



## DRAWN TO THE HEAT *Outdoor Fireplaces*

BY DEIDRA DARSA



**(facing page)** The high capacity Winthrop Gas Fireplace by Avalon comes with a 9-piece log set and the Ember-Frye burner for enjoying those outdoor dinners photo courtesy of Travis Industries **(above)** The indoor/outdoor Merit Plus Series Fireplace is made with stainless steel weather surfaces to withstand the test of time photo courtesy of Lennox Hearth Products

A chill in the air or the onrush of rain doesn't stop Ken and Carol Vaughn from enjoying the outdoors in the foothills. It's during a chilly afternoon or evening that you may find them relaxing in their covered outdoor room, comforted by the warmth of their rustic fireplace. "It's a really nice place to sit outside, have a cup of coffee and listen to the rain," said Ken Vaughn of Meadow Vista, California.

With two fireplaces indoors and an open wood-burning firepit on their three acre estate, making the decision to include a gas fireplace in their outdoor room was easy. "The idea to include an outdoor room came about when we began building our house," he said. "During that process we realized that we wanted to have an outdoor space that we could use year-round. And, because it often rains in the foothills during the winter, we built a

covered outdoor living space and added a gas fireplace for its warmth and ease-of-use."

The Vaughns worked with DAVCO's Warm Sensations of Auburn, to find the perfect hearth product that met their needs. "Since that area right outside the door is part of your house, you might as well make it as attractive as possible with a fireplace," said DAVCO owner, Cherylene Anderson. "We want to



(above) For cozy settings, the medium capacity Winthrop Gas Fireplace by Avalon comes with a 4-piece log set enticing you outdoors a little longer photo courtesy of Travis Industries (inset) Made with beauty and stainless steel construction, the Alfresco Series by CFM Corporation is a superb addition to any outdoor setting photo courtesy of CFM Corporation

coordinate the fireplace to the patio area.”

For Murre and Peggy Traverso of Davis, an outdoor wood-burning fireplace is the place for family and friends to gather, even during family backyard campouts. “We’ve gone as far as pitching a tent on our lawn,” said Murre Traverso. “The kids even roast marshmallows in the fireplace.”

Instead of purchasing a vacation home, the Traversos decided to create a backyard resort with a rustic kitchen and natural looking pool and waterfall. That same look was carried through to the outdoor wood-burning fireplace. “From an aesthetic point-of-view, a large roaring fireplace across from the swimming pool and waterfall made the look,”



The 44 Direct Vent Fireplace by Fireplace Xtordinair will keep you quite warm with its 3,000 square foot heat range photo courtesy of Fireplace Xtordinair



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he said. "We enjoy it eight months out of the year."

Residential contractor Marty Morse of Morse Remodeling has incorporated outdoor fireplaces in several projects, including the Traversos, and offers these tips: position your outdoor fireplace so it's visible from indoors; if wood, build the chimney to properly draw; and, engineer the foundation to adequately support the weight. Most importantly, he says, have the product installed by a National Fireplace Institute Certified specialist.

"There are several ways to go about building an outdoor fireplace," said Mitch Heller of the Sacramento retailer Custom Fireside Shops, Inc. "You can use a masonry contractor and build the fireplace out of cinderblock, brick with a gas valve log lighter or a gas log set, or you can build an outdoor fireplace using a wood or gas manufactured fireplace with a custom surround," he said. Heller carries the Lennox Hearth Products line, a manufacturer of both indoor and outdoor fireplaces. Currently, Lennox carries seven outdoor fireplace models, both wood and gas.

"With a wood fireplace you often have to move chairs forward or backward depending on the heat output, but a gas fireplace is easily adjustable with a switch, either way," said Mark Campbell, product manager, "no outdoor room is complete without a fireplace." And, the folks at Travis Industries agree. "The outdoor fireplace has become a luxury item that people are looking for," said Kurt Rumens, president. "It is the focal point that makes for a cheerful gathering area."

Looking to provide products for the outdoor market, Travis Industries went back to OMNI-Test Laboratories, Inc., to have a number of their gas fireplaces tested and approved for covered outdoor use. "We're finding that magazines are showing them and consumers come into the stores with pictures asking, 'can you do this for me?'" he added.

For those looking for the ambience of an outdoor fireplace, but don't need the heat, consider an electric product. "Our product




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was created for folks who live in areas where it's too warm for a fireplace, yet they want the ambience of a burning fire in their outdoor room," said Kim Hammill, Dimplex product manager. "The response has been overwhelming."

In Auburn, Earthly Wisdom landscape design contractor, Sunny Rehkop, uses outdoor fireplaces to create destinations or a focal point in the yard. "I'm looking for the fireplace to create a place or a separate part in the landscape. It's about creating a focal point and fire has become a good way of doing so."

AH

*Deidra Darsa is the Public Relations & Media Relations Manager of the Hearth, Patio & Barbeque Association (HPBA). For additional information on HPBA visit [hpba.org](http://hpba.org) or phone 703.522.0086.*



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