

# Take It Outside!

There is something about cooking and eating outdoors that intensifies appetites and adds to the entertaining experience. In the Midwest we relish our nice weather and being outdoors, and adding an outdoor kitchen to your home also adds additional living space. Depending on your budget and abilities, the variety of innovative products available can make your outdoor prep area appropriate enough to prepare an elegant gourmet feast as well as those tried and true grilled dinners.

## **Begin with a Plan**

We will help you to plan your outdoor kitchen, and we will consider available area and placement. The size of the kitchen will be determined by how much you want to include and how elaborate it will be – anything from a small corner unit to a full culinary center are possible. It is sometime convenient to place the kitchen close to the indoor kitchen or family room. You should also consider accenting some other element of your home, like a view or garden. Sometimes an existing deck or patio can be used for the foundation, but if you are constructing a new patio be sure to plan for kitchen elements like water, electricity and gas supplies. The materials we use for our islands are designed to be weather proof, year-round and provide you with years of service. Because we custom build all of our islands we can make our layout accent design elements of your home.

## **Decide on the Components**

The range of products available for outdoor kitchens rivals those for indoor kitchens. Begin with the best grill you can afford, since the grill tends to be the focal point of an outdoor kitchen. There are freestanding and built-in models in gas, charcoal and electric (for flame-restricted areas like condominiums). There are even grills that cook with both gas and charcoal.

Accessory features for grills include side burners, woks, griddles, and rotisseries. Many grills have a built-in wood-chip tray for adding true smoky flavors to meats and vegetables. Expect to invest a few hundred dollars for a portable unit to \$4,000 and up for an elaborate built-in model with many useful features. Price will depend on the quality of construction, the size of the grilling area, and the number of BTU's of a gas unit.

Refrigerators and sinks are common additions to an outdoor kitchen plan. If you want to make a real splash with your outdoor kitchen, consider adding some special extras designed to withstand the rigors of the outdoors:

- A vent hood over the grill and side burners.
- Wine or beer coolers or a beverage center
- Dishwasher
- A warming drawer
- An icemaker
- Outlets for powering rotisseries or blenders or other electric appliances
- Television

Of course, you'll also want comfortable furniture and enough table space to accommodate your dinner guests. Whether cooking for friends or family, remember to enjoy your great dining experiences because food somehow tastes better when served outdoors.

**Call us today to start planning your outside entertaining area.  
847-620-5088**