

March 23, 2017



The Winchester Star

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# HOME & GARDEN

# The new living room

## Homeowners bring the indoors out with patio projects

By **JENNY BAKER**  
The Winchester Star

**WINCHESTER** — Move the indoors out — that's the thought behind current patio trends.

"People are trying to make the space more livable, so you're seeing things like kitchens with bars and grills being added to an outdoor space," said James Printz, co-owner of Greatscapes in Winchester.

"Think of it as an extension of your actual living space; you're making the space more functional instead of a space with just tables and chairs," he said.

Printz is currently building his outdoor living area at his home.

"We're constantly beautifying others' properties and adding investments. It's a great perk to do this to your own property as well," he said.

"I love having an outdoor entertainment space and a lot of my friends are clientele, so it's a good way to show off skills that the company has."

Patios have come a long way. Besides being a place to grill and dine al fresco, you can now cook your entire meal outdoors with today's outdoor kitchens, thanks to adding upgrades like counter space, ovens, and sinks.

"We've seen more emphasis being placed on outdoor cabinets, veneered with stone and topped with a natural stone top to create a gourmet outdoor kitchen," said Sarah Frey, marketing director for Frederick Block, Brick & Stone in Winchester. Other popular outdoor kitchen add-ons include professional grills, wine coolers, ice makers, and sinks.

If those items aren't in your budget, there are plenty of other smaller projects you can tackle to improve your outdoor living space.

"One thing we've been adding with our installs is a sitting

wall," said Printz.

"Those are nice because they are not only functional as an area for people to sit or to place things, it closes the area in, giving it more of a private feel."

Frey also recommends DIY projects like the sitting wall, a hardscape bistro table, or a fire pit. Fire pits are a great way to add value and allow the homeowner to enjoy their patio on cooler nights in spring and fall.

"Most of the companies that make patio pavers offer fire pits as easy-to-install kits, and several have gas burning options," said Frey.

"Masonry fire pits provide the added safety of a more enclosed flame, typically are available with cooking grates and spark screens, and they cannot tip-over like most portable fire bowls. Smokeless fire pits are a more recent option that has generated excitement."



Outdoor kitchens have grown in popularity dramatically in the last few years. Besides a professional grill, people are adding ample counter space in materials like granite, sinks for easy cleanup, small refrigerators, and storage space. Pergolas, like the one pictured above, can help define a space and create outdoor "rooms."

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# Kitchen remodel?

## What to do before you start; plus, new trends for 2017

By **JENNY BAKER**  
The Winchester Star

**WINCHESTER** — Considering a kitchen remodel? There's a lot more to it than picking out new appliances and cabinets. We spoke with industry professionals, who gave us their tips on everything from selecting a designer to the choosing the countertops.

### Step 1

Analyze your current space. What works, what doesn't? David Richmond, certified kitchen designer and owner of Heart of the Home Design Build of Winchester, recommends asking yourself these questions:

- Does your kitchen work for you? Or was it meant for someone else?
- Do you have adequate access and egress in your kitchen in case of an emergency?
- Do doors and appliances interfere with each other?
- Does your Work Triangle "work," or is it too spread out and interrupted?
- Do the preparation and work areas in your kitchen have adequate counter-top space?
- Do you have enough storage for dishes, pots and pans, food, and small appliances?

After you've studied your space with a critical eye, you'll have a better idea how to approach the remodel, and what your priorities should be.

### Step 2

The next step is finding the right professional. Richmond says that because housing and construction markets have improved since the recession, many more contractors are coming into the market to take advantage of the upturn — and not all are qualified. While they may offer lower prices, you might end up paying more in the long run for mistakes.

"Use a professional recognized by the industry, in this case a kitchen or bath designer certified by the National Kitchen and Bath Association," he recommended.

"Beware of unqualified contractors."

### Step 3

Richmond says that it is important that the designer or contractor takes the time to get to know you, which ensures better communication during the project between the design and construction phase.

Have a clear vision of what you want — but be practical.

"Do your homework. Collect a folder of dreams, thoughts and design concepts," said Richmond.

"Sizzle is great, but make sure it functions properly. Nothing kills bling like bad design. The kitchen specialist who just gives the client what she wants is not a designer, he's a salesman. Good design is not free."


New kitchens and kitchen remodels have a very different look than then did 10 years ago. Heavy looks and darker colors are being traded in for a lighter, modern look.

See **Trends**, Page 5



JEFF TAYLOR/The Winchester Star

Gray cabinetry and stains on wood are popular kitchen trends for 2017, said Scott Dyke, co-owner of Cavalier Kitchens and Baths in Winchester. One trend that hasn't changed in years is the desire for a large kitchen island. Having the island be a different color than the rest of the cabinets is also a desired look.



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# Trends

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Here are five trends for kitchen design for 2017:

## 1. Transitional Style

Forget ornate cabinetry — clean and simple lines are sought-after.

“Transitional style is in,” said Scott Dyke, co-owner of Cavalier Kitchens and Baths in Winchester. “It’s not a true Shaker style, it’s a smooth simple style. Cabinets are clean, flowing lines.”

## 2. Painted cabinets

Dark cabinetry has been falling in popularity. Lighter colored painted cabinets are what you see a lot of currently.

“Painted cabinets are up dramatically, around 50 percent — white, off white, grays are in,” Dyke said.

Stains are also popular as are “gray stains on wood. Espresso brown stains, mixing two different finishes or styles. Around the perimeter cabinets are painted, or having a different color island.”

One thing that hasn’t changed? The desire for a kitchen island. Dyke said that islands are still the number one thing people want in their kitchen if they don’t already have one.

## 3. Granite and quartz

No surprise here: granite remains king. Dyke said that 95 percent of their kitchen designs have granite or quartz.

Quartz has greatly grown in popularity. “Quartz, and white and gray colors are very popular right now. And either actual marble, or it’s imitated through quartz,” said Pete Hallet, manager at ABKA in Winchester.

He said that people are moving away from the darker colored granite, and from typical builder-grade styles like Ubatuba. “They are discovering that there is a larger selection out there,” Hallet said.

## 4. Specialty lighting

Lighting under and inside cabinets are not only attractive additions, but practical and useful too. “Lighting has really advanced the way it’s offered and presented, with different colors and different types of white light,” Dyke said.

## 5. Backsplash

“People tend to look at the island or backsplash as places to experiment, to do different colors or styles,” said Hallet.

He said that homeowners feel they can take more of a risk with a backsplash and are leaning toward tile with different shapes like rhomboids, a diamond-shaped pattern, or arabesque, a more ornate shaped tile.



JEFF TAYLOR/The Winchester Star

**ABOVE:** Specialty lighting, particularly under cabinets, is a growing trend.



**RIGHT:** You won’t see many granite backsplashes anymore. Subway tile and all-glass tile are the new must-haves, as pictured in this home on Handley Avenue in Winchester.



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# Refresh for spring

## Local designers and shops share tips for the home

By **JENNY BAKER**  
The Winchester Star

**WINCHESTER** — Flip through any home magazine or scroll through any blogger's Instagram feed this time of year, and you'll see lots of bright white walls, minimal decor, pops of color, and probably a palm leaf or two.

'Tis the season to lighten up. We spoke with area interior designers and shops for their tips on how to refresh your home for spring.

### Easy updates

Let's start simple. What can be done immediately, without spending any money?

"The easiest way to give the house a brighter vibe for spring is to trim everything down a bit," advised Paul Miller, interior designer and owner of Make Nest Interiors on Winchester's Loudoun Street Mall.

"Simply removing a few things from the mantle or from your tabletop vignettes can give the house a lighter feeling. Rearrange accessories to tighten up groupings and open up free space on counter tops, bedside tables, and bookshelves. A modest tune-up of home accents can go a long way to shaking off the winter doldrums."

Elise Seidita, interior designer and owner of Cotton Hill Home in Berryville, suggests simple changes like swapping out pillows and throws for seasonally-appropriate ones. Consider your rugs also.

"A lot of people will do a sisal rug, which is large and a lot of people here use them over their wooden floors. Put a smaller rug on top that may have a fun print, adding a punch of color," she said.

"It's easy to do this at any price point, and it's a simple project that your husband won't even know that you've done it," she said.

### What to clear out

Another easy way to freshen your home

for spring is to simply remove the heavier-weight objects and darker colors and store them until the fall.

"We advocate for meaningful collections that have value in your design all year round, but while rearranging during your spring cleaning, you can group brighter pottery or art glass in a more prominent place," advised Miller.

"The wonder of early spring is the mix of vibrant color with the remains of wintry muted tones. To capture the excitement of seeing that first spray of daffodils, use your pops of color sparingly, rather than evenly disbursing them in the room," he said.

Kimberly Sowers, owner of Kimberly's in Old Town Winchester, recommends lightweight fabrics like cottons, linens and lightweight wool.

"It's time to put away the cashmere and fleece blankets, dark candles and frosted wreaths. Look for bright florals — dogwoods and apple blossoms are a great touch," she said.

Seidita recommends removing your heavy drapes and replacing them with roman shades, which still provide privacy and a barrier from the outdoors.

### Colors & trends

Sowers reports that shades of green and

See **Colors**, Page 7



JENNY BAKER/The Winchester Star

Sunbrella makes indoor-friendly fabrics in a wide array of styles, like these available at Cotton Hill Home in Berryville.



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# Colors

from **Page 7**

palm patterns are everywhere this year, and that classic floral patterns are making a comeback.

"Pastels are always the go-to for spring, but this year natural greens are the Pantone colors. Look for lush, bright greens to fill your home," she said.

Seidita agrees about green. With Greenery being named the Pantone Color of the Year for 2017, she said that you can expect to see it everywhere soon.

Bold colors are also big. "People are feeling good and the colors show it," she said.

Made in America is also making a welcomed comeback. Miller said that at his shop, they are witnessing a growing interest in furnishings made here, "which is great because America has solid reforestry standards, which obviously is good stewardship."

"We made the commitment ourselves to work with made in America furniture last year and have been very satisfied with that decision."

## Other tips

Change the scent in your home. Seidita recommends adding fragrances with diffusers in lighter scents, like coconut mango. "They will last all summer long and you

don't have to worry about a fire risk," she said.

Seidita also recommends adding slipcovers to your upholstered furniture.

"With spring and summer, I think of kids being out of school, popsicles and candy on furniture, so I would recommend either making a slipcover or reupholstering your fabric in a Sunbrella fabric, which is an indoor/outdoor fabric," she advised.

These new fabrications are indiscernible from regular upholstery fabrics — they have textures, patterns and colors just like you'd expect to see on an upholstered piece in a furniture showroom.

She also recommends Crypton fabric, which she said was developed originally in the healthcare industry because it is antimicrobial, resists bacteria and keeps fluids out.

"It's like Superman to dirt," she said.

Miller, of Make Nest, says that now is the time to deal with certain household projects.

"Spring is a good time to tackle projects that require airing the house during or after, such as refinishing floors or painting," said Miller.

"While the air outside is temperate, one doesn't have the concern about losing heat or cooling."



JEFF TAYLOR/The Winchester Star

Spring display inside Kimberly's. Shades of green and rabbit figures are popular.

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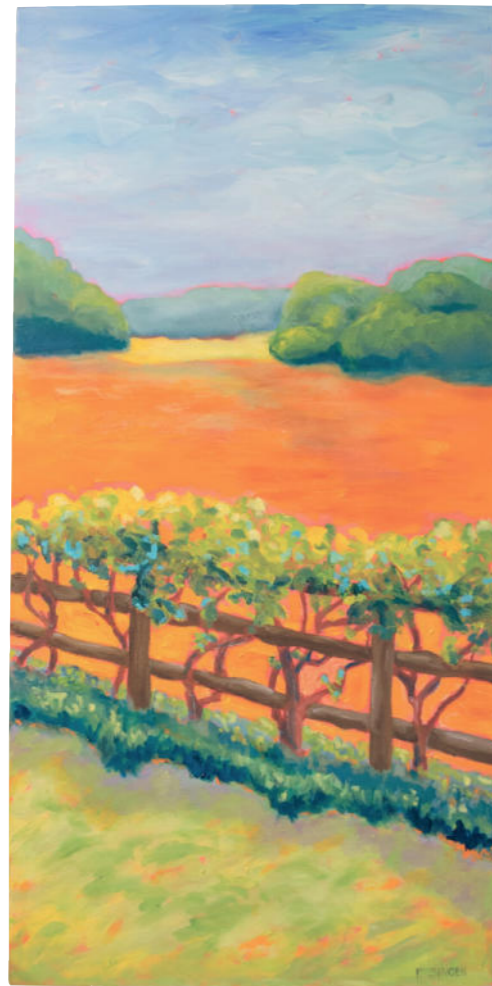
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Clockwise, from top left: Fabric samples, Make Nest Interiors, prices vary. Pineapple bookends, Kimberly's, \$72. Flower plate, Kimberly's, \$38. Illume Pineapple Cilantro candle, Kimberly's, \$17. Reversible napkins, Kimberly's, \$8.50 each. Glass vases, Make Nest Interiors, \$38 - \$48. Concrete lamp, Make Nest Interiors, \$300. Fern frame, Make Nest Interiors, \$20. Bamboo frame, Kimberly's, \$46. Modern plant stand, Make Nest Interiors, \$100. "Grapevine on Fence," by Pam Singer, Bluebell's, \$600. Vintage ceramic bird, Make Nest Interiors, \$55.



# Historic home renovation: to DIY or not to DIY?

## Due diligence and a focus on historic methods required

By MELISSA KOSSLER DUTTON  
Associated Press

Dwain Livengood can save money on his home renovation project by doing the work himself. But he also knows that do-it-yourself projects in historic homes like his 100-year-old farmhouse require extra planning and research, and that mistakes can be costly.

“Self-awareness is pretty huge,” says Livengood, who grew up in the house in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and is the third generation of his family to own it. “Saving money isn’t worth it if in the end it looks like an amateur did it.”

He is planning the first major renovations to the property, including a new kitchen,



Saving money isn’t worth it if in the end it looks like an amateur did it.

— Dwain Livengood  
Historic home owner

hardwood floor restorations and window repair.

DIY “fails” in historic homes can do more than look bad; they can seriously damage a home’s structure and character, says Jody Robinson, historic preservation officer for the city of Bellevue, Kentucky. DIY has a place in historic home renovation, she says, but it needs to be well-researched.

If your home or neighborhood has a historical designation, there probably are restrictions on what you can do, particularly to exteriors. Consult with local authorities be-

fore initiating projects or hiring contractors.

“The difference with a historic home is the materials used and how they were constructed,” Robinson says.

Slate roofs, wood gutters, weight-and-pulley windows, plaster walls and old building materials require special attention, experts say. Luckily, there are numerous places where owners of historic homes can find information about which projects they should and shouldn’t attempt on their own.

Cities, preservation societies, restoration enthusiasts, and even businesses that specialize in historic renovation offer workshops and classes. Window repair, plastering, basic fireplace fixes and tiling are among the most popular subjects.

Understanding your home’s construction and appreciating historic renovation methods are the first step, says Benjamin Curran, department head for historic preservation at Savannah Technical College in Georgia.

When homeowners try to apply modern solutions to old homes “a remodel can easily turn into a re-muddle,” Curran says. For example, using the wrong mortar can damage old bricks.

He recommends taking a class and consulting with a professional or historical preservationist.

“From there, it’s a question of what is achievable. What is the breadth of your skill set? Where might you stretch yourself and learn more?” Curran says.

Jim Wigton, president of the Monrovia (California) Historic Preservation Group, says it was formed nearly 40 years ago by residents who were restoring homes and wanted to share knowledge.

“At the beginning of the organization, we invited craftspeople in to share how to do things,” says Wigton, adding that group also

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Stephen B. Morton/Savannah Technical College via AP

Historic Preservation students paint in the lab, in Savannah, Ga. Understanding your home’s construction and appreciating historic renovation methods are the first step to a successful renovation, says Benjamin Curran of the college. When homeowners try to apply modern solutions to old homes “a remodel can easily turn into a re-muddle,” Curran says. For example, using the wrong mortar can damage old bricks.

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# Historic

from **Page 11**

offers a home tour and works on city-wide preservation projects.

Livengood, who has experience restoring antique carriage and tractors, plans on repairing the 40 wood windows in his four-square house this spring. Using tips from a professional restoration company, he will replace the rope that holds the cast-iron weights that allow the windows to move up and down, and will paint the windows' interiors. He's hired a professional to tackle the exterior. He anticipates the work he does will reduce the repair costs by \$200 per window.

Windows are a good DIY project because the work is more time-consuming than difficult, says Danielle Keperling, who with her parents and husband owns Historic Restorations in Lancaster.

To maintain a home's historical character, repairing old windows — rather than installing new ones — makes a big difference, says Keperling.

Whenever Doug Heavilin hires a professional to work on his 1902 Queen Anne Victorian in Franklin, Indiana, he shadows the person, soaking up as much information as he can.

"I've learned 90 percent of what I know about plumbing by sitting there and watch-



This undated photo shows a 1903 farm house in Lancaster, Penn. Dwain Livengood knows he can save money on his home renovation project by doing the work himself, but the owner of this 100-year-old farmhouse also realizes that DIY projects in historic homes require more planning and information than those in newer homes and that mistakes can be costly.

Dwain Livengood via AP

ing a plumber," says Heavilin, who is restoring the 4,700-square-foot house with his wife, Amy. They've finished five of the home's 22 rooms.

During their restoration journey, they've learned to install tile, hang wallpaper and drywall, repair plaster, and match stain and

paint.

The Heavilins read books and magazines, watch videos, take classes and swap tips with other homeowners before starting a project.

But they also know things might not go as planned, and say it's important to be flexible. "You never know what you're going to find," says Amy Heavilin, recalling the time they discovered that their dining room chandelier was wired to a pipe with a coat hanger.

"We're at the point where I'm pretty comfortable with whatever we find," Doug Heavilin adds. "I'm not always happy, but I'm comfortable."



**RIGHT:** A beam constructed of flat steel sandwiched between double laminated veneer lumber beams carries the weight formerly born by a bearing wall in this 1903 farm house in Lancaster, Penn. Both beam and posts will be fully concealed when finished.

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# Mark your calendars for a trifecta of garden shows

By **JENNY BAKER**  
The Winchester Star

**WINCHESTER** — As the temperatures get warmer, the buds on trees aren't the only things bursting with excitement for the new Spring season. Area gardeners — novices and masters alike — are itching to get their hands dirty with garden soil. Get inspired at one of these upcoming area flower or garden shows:

## Celebrate the Bloom Flower Show

Winchester Council of Garden Clubs  
April 21 & 22, 1 - 4 p.m.  
The Museum of the Shenandoah Valley

Just in time for the 90th Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival, the Winchester Council of Garden Clubs hosts "Celebrate the Bloom" on April 21 - 22, a joint flower show organized by Winchester's five federated garden clubs.

The free show is held at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. The garden clubs host a joint flower show every two years which brings in hundreds of flower enthusiasts from garden clubs across the state to see the exhibits put together by over 200 area garden club members.

"The Garden Club of Virginia's Historic Garden week starts April 22 and runs

through the 29th, so people are traveling all across the state to visit different venues," said Marsha Barley, publicity chair for the show.

"It's a nice kickoff to Garden Week." (Winchester's tour of five venues is on Saturday, April 29, hosted by the Little Garden Club of Winchester and the Winchester-Clarke Garden Club.)

Additionally, this year's flower show is a timely precursor to the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival, which kicks off the following weekend on April 28 and continues through May 7.

The floral arrangements will be interpretations of the festival, expressing the feelings of excitement and anticipation to arrangements inspired by many of the events. Expect to find entries for categories like Apple Blossom Fun, Dining with the Bloom, Little Maids and Pages, and The Private Pre-Parade Brunch. There will be around 100 floral arrangements.

Besides the floral displays, there will be special exhibits on Dressing the Queen and her Court, Pumps and Pearls, The Queen's Ball, The Apple Blossom Princess Reception.

There is a Youth category, themed The Parades, and will feature floats created by children preschool age through 18 years of age. There will also be horticulture entries, which include a range of flowers, plants,

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JEFF TAYLOR/The Winchester Star

Kathy Holliday of Winchester helps create a floral arrangement at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley where the Celebrate The Bloom flower show will be held April 21 and 22. The local garden clubs host a joint flower show every two years.

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# Flowers

from **Page 12**

herbs and some trees. Combination Planting and Container Plants are also included.

Celebrate the Bloom flower show will be held at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley at 901 Amherst St. from 1-4 p.m. Friday and Saturday, April 21 and 22.

Admission to the show is free, but contributions are welcome. To visit the museum's exhibit areas, normal admission rates apply.

## 28th Annual Garden Fair

May 13 & 14, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
State Arboretum of Virginia  
at Blandly Experimental Farm

A Mother's Day weekend tradition, the Garden Fair is a large plant and garden supply sale, with dozens of vendors of high-quality plants including annuals, perennials, small trees, shrubs, boxwood, bonsai, and more. The Foundation of the State Arboretum of Virginia usually sells a selection of plants divided or propagated from the Arboretum collection.

Gardeners, both professional and amateur, share information about how to grow certain plants, what time of year to plant seeds and the nuances of different soil types. In addition to the plant sale, free events include Arboretum tours, native plant walks, children's nature walks, and other activities

for kids.

Proceeds from the Garden Fair help the arboretum stay open to the public 365 days a year, where people can enjoy the beauty of more than 8,000 trees and woody shrubs, representing over 1,000 species. The fair also supports the programs and camps they host throughout the year. Garden Fair is held every Mother's Day Weekend, Saturday and Sunday, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. rain or shine. Admission is \$15 per car.

## GardenFest 2017

Northern Shenandoah Valley  
Master Gardeners  
June 3, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Belle Grove Plantation

Get your garden ready — the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners will hold their 14th annual Garden Fest and Plant Sale on Saturday, June 3 at Belle Grove Plantation in Middletown.

Lectures by local garden experts are one of the highlights of the annual event.

Starting at 10 a.m., attendees can sit in on sessions by Lynn Phillips of Natural Garden Art Nursery in Toms Brook, Jay Pensky of the Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District, and Tim McCoy, research specialist for Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs.

Perennials, shrubs, vegetables and annuals that are homegrown by the Master Gardeners will be for sale throughout the event.



JEFF TAYLOR/The Winchester Star, file

A crowd of Mother's Day shoppers enjoy the 27th annual Garden Fair at Blandly Experimental Farm in Boyce last year.

All plants are suited to grow in the northern Shenandoah Valley gardens. Besides plants, a variety of vendors and local craftsmen will have garden-related items for sale.

Kids will find plenty to stay busy. There will be games, a scavenger hunt with prizes, a petting zoo of farm animals, rabbits and chickens from the 4-H club on display, and demonstrations of sheep dog herding.

Raffles will be available throughout the day for garden-related prizes, and there will be a table of Second Hand Rose's Garden items donated by the Master Gardeners.

Proceeds of GardenFest go toward supporting high school scholarships given annually to local students who plan to pursue a career in agriculture or horticulture.



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# Garage trend? Think versatility, not parking

By KATHERINE ROTH  
Associated Press

The American garage is world famous. But not necessarily for cars.

Silicon Valley started in the Palo Alto, California, garage of the Packard family, where Hewlett-Packard was founded, according to the National Register of Historic Places. Steve Jobs launched Apple in his parents' garage. And dozens of American bands started in garages. Amazon, Disney, Google, Harley-Davidson? All famously launched out of garages.

Garages have, for generations, been places for tinkering and creating, where kids build soapbox-derby cars or refinish kayaks. Some garages are home to small catering kitchens or extensive wine collections, and many feature extra refrigerators or freezers. And of course, they often serve as a deep storage and workshop space.

Designers and architects say the idea of the garage as the ultimate multi-purpose room is alive and well, and that modern garages are finally being seriously retooled to better suit those myriad uses.

"When it comes to garage design, functionality is always key. I'm seeing a lot more glass garage doors, whether frosted or clear. It's more fitting for most modern homes, and makes the space more versatile because it lets in the light," said Jonathan Savage of Nashville-based Savage Interior Design.

"A car collector might want to park in a garage every day to protect their investments, but I store my wine in my garage," he said.

Raw concrete floors are out, frequently replaced by more versatile epoxy or modular rubber flooring, designers say.

"Clients want a floor that can be easily cleaned and mopped, like any other room in

**The idea of the garage as the ultimate multi-purpose room is alive and well, and that modern garages are finally being seriously retooled to better suit those myriad uses.**

the house," Savage said.

And if the garage has windows, he includes window treatments that match those in other parts of the house. Storage units on wheels can be easily rearranged in a pinch, he says, and some garages include not just refrigerators but kitchenettes.

Margaret Mayfield, an architect living in Los Osos, California, keeps her washer and dryer in the garage, with most of the floor reserved as a workspace for refinishing furniture and other tinkering projects. Her family's three cars are parked in the driveway, never in the garage.

"You're supposed to keep your cars in the garage, but I hardly know anyone who does," said David Hirsch, a partner at Urban Architectural Initiatives who splits his time between California and New York City.

"My neighbor uses his for woodworking projects, and my daughter uses hers as a sort of casual space and playroom for the kids. And for deep storage. I guess that's another common use for garages," he said.

Even the carport Hirsch designed for his own Palo Alto, California, home — a steel framework over a gravel driveway — goes unused, he said.

Sheri Koonos, author of "Prefabulous Small Houses" (Taunton, 2016) and other books on home building, says garage doors

are getting more attention these days.

"Individualizing a garage door makes the entire house look much more interesting," she said, citing a recently constructed house in Santa Monica, California, where leftover strips of orange kitchen counter were used to build a striking and artistic garage door.

"They purchased a garage door without siding, laid it all out in the driveway and, using scraps from the construction, really made a gorgeous piece of art," she said. "They made it into so much more than just an ordinary garage door. It's the most beautiful garage door I've seen anybody do, and it adds so much to the look of the whole house."

Koonos also said there is greater demand now for good ventilation in garages, for built-in fittings to facilitate organization, and for garages that are separate from the rest of the house, as opposed to attached garages.

"The garage is such a useful and important space in American culture, and making optimal use of it is much cheaper and more convenient than renting an extra space somewhere," said Hirsch.



Art Gray/Sheri Koonos via AP

This Santa Monica, Calif., home shows the facade of the garage door, a focal point of the house, which was created with scrap pieces of wood and leftover quartz from the interior countertops.

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# Non-flower gardens: 50 shades of green, plus other colors

By KIM COOK  
Associated Press

While beds tumbling with flowers are lovely, there's an emerging trend in landscape design: the flowerless garden.

Non-traditional gardens are no less green. In fact, the hue is often more obvious than in a floral-filled space. Varieties of leafy shrubs, trees, vines and grasses create a verdant vista, even in small gardens. An additional perk: these gardens may be significantly easier to maintain than a plot full of posies.

Justin Hancock of Costa Farms, a nursery in Miami, describes two types of non-traditional gardens: "One is a soothing, naturalistic garden that's filled with different shades of green," he says. "The other is a little more flamboyant and uses variegated plants to bring in splashes of color."

Both offer a pleasing aesthetic in all seasons, and you don't need to worry about plants going in and out of bloom.

## Serenity

A Zen-like garden keeps the focus on the garden structure itself, with greenery that's calming.

Shawn Fitzgerald of the Kent, Ohio-based Davey Tree Company, thinks hard-

**These gardens may be significantly easier to maintain than a plot full of posies.**

scaping should also be a consideration in these gardens.

"A water feature always adds a nice element — a pond, or a creek, with the sound of running water. It's especially nice if you have some lush foliage over the water," he says.

He encourages adding rocks, perhaps some large and small boulders strategically placed.

"And, of course, benches are always great," Fitzgerald says. "Who doesn't like to sit and reflect in a peaceful garden, under some nice shade cover?"

## Visual interest

Hancock suggests using variegated shrubs or trees to add color and texture to a garden. Give similarly hued plants like hostas, dusty miller and succulents a tonal frame by placing them next to bluestone pavers, he suggests. Or play with scale per-



The Davey Tree Expert Company via AP

ception by graduating dark and light greenery along a pathway.

Black Flowering Fountain Grass, which makes a dramatic statement, has flowing green foliage and ebony foxtail-like plumes. The key to a garden where flowers aren't the focus is foliage with different sizes, shapes and textures.

cept by graduating dark and light greenery along a pathway.

"One of my favorite ways to make a small space feel larger is to plant varieties that have rich green, purple, or orange foliage up front, and incorporate white-variegated leaves at the back. Because the light color recedes, it creates an optical illusion of more space," he says.

No matter what hardiness zone you're in, there's one annual he recommends for any non-traditional garden.

"Coleus is one of the most versatile foliage plants you can choose. Some tolerate full sun, but most grow in shade, too," he says. "You can get varieties in so many colors. Redhead, which is a personal favorite; Campfire, which is purple and orange; chartreuse Wasabi; gold Honeycrisp. Plant these in the spring, and enjoy them right through the fall."

Sweet potato vine is another easy-care an-

nual, with multi-colored varieties.

"On the perennial side, hostas are beautiful shade plants that thrive from Alaska way down to Texas," says Hancock. "Variegated liriopse has a wide planting range, and has deep green, grassy leaves edged in gold or silver."

Heuchera, also known as coral bells, "is another perennial that, like coleus, offers tremendous versatility with leaves in a wide range of colors, and varieties that thrive in sun or shade," Hancock says.

Fitzgerald recommends palm trees for southern zones 8-11. Gardeners in the Mid-Atlantic might consider cool-season grasses that bloom early, and warm-season ones that bloom at summer's end. For the Northeast, varieties of conifers provide year-round greenery.

Hancock's pick for a great North American native shrub is ninebark.

"It's practically bulletproof, and offers colorful foliage," he says. "Diabolo is an older variety that has deep purple leaves from spring to fall and grows big, making it a stunner. Dart's Gold is a smaller variety, with golden-chartreuse leaves."

Red twig dogwood, elderberry and variegated Japanese white pine would also provide all-season interest, he notes.

"The key to a garden where flowers aren't the focus is foliage," says Fitzgerald. "There are lots of trees, shrubs and plants with stems, fruit and foliage of different sizes, shapes and textures. Just because there aren't flowers doesn't mean your garden can't be colorful."

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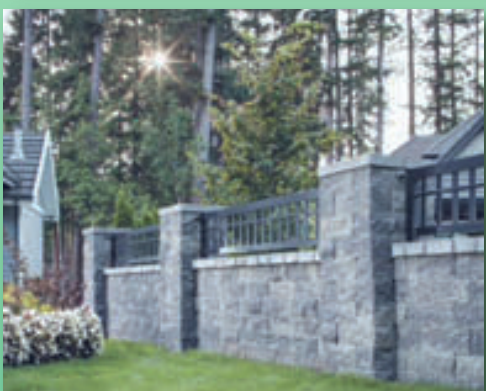
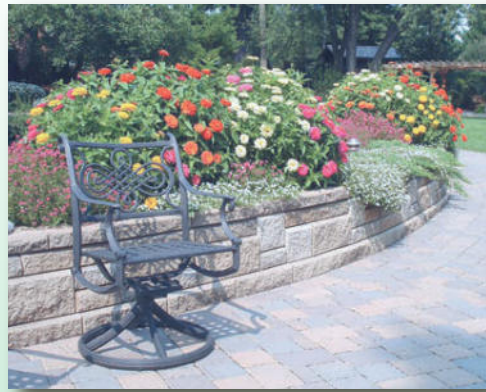
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