



BACKYARD BEAUTIES

Today's outdoor kitchens and bathrooms have taken on a new look and bear little resemblance to the backyard barbecues and pool showers most Australians remember from their childhood

THE West Australian love of the outdoors has been slowly influencing house design for some time. With outdoor kitchens now de rigueur in modern-day house plans, it was inevitable that outdoor bathrooms followed suit.

"With the whole concept of outdoor living constantly growing as it has done for quite some time now, it has become prudent for facilities such as ablutions and kitchens to become a part of an overall lifestyle concept," says Reza Khan, general manager of Oswald Homes.

"It justifies West Australians' preoccupation with the outdoors, and why not? We boast some of the best weather in the world, which encourages an outdoor lifestyle."

George Sinclair, sales and marketing manager of Lifestyle Homes, agrees that outdoor kitchens and bathrooms are growing in popularity.

"The introduction of outdoor kitchens and bathrooms throughout WA homes are increasing, with homeowners wanting to take full advantage of the climate, especially in these summer months," he says.

"There is a growing trend for your home to be your ultimate sanctuary. Outdoor amenities such as kitchens and bathrooms offer the exact respite needed from the bustle of the outside world."

Residential Attitudes general manager David Hochwald-Jones says West Australians love to enjoy the wonderful climate, being around the pool or outdoors on balmy nights.

"With busy lifestyles, we like to create a home that is our sanctuary with a relaxed ambience, open to space, light and fresh air," David says. "It lifts the spirit, and we appreciate it."

The outdoor kitchen bears little resemblance to the back yard that most Australians remember from their childhood.

Highbury Homes sales and marketing manager Peter Chellew says outdoor kitchens have been a must-have item since the late 2000s.

"They start from the basic brick build-up for the barbecue with a gas point located outside to the full stainless-steel fit-out, sometimes with stone tops, hot and cold tap with sink, cupboards and various hotplates, wok burners, ovens and display fridges," he says.

According to David Hochwald-Jones, outdoor entertaining has always been popular for West Australians, but people are becoming more interested in creating gourmet food and salads while maintaining a relaxed outdoor atmosphere.

"With this comes a need for hooded barbecues, ovens, wok burners and pizza ovens," he says.

"Many homes are including an outdoor bar – often Bali-style – and there is a trend towards outdoor TV screens as well as sophisticated music systems and DVD players."

Outdoor bathrooms are tending to take two forms in new homes – either as a place to shower after swimming in the pool or at the beach, or as a luxurious retreat off the main bedroom.

"Outdoor showers have been commonplace for some time, particular for those with pools and or those who are near to the beach," says Peter Chellew.

"The bigger swing I have noticed here is that the outdoor shower has gone from the hidden necessity to a statement of style."

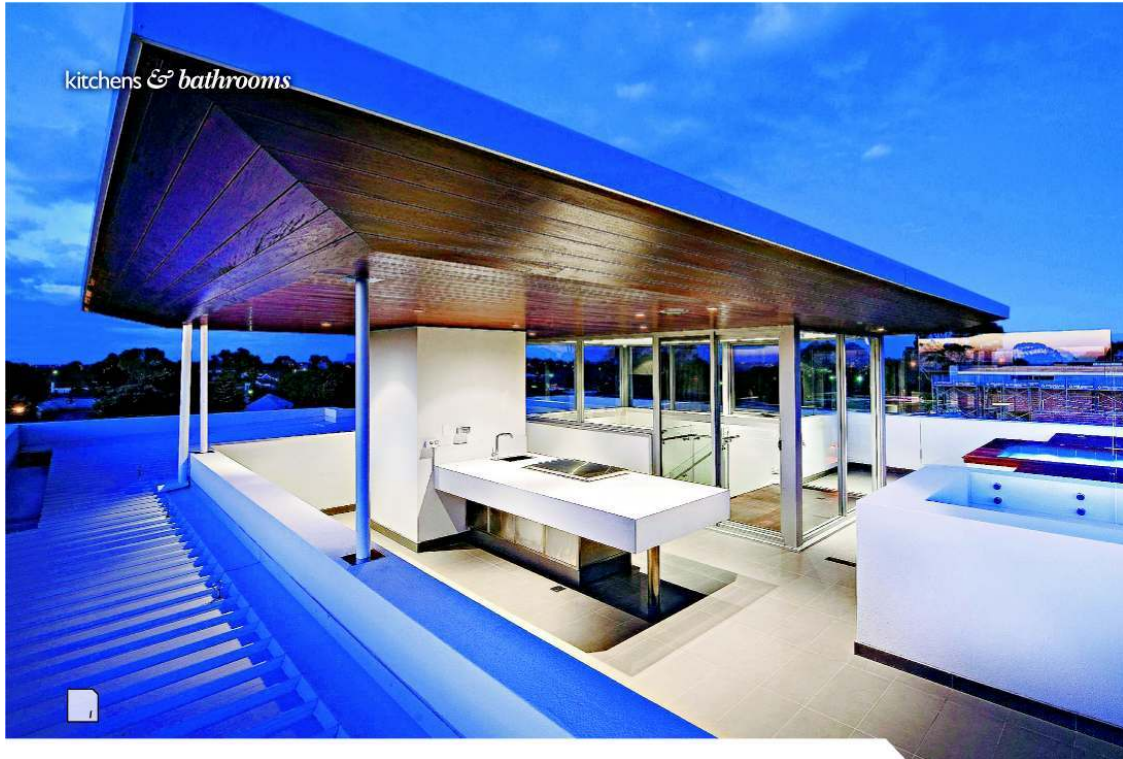
Shane Casserly, sales and marketing manager at Ventura Homes, says the outdoor bathrooms incorporated into their recent display homes have been incredibly well received.

"Our outdoor bathrooms are completely enclosed courtyards in what would have been wasted space off the ensuite," he says. "Instead we've transformed that space into a luxurious sanctuary."

David Hochwald-Jones sees similar trends.

"A popular solution to having outdoor access to bathroom and toilet facilities is to have a dual-access bathroom, with a door to the garden," he says.

Lisa Amphlett



1. *The Mare Sol* by Oswald Homes.
2. *The Escape* by Ventura Homes.
3. *The Plaza* by Lifestyle Homes.
4. *The Elements* by Residential Attitudes.
5. *The Leeuwin* by Ventura Homes.
6. *The Mayfair* by Residential Attitudes.

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