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CONTRIBUTED BY CRUICKSHANK REMODELING

COVER STORY

Remodel high on to-do list?

Those interested in renovating an outdoor living space, bathroom or kitchen could get some ideas from the fifth annual Tour of Remodeled Homes. **G4**

myajc.com

On Page G10, you'll find our weekly feature, *Private Quarters*, which takes you on a tour of the Waleska home of Barbara Skeen. To see more photos and video of the home, visit MyAJC.com.

Remodeling ideas flourish

To do in 2014: Create an outdoor living space, refurbish the bathroom, make major repairs and give the kitchen a face-lift. If one of those projects showed up on your personal to-do list, then you are part of the 56 percent of homeowners who reported lining up a remodeling job this year. A spring survey from the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard found that more than half of the country's homeowners planned to give their residences a face-lift this year.

By H.M. Cauley For the AJC



Color schemes of whites and grays, coupled with dark countertops and floors, are making a comeback in the kitchen. CONTRIBUTED BY DISTINCTIVE REMODELING

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The survey not only indicated a steady stream of business for remodelers; it also listed specific areas where homeowners want to see a change, with outdoor living spaces and bathrooms leading the list.

That's not breaking news to the metro area's remodeling community that's preparing its Fifth Annual Tour of Remodeled Homes on Oct. 18. Brad Cruickshank, president of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry's local chapter, said baths, kitchens and outdoor spaces are consistently the areas where most Atlantans want a makeover.

"In the last 25 years, those are the three that are in most demand," said Cruickshank, whose remodeling firm is based in Midtown. "People want to redo the kitchen/family room combination that didn't exist in older floor plans. They want a master suite with more closets and nicer, bigger bath. Then they want those indoor/outdoor projects that open the house to the outdoors or an intermediate space like a patio, a deck or something with a roof. We lost a lot of porches in the '60s and '70s when they were enclosed, and people are opening them up again."

The tour will feature a Brookhaven home Cruickshank remodeled to maximize the outdoors around it. "The owners bought the property next door and wanted it to be their outdoor entertaining space," said Cruickshank. "Our goal was to give them a variety of outdoor experiences and spaces where they could entertain in different ways."

The result is an extensive outdoor addition that includes a spacious lawn area, a formal garden, a covered seating pavilion, a small greenhouse, a courtyard around an outdoor fireplace and an old-fashioned "folly" – a fanciful structure designed purely as an architectural accent.

"In most of the outdoor spaces we do now, people want fireplaces, grill areas and porches," said Cruickshank. "With Atlanta being largely a three-season town, they want a porch with a wood or gas stove where they can relax most of the year."

When it comes to creating a new bath, most homeowners start with one thing in mind: Lose the tub.

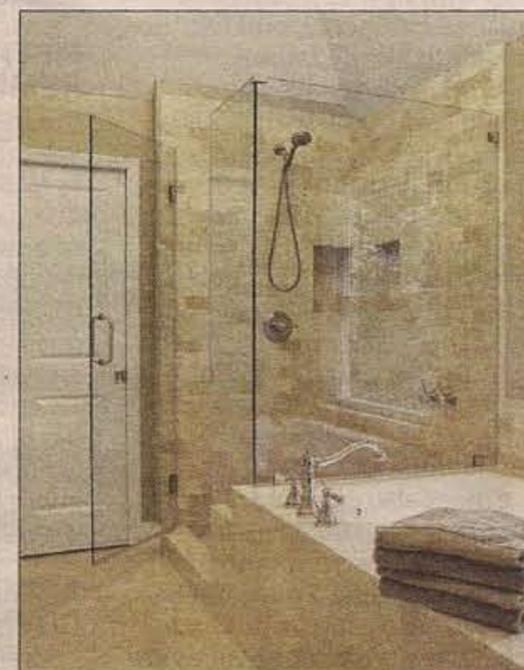
"We are seeing more people shift from 'gotta have a tub' to doing something more decorative, like a claw foot, if at all," said Mark Buelow of Distinctive Remodeling in Roswell. "Fifteen to



Outdoor living spaces are among the top remodeling projects homeowners plan to undertake this year. CONTRIBUTED BY DECKS & MORE



Opening up the kitchen to other living spaces as well as the outdoors is a top priority in many remodeling projects. CONTRIBUTED BY CSI KITCHEN & BATH



Marble, tile and a frameless walk-in shower give a sleek, contemporary edge to this remodeled bath. CONTRIBUTED BY DISTINCTIVE REMODELING

COVER STORY

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20 years ago, tubs were massive and took up a lot of space. More people are eliminating it and expanding the shower into that space.”

What ages a home most is the kitchen and bath, said Buelow. So many of his clients go for the latest in countertops – Carrera marble or quartz – and brushed nickel or polished chrome fixtures. Bathroom floors are often slate, marble or travertine tile.

“They want a clean, tight look often associated with full-blown contemporary style, but not quite that far,” said Buelow. “So you’ll still find floating vanities, for example, along with many neat touches like heated floors and towel racks.”

Debra Bobo, a designer with CSI Kitchen & Bath in Norcross, said the demand for baths that reflect the relaxing atmosphere of a spa still are in demand.

“People want a very serene bath, with simple, light colors, and lots of marble and glass,” she said. “They want bigger showers with large, porcelain tiles for a very clean look. But we’re also seeing a lot of free-standing tubs with beadboard or subway tile surrounds – again, very clean.”

When it comes to the kitchen, most homeowners don’t just stop with new appliances or re-finished cabinetry, said CSI Vice President Mimi Clausen.

“The majority are doing a whole tear-down with walls being knocked out to create that open kitchen and bring other rooms into it,” she said. “It’s their way of life that’s driving that; they want the kitchen to reflect the way the family interacts. The house we have on the tour does just that, with folding doors that open the kitchen to the pool and deck, creating one entertainment area.”

Colors also can date a kitchen, but if you still have those white cabinets, you’re in luck.

“We’re seeing a big comeback of white and gray,” said Clausen. “Even white appliances are coming back, along with other colors. You can now create a custom for your range.”

The West Cobb tour home re-

worked by Dale Contant of Atlanta Design & Build in Marietta blends light and dark colors in the kitchen. The project started with taking out walls and turning part of the keeping room into a breakfast area and creating larger work spaces for the cooks. It finished with a mix of white shades and dark counters.

“It’s a much softer, warmer white than the stark shade of the ’80s and ’90s,” said Contant. “But it still gives that clean, bright look.”

Wally Lewis, chairman of the local NARI board and owner of Neighbors Home Remodeling in Roswell, said he’s been getting more requests for outdoor areas, but business still centers consistently on kitchens and baths.

“The thing is, those areas get dated, and people tire of them very quickly,” he said. “So many have those golden oak cabinets; they’re everywhere. People are going for either white, maple or dark. The house we have on tour has fairly dark wood cabinets and oak floors for a rustic feel. People are also putting in bamboo and cork floors and quartz countertops.”

Depending on the scope of the project, a remodeling budget these days can easily average from \$20,000 to more than \$50,000.

FIFTH ANNUAL TOUR OF REMODELED HOMES

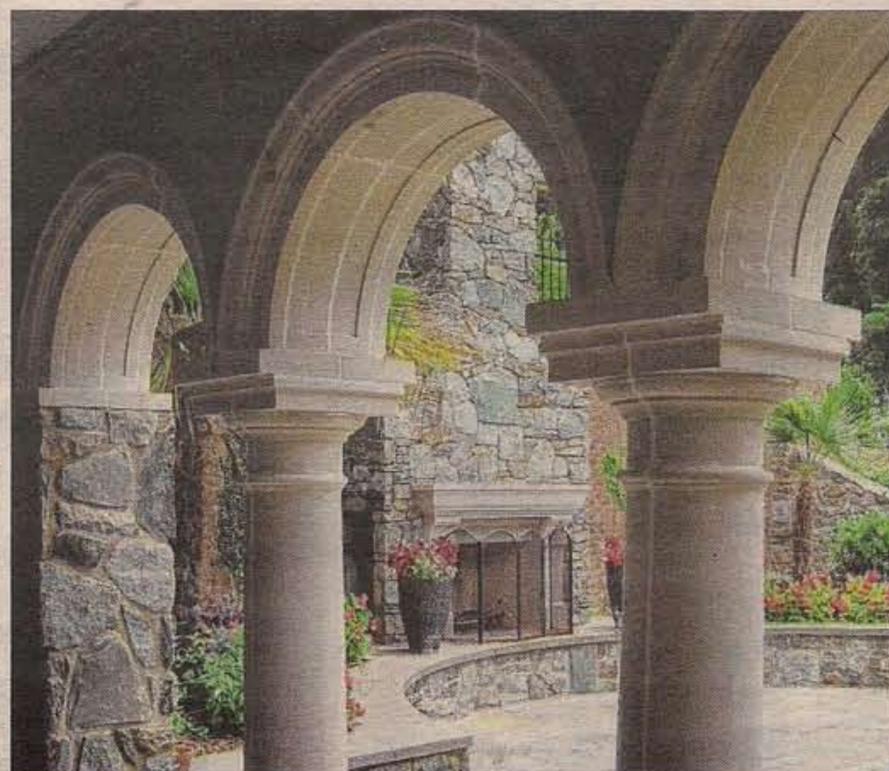
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Oct. 18
Seven private homes transformed by NARI members throughout Atlanta’s northern suburbs will be open to the public, with the remodeling teams on hand to discuss each project and answer questions. The tour is self-guided and will be held rain or shine. Tickets are \$10 in advance; \$15 the day of the tour. Proceeds benefit CURE Childhood Cancer. Information: 770-516-2091, www.AtlantaRemodelingTour.com

ABOUT THE COVER PHOTO

Creating an outdoor living and relaxing area is the top priority for many homeowners who want to make good use of Atlanta’s temperate climate.



Kitchens are one of the first rooms in a house to show their age. CONTRIBUTED BY ATLANTA DESIGN & BUILD



Outdoor fireplaces and stoves make outdoor living areas functional most of the year. CONTRIBUTED BY CRUICKSHANK REMODELING



A makeover with contemporary colors and styling can breathe new life into the space. CONTRIBUTED BY ATLANTA DESIGN & BUILD