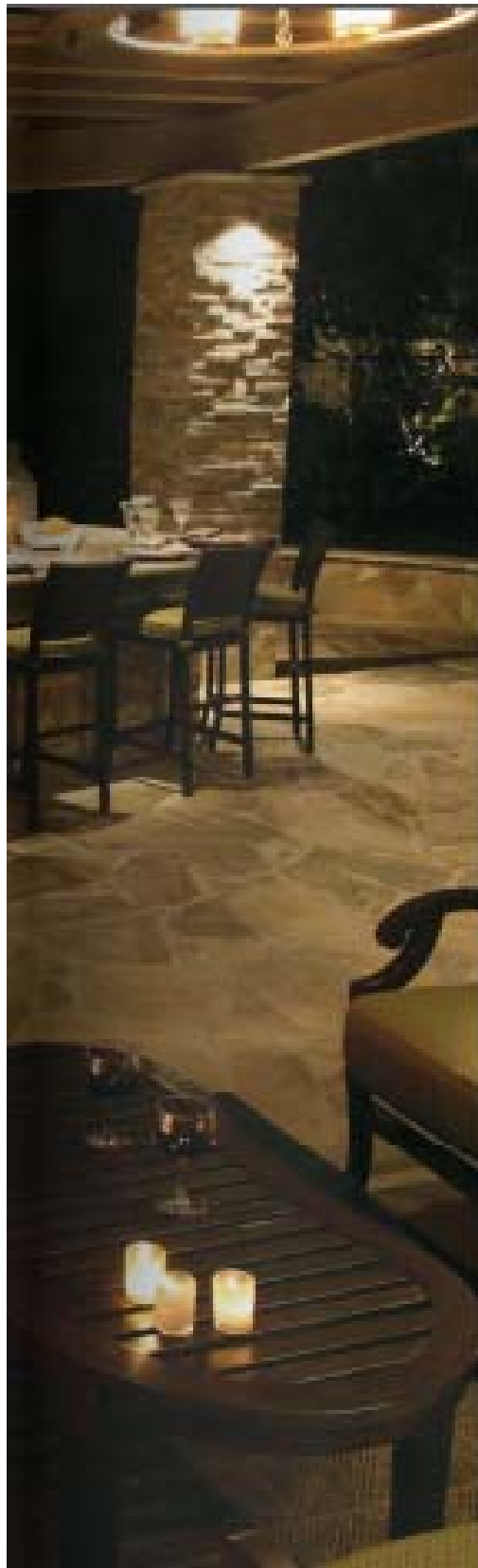


# External Analysis

Thinking inside out makes for a well-planned space

by Christina Ledwith



"It's an interesting phenomenon," said Michael Glasman of Sacramento-based Michael Glasman & Associates, who has designed many outdoor spaces, including this one, which is in Sacramento. "Designers always think about function when designing a kitchen inside the home, but when they step outside to create one, it's that thought that goes right out the door." More than just a pet peeve to Glasman, who has built his client-wrangling specialization on visiting a home's interior as another large room, it's a mistake. "You need to think about how the clients are going to use the space," he said. "Otherwise, you miss the opportunity to maximize on its potential."

Needless to say, there was no missed opportunity in designing the outdoor environment of this California residence. There's plenty of room to strategize whether around the fireplace or kitchen counter, which is what outdoor entertaining is all about. "People, especially outdoors, want to mingle and gather," said Glasman. "The whole beauty of having an outdoor kitchen is that company and people can interact with each other." A designer pointed out, "We've seen a lot of instances where an outdoor kitchen has all of the amenities, but the cook or prep person has their back to the guests. Each time I see it, I wonder why." The designer underscored his advice by adding, "Take commonly used indoor techniques and apply them outdoors. Kitchen design is so crucial. The client hires a professional, affords all of the expensive solutions and fees through the construction, but you didn't think about where to put the barbecue and griddles? Not good."

Glasman's response to the common gotta-be-out-there-is-just-pulling-the-kitchen-area-to-open-up-to-the-entertainment-area, as you would with indoor arches, you open up a world of possibilities," he said. "In this project, when people come out of the house, right from the kitchen and family room, they don't walk around-don't enter the outdoor kitchen." Glasman pushed the outdoor kitchen further over and gave it its own space—no party off. He chose to create a U-shaped kitchen with abundant counter space (with granite tops) and seating for seven people. The barbecue to one side, the sink to the other. At any time do the hosts turn completely away from their guests, but either include their conversation or preparation. "In fact," he said, "sometimes their coffee holds cooking classes out there."

But Glasman, "Another thing to remember is to give your clients plenty of room in which to work." Again, a common mistake for many designers in creating outdoor kitchens, he said. "Inside the home, you would typically try to maximize the amount of allowable space for the kitchen project," noted Glasman. "But often, when designing these amazing, open outdoor spaces, we see space is dedicated to the work area."

Include in counter depth and enough of an overhang to accommodate stools, if at all possible, and be generous with dimensions. "We do a minimum of 4 to 5 ft. of space so two stools can be in the kitchen without jostling over each other," said Glasman. And inside the perimeter meet one of the elements needed to create an outdoor barbecue, double burner with temperature warning chime and lot of storage behind stainless doors. While there is no dishwasher in this kitchen, Glasman recommends installing one if you have access to the sewer system so as to reduce cleanup trips to the indoor kitchen.

But, you see, it's not just about creating an outdoor kitchen. It's about creating an outdoor environment. And that's where the rest of the space, and its connection to the kitchen, comes in. Before we reveal that solution, though, let's take a few steps backward to the backyard. Glasman first encountered the onset of this project. A land yard with little depth. It was, as the designer described it, "old and tired." said Glasman. "There was an existing overhead structure that was falling down, a little bit of deck, some aggregate concrete and a lot of weeds and dead grass." No color. No focus. No focal point. "The true definition of bleak," he said. "And definitely no real entertainment space." The owner told Glasman in their initial consultation that they would like to do extensive entertaining but needed a place in which to do it. Glasman said he gave their old yard a much-needed boost, but really, it was more the reconstructive surgery. He even

#### SOURCES

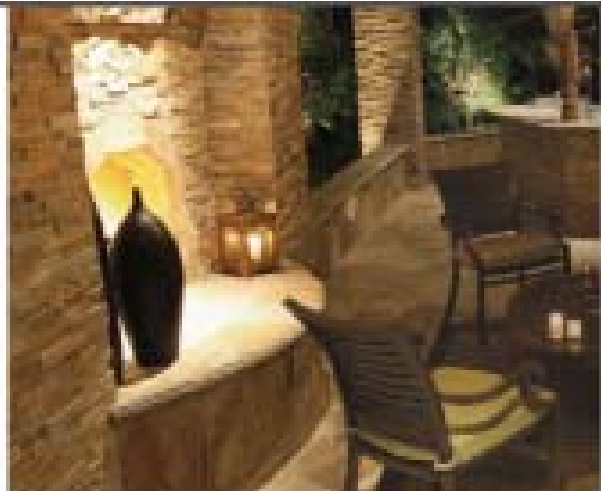
**Designer:** Michael Glasman—Michael Glasman & Associates, Sacramento, CA; [www.michaelglasman.com](http://www.michaelglasman.com) **Contractor:** Empire Construction, Whittier, CA **Manufacturer:** Stone-Island West Stone (edge stone); Appliances: Amana; Sink: Jetro; Faucet: Moen; Burner: Summit Classics **Photography:** © Amy Gallo, J Ryan Robin Wason, Atmosphere Design

went as far as to spend the back of the house in a warm ether tone to complement the new design yet blend with the existing brick that

Now, an expanded, "sumptuous and spacious" patio, as Giaman calls it, is faced with desert gold quartzite. Combined with contemporary-style, square columns faced in honey gold edge stone, the 40-ft. x 20-ft. space creates not only an inviting outdoor atmosphere but almost an extension of the house. "Great outdoor entertainment is complete without shade. This is especially true in locations where it can get very hot," said Giaman. The designer wanted something "big and beefy" in terms of size and shape but did not want it to be solid. Three flat—yet beamed—supporting the other 20-ft. or so—create supporting slab ends—give it a textured effect, allowing it to breathe and creating natural ventilation. Beach wood, added to complement the house, though the pergola is not attached to it, provides the beauty. "Another benefit of the overhead structure is that it gives you the ability to do directional, low-voltage lighting," said Giaman. "Tucked into the rafters, the lights not only provide ambience, but efficient light for tasks."

As for the low mood lighting, the custom-designed gas fireplace does the trick. The focal point of the space, it summons guests to gather "around and enjoy," which is just what they do," said Giaman. A well-designed outdoor space truly becomes an extension of your home. It's not just a thing, it

Want more outdoor kitchen ideas? Check out the project photo at [storiene.com/visittothefire](http://storiene.com/visittothefire).



More beautiful in a fast fading landscape as it would require Giaman's custom paint on the fireplace to remain and showed it to the contractor and client. They loved it, we built it, he said. The light fixture, suspended overhead, is electric, but was designed to look like a candle for a cozy ambience.

Left and below: Adding heat with a multi-purpose solution. The custom lighting now hangs down and significantly helps with the big problem. "If you keep the air moving, heat isn't bad," said Giaman. "Beams like a great thing, but for sure, it keeps them from slipping off the roof or your guests." Spending a little to save things you get better results is reflected in the effort, good and new work, on a new night.

