

CELEBRATING 36 YEARS
IN JEFFERSON'S VIRGINIA

albermarle

The Sky's The Limit

DESIGNING BEAUTIFUL AND
FUNCTIONAL OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES

June/July 2023 \$4.99



albermarlemagazine.com

- STEEPLECHASING • STITCHES IN TIME: NEEDLEWORK MASTERPIECES
- PICKLEBALL TRIVIA • VIRGINIA WINE COUNTRY: 2023 MONTICELLO WINE COMPETITION AND THE MONTICELLO WINE TRAIL • BEE BALM
- THE CHINCOTEAGUE PONIES



The Sky's The Limit

DESIGNING BEAUTIFUL
AND FUNCTIONAL OUTDOOR
LIVING SPACES

BY CATHY PURPLE CHERRY, AIA, LEED-AP, FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL OF PURPLE CHERRY ARCHITECTS • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BURROUGHS, DURSTON SAYLOR, AND DARREN SETLOW

Outdoor spaces play a vital role in our lives, providing a connection to nature and a sanctuary from the hustle and bustle of our day-to-day life. Outdoor living spaces are opportunities for introducing open fire and flowing water, creating whimsy, and introducing sounds that differ significantly from the emotions experienced inside the home.

Whether it's a small patio, a spacious terrace, or a multi-structure estate, designing beautiful and functional outdoor living spaces requires creativity and careful planning to create functional, comfortable, and beautiful environments that seamlessly blend with their natural surroundings. We frequently collaborate with a professional landscape architect to develop a master site plan, which details layout and flow, landscaping and hardscaping, and pool size and orientation, among other features.

Blend Indoor & Outdoor Living

The most special entertainment areas of the home are where the inside meets the outside. When you can expand a house's indoor living or kitchen area into the "outside room," you can embrace the views, the wind, and the smell of nature while doubling the floor area of your entertainment space. One way to incorporate this concept is by utilizing a folding glass wall system. These systems allow the doubling of an entertainment area with easy flow across the



Structures such as pergolas, gazebos, pavilions, and pool houses provide shade and shelter and create a gathering and entertaining destination away from the main house.





large opening's width. The glass walls can fold on themselves in a scissor-like fashion, or they can slide and stack into a wall pocket. Where bugs prevail, a large screen can be married with folding glass panels.

Shade & Shelter

Structures such as pergolas, gazebos, pavilions, and pool houses provide shade and shelter and create a gathering and entertaining destination away from the main house. For example, in addition to meeting functional requirements, today's pool houses often offer both indoor and outdoor lounge spaces with stone fireplaces, conditioned spaces with foldaway glass walls creating the ability for year-round use, full kitchen and dining spaces accommodating everything from lunch for the kids to full farm-to-table meals, built-in gourmet grilling centers with entertaining features such as pizza ovens and ceramic smokers, outdoor fire pits, and full-scale bar spaces taking the form of anything from a rustic barn to a modern sports bar aesthetic.

To create a truly experiential space for friends and family to gather, some pool houses are also designed to accommodate pool tables



Understanding and defining each space's intended use will help you choose the right furniture and accessories.

or ping pong tables, home gyms, and guest suites, and can also be supported by a bocce ball court, croquet court, pickleball court, or playground space.

The choice of materials used in these accessory structures can significantly influence the character and aesthetic of the outdoor area. For instance, a wooden pergola seamlessly blends into nature, natural stone creates a timeless and rustic ambiance, and sleek metal elements convey a more contemporary feel.

Furniture Selection

It is essential to consider the purpose of each outdoor space to determine the type of furniture required. Do you envision a cozy reading and relaxation retreat or a vibrant area for hosting parties? A cozy retreat may call for a pair of chaise lounges in a soft neutral hue, while an area meant for entertaining may require a dining table and a fire pit with additional seating. Understanding and defining each space's intended use will help you choose the right furniture and accessories.

When selecting furniture pieces, seek weather-resistant materials like teak, aluminum, synthetic lumber or wicker, and durable fabrics such as Sunbrella. Think beyond just furnishings, too—incorporating rugs, plush pil-



Creating an outdoor destination experience on your property can transform how you entertain, utilize, and interact with your surrounding environment.

lows, and cozy blankets can add comfort and a touch of luxury to an outdoor seating area.

Landscaping & Greenery

Consulting with a talented landscape architect is invaluable when planning for plant species and plant locations. They will consider the unique characteristics of your property, how you plan to use your outdoor spaces, and your local climate to recommend trees, shrubs, flowers, and potted plants that thrive in your area and are best suited to enhance the natural beauty of the environment.

Outdoor Lighting

Thoughtfully planned lighting enhances safety and can transform an outdoor space into

a magical oasis. Think through the nighttime uses of each outdoor destination and the pathway used to reach it to determine what type of lighting is needed and where. Utilizing a combination of festoon lights, lanterns, and path lights will create a warm and inviting atmosphere. Lights built into hardscaping can illuminate pathways and steps and prevent trips. In addition, architectural features, trees, and sculptures can be accentuated via uplights and spotlights, adding a layer of drama to the space.

Entertainment & Technology

Integrating innovative smart technology can create a dynamic and immersive experience in an outdoor area. Consider installing an outdoor sound system with strategically placed

speakers, a weatherproof television under a covered patio for outdoor movie nights, smart lighting that automatically adjusts to daylight or even automated retractable awnings that can be adjusted based on the weather.

Creating an outdoor destination experience on your property can transform how you entertain, utilize, and interact with your surrounding environment. A well-designed outdoor oasis can create a delightful retreat from your main living spaces, offering unique views of the surrounding landscape, creating indoor/outdoor living opportunities in comfortable weather, and keeping cabin fever away in the colder months. By striking the right balance, outdoor spaces can become serene retreats that enhance our connection to nature and enrich our daily lives.



By striking the right balance, outdoor spaces can become serene retreats that enhance our connection to nature and enrich our daily lives.



Born and raised in Virginia, Cathy Purple Cherry ultimately landed in Annapolis where she grew a large architectural firm specializing in high-end custom homes and estates. Today, the firm has four offices—Charlottesville, VA, Middleburg, VA, White Sulphur Springs, WV, and Annapolis, MD—and specializes in creating luxurious residences across the United States. A talented architect, visionary, and three-dimensional thinker, Cathy is able to marry clients’ dreams with the reality of the built environment. While she revels in the intricate design opportunities presented by high-end residential architecture, Cathy is equally passionate about her philanthropic efforts. She and her firm offer their design knowledge and sensitivity to the special needs community via the Purple Cherry Purposeful Architecture Studio. A true creative servant, Cathy Purple Cherry is unfailing in her efforts to positively impact all those around her.

Purple Cherry Architects
434-245-2211 purplecherry.com