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**“Hive It” Your Way:  
Outdoor Rooms Expand Living Space of American Homes**

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Nearly sixty percent of the 1.8 million new homes built in 2004 have a patio, porch or deck. Outdoor hearth products sold in record numbers for the second consecutive year. And U.S. homeowners spent more than twice the amount on remodeling and renovation - \$200 billion - than on new home construction. A full third of that amount was for exterior amenities.

An independent 2003 survey of gas grill owners with household incomes of \$75K or more showed that half actually have an outdoor room (although half of them don't use the phrase!) But an outdoor room by any name is, well, an outdoor room and, by definition an extension of your home living space.

**The Basics ... or All the Bells & Whistles**

The key elements of the outdoor room include a durable, high-performance barbecue grill, a dining table and chairs, lighting for night, a patio umbrella for shade and some type of portable heater, chiminea or fireplace to chase the early and late season or nighttime chills. A basic outdoor room comprised of quality products can be assembled for around \$2,500.

On the other hand, with high-end landscaping, an in-ground pool, and a premium built-in grill housed in an exotic island, the cost can easily escalate to \$100,000 or even higher. The point is that regardless of budget, with thought, creativity, and planning, an outdoor room can be yours!

The sensible route for most homeowners is to make it a two- or three-year project, as you'd do in decorating an interior. Set your plan and implement it by stages, first getting electrical and plumbing in place. Given the generally low interest rates that continue to drive the remodeling boom you may find it sensible to roll an outdoor room right into your financing.

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### **Consumer Spending for the Home Still Up**

The reverberations from 9/11 may continue to impact personal and vacation travel, the frequency of dining out and other non-essential expenditures but American consumers continue to put their money where their family and friends are – right at home. Consider these facts:

- ✓ 14.4 million new barbecue grills were shipped in 2004.
- ✓ Consumers spent \$3.2 billion on new outdoor furniture.
- ✓ They put \$40 billion into landscaping and garden upgrades.
- ✓ Second home ownership will double by 2010 (to 10 million).
- ✓ Close to \$200 billion was spent on home remodeling/renovation – a full third of it on outdoor amenities.
- ✓ The pool and spa industry accounted for \$20 billion – with a growing percentage of that on spas/hot tubs.
- ✓ Many new outdoor rooms are equipped with elaborate kitchen components, such as cabinets/storage area, countertop/cooking island, refrigerators, sinks and running water, electrical outlets and lighting.
- ✓ In the survey of gas grill owners, half of those with outdoor rooms have a stereo system, 10 percent have TVs, 28 percent have swimming pools and 18 percent a hot tub or spa.
- ✓ 91 percent of the customers at pool and spa retailers order a kitchen amenity with their installations.
- ✓ Nearly 70 percent of gas grill owners cook out year-round at an average of 1 to 2 times per week. Outdoor hearth products such as chimineas, portable heaters and firepits play a large role in making this a comfortable experience whatever the weather or climate.
- ✓ Mosquito eliminators are also gaining in popularity – another appliance that ensures more comfortable time outdoors.

### **A Demographer's Delight, a Consumer's Leisure**

American consumers, having passed through “nesting” and cocooning” are now into “hiving” and “connecting”. But it's really all the same thing: people spending more time with family and friends in the comfort and safety of their own homes. And hearth, patio and barbecue products play a major role in making that all happen.

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Two-thirds of the 3,200 hearth, patio and barbecue specialty stores across the U.S. now actively promote the outdoor room. Visit one now!

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**About the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA)**

The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA), based in Arlington, Va., is the North American industry association for manufacturers, retailers, distributors, representatives, service firms and allied associates for all types of hearth, barbecue and patio appliances, fuels and accessories. The association provides professional member services and industry support in education, statistics, government relations, marketing, advertising and consumer education. There are more than 2,600 members in the HPBA.