting space starts from the ground up, as Atlanta residents and outdoor-types Tom and Helen Fraser could tell you. Employing the skills of landscape architect Cla Allgood, the Frasers turned a sloping, uncivilized 1 1/2-acre back yard into a series of outdoor nooks and recreation areas.

Mr. Allgood integrated durable materials such as flagstone, tile and pressure-treated wood to create an expansive wonderland featuring a hot tub/pool combination, multilevel patio areas and a lighted tennis court.

A 20-by-30-foot covered terrace off the kitchen is surfaced in adoquine, a reddish-gray Mexican tile with the look of natural stone. Matching stairs descend from the terrace to a small patio paved with blue-gray flagstone.

The patio steps down to the kidney-shape pool and elevated hot tub, flanked by wide, curving flagstone borders.

A short flagstone pathway leads to a 12-foot-square patio overlooking the tennis court, then curves back to the house, where it encounters seven raised, treated-timber flower beds and steps that end in a 14-by-20-foot patio done in rough-textured adoquine.

Viewed from the kitchen terrace, the layout of pool, paths and patios resembles a small amusement park. "We get teased about not needing to go anywhere for a vacation," Mr. Fraser says.

Small space was big challenge

On a much smaller but no less impressive scale, David and Arlene Taylor's outdoor living area behind their 1 1/2-year old Atlanta home is a perfect example of getting the most from the least amount of space.

The Taylors' "back yard" is more along the proportions of an alley - a thin rectangle extending a mere 17 feet from the rearmost projection of the house. Yet the Taylors enjoy a variety of living spaces through a creative blend of wood decking and flagstone.

Instead of going with the standard deck offered by the builder, they opted for a more spacious version that extends across the back of the house about 60 feet - nearly the width of their lot - and wraps around to one side. A hot tub off the master bedroom and an arbor with built-in seating just outside the dining room added to the deck's versatility. Still, the 900-square-foot platform didn't quite fill the bill.

"The steps off the deck just led down to a strip of red

clay with a little grass," Mrs. Taylor said. And although the rear of the house - essentially a wall of windows - looked out on the woods behind the property, the couple also wanted an intimate, enclosed space when they stepped outdoors. Plus, the deck wasn't quite big enough for entertaining lots of guests. With the help of landscape designer Carol Hess of Environmental Design Group, they now enjoy an expanded outdoor living space fitting their needs.

To create a feeling of intimacy, Ms. Hess extended the existing 8-foot shadowbox redwood fence to enclose three sides.

The midpoint - and focal point - of the rear fence holds a unique stained-glass panel created by Atlanta artist Tom Marr. The original wooden steps were widened from 4 to 17 feet, and instead of dead-ending, they now lead to a 180-square-foot flagstone terrace.

The real magic trick was performed in the terraced area, neatly tucked into a sliver of land at one point only 5 feet wide. The paving widens at either end to distinctive sitting areas, one of which features a pair of facing teak benches and a small recirculating fountain and pool framed with ferns and other plants.

At the opposite end is a two-person macrame rope swing flanked by climbing plants such as clematis and Confederate jasmine.

Courtyard solution

Landscape architect Bill Smith was asked to mix people and parking spaces in front of Henry and Jeanne Bowden's home in north Atlanta. "We needed a nice place for the kids to sit out, as well as room for guest parking," Mrs. Bowden said.

The solution was to extend their two-car driveway, which slopes steeply down to the street, into a mixed-use courtyard near the front steps. The new area features a brick-trimmed, black concrete parking space/turnaround ending in a 7-by-5-foot patio that's home to a sitting-pretty teak bench. Here, loose-set brick are laid on a concrete foundation, which forms a more durable surface than the usual way of laying loose bricks on packed sand or earth. Dichondra growing in the earth-filled cracks gives an aged look.

Shaded by a huge red oak and several dogwoods, the courtyard is framed by a low wall used for sitting and done in brick matching that of the house. Inset lighting provides soft illumination at critical points.

The front wall dips 12 inches to allow a view of the house from the street. Blue-gray cherokee flagstone steps lead to points away from the courtyard, creating a comfortable transition from the formal-looking entrance to the woody yard.

“It was a difficult site,” Mr. Smith says. “It had to be level [for sitting], and the only place I could fill in was at the turn up [to the courtyard].” Several truckloads of dirt were needed to create the foundation for the courtyard. Perhaps the best compliment to the Bowdens’ new outdoor space (or any home improvement project, for that matter) is that it looks like it came with the house.

How much will it cost?

When estimating how much material is needed for an outdoor surface, determine the area’s square footage. Purchase 5 percent extra to allow for breakage or loss. Be sure the materials are approved for outdoor use.

Surface Cost/sq. ft. Durability

(materials only)

Brick pavers \$1.10 - \$3.60 high (unmortared)

Flagstone

Irregular \$3.50 (mortared) high

\$1.50 (loose) high

Cut stone \$1.75-\$8 high

Tile \$3.60 high

(8-inch square)

Concrete

(4 inches thick, poured) \$1.25 high

Stepping stones \$2 - \$3.50 high

Interlocking pavers \$1.40 high

Stone aggregate \$5 - \$6 medium

(needs

resealing)

Pressure-treated wood 50-75 cents medium

Bark mulch Less than \$1 low

River pebbles Less than \$1 medium

Marble

Irregular slabs \$1.50 loose high

Cut marble About \$20 high

color photo: A wide flagstone terrace surrounds the kidney-shape pool and hot tub in Tom and Helen Fraser’s sloping lot. Landscape architect Cla Allgood used a variety of durable materials to create an expansive backyard wonderland. / Louie Favorite / Staff

color photo: A teak bench sits on a loose-set brick patio in Henry and Jean Bowden’s new courtyard. / David Murray Jr. / Special color photo: David and Arlene Taylor had a thin strip between their wooden deck and property line expanded into a unique flagstone patio. / Walter Stricklin / Staff