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Year-Round Alfresco Living In Connecticut Expand Your Living Space and Increase Your Property's Value

For Connecticut residents, year-round living in the Northeast means acclimating to a four-season climate. The warmth of spring and summer quickly fades into the chill of autumn, and before you know it, Old Man Winter has arrived! For that reason, outdoor living and cooking becomes a mere seasonal tradition, but it does not have to be that way. Year-round backyard usage is now not only possible, but also essential. With various opportunities to design an outdoor space with weather protection (i.e., a permanent roof or pergola with a retracting shade), homeowners can easily extend their indoor living space to the outdoors with a terrace and built-in kitchen, barbeque, fireplace, pizza oven or fire pit to offer their guests an additional gathering place for recreation, celebrations, and entertaining.

Outdoor living, even in cooler climates, is becoming increasingly popular and experts and homeowners are taking notice. According to the National Home Builders Association, "Outdoor kitchens can earn back up to 130% of their value." Additionally, when an outdoor fireplace or permanent fire pit is well designed and properly installed, it increases the visual appeal of the home's landscape significantly, which is attractive to potential buyers down the road. With that potential, many homeowners are opting to add outdoor spaces that serve as focal points, bringing both beauty and practicality to their landscape.

Before starting the design of an outdoor living space, it is crucial for homeowners to consider any limitations (such as budget, location, zoning laws, and safety) that may impact the project. For instance, if the design includes the addition of a fire feature, it is important to ensure that both the kitchen and/or fire pit are a safe distance from propane tanks and not located within property line setbacks. After these limitations are resolved, it is essential to keep in mind that outdoor living is no longer limited to those with big budgets. From custom build outs and prefabricated fireplaces, to granite and metal countertops, to grilling stations and full outdoor kitchens (with sinks, plumbing, heating elements, and electric), to pergolas with retracting shades and green roofs, the options for creating your perfect outdoor oasis on any budget are endless!

According to Jonathan Tan, Associate Designer at The LaurelRock Company, "A designer has to understand the opportunities and constraints that are unique to each project, while taking advantage of natural assets. For example, if a property slopes, a series of gardens and entertaining spaces that spill into one another can be created, thus providing a graceful and functional way to transverse the elevation change." Tan added, "For outdoor

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kitchens, terraces, and fireplaces, the LaurelRock design team works creatively to integrate these elements into spaces that are tailored to client needs, respond to the natural character of their property, and meet safety regulations.”

With just a few simple improvements and an inspired design, you will quickly increase your living space and property value, so you and your guests will have a great gathering spot to enjoy all year round. So, go ahead and take advantage of your landscape’s natural assets; we all know that there is nothing better than taking in the beauty of a breath-taking landscape sitting next to a fire pit in a couple of Adirondack chairs!

About The LaurelRock Company

The LaurelRock Company has been servicing clients in Fairfield County and beyond, for over 35 years. They have lent their landscape architecture, construction and maintenance expertise to more than 1,000 of the area’s most stunning residential properties. Their team of dedicated professionals, including landscape architects, designers, horticulturists, and construction and maintenance crews, are committed to enhancing each property’s aesthetic beauty, with a concentrated focus on preserving the environment and worker safety. The LaurelRock Company is the single solution for all of your landscape needs.

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