

# Santa Fe REAL ESTATE Guide

Artisan/craftsman/**builder**

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## Time to accentuate your outdoor space

by Kurt Faust

I love this time of year when the weather turns nice. I am spending more time in the space outside of my house, grilling on the barbeque, relaxing under the portal or under the shade tree and enjoying the latest flowers in bloom.

A recent National Association of Home Builders survey suggests that outdoor space now is a must for homebuyers.

There are countless ways to enjoy the space around your home. Uses include entertaining, cooking and dining; playing horseshoes, badminton, volleyball and croquet; and enjoying solitude, reading a good book or simply drinking your morning coffee in the sunshine.

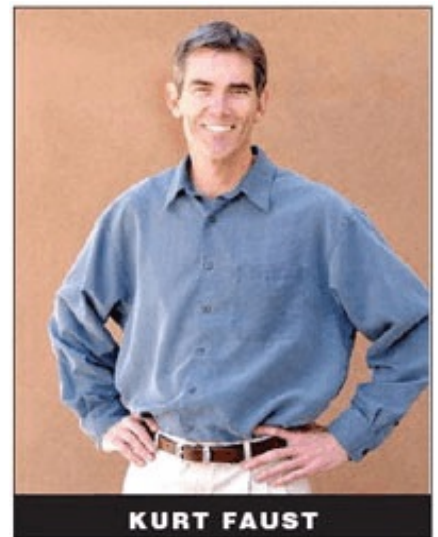
First decide just what the space will be used for. How big is it? How many people must fit comfortably? Will some areas be used for more than one activity? Are you dealing with a new house or new construction?

Next, decide how to accomplish your objectives. Any number of materials and ideas can be utilized to create the perfect space. A pergola or trellis overhead can be covered with grape vines or wisteria and give a sense of refuge. If you don't have walls, you can add a free-standing screen or shutters to create surroundings.

Add a hammock or porch swing for snoozing or quiet conversation. Tikki torches and oil lamps provide warm light.

Chimes and bubbling fountains add a peaceful quality. Remember winter and design your fountain so it looks good dry. An outdoor fireplace, metal firepit or ceramic chiminea will wonderfully extend the season of outdoor living to those chilly fall evenings.

Sometimes there is a deliberate attempt to blend the outdoors with the indoors, to "bring the outside in." Architects are opening up walls with wide expanses of floor-to-ceiling glass and using the same floor materials inside and out to create the feeling that the room does not stop at the wall. "The availability of very large glass doors has changed the way we are able to open up to the outdoors," said Santa Fe architect Pedro Marquez, who also employs portales as deep as 20 feet. These sheltered spaces provide protection from the elements and can be furnished with couches and overstuffed chairs.



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Deb Auten, another local architect, said, “I will sometimes create a sense of room outside. This can be accentuated with a window or some kind of opening and then made cozy by the furnishings or use of soft materials.” Such a gesture extends the idea that you are still inside. Old furniture on the portal can add to the outdoor-room feeling.

Paul Bougie of Showcase Appliance Center said the trend toward outdoor kitchen appliances is growing by leaps and bounds and added, “The back yard is more than just a place for the barbeque grill.” Kitchens are going all out, complete with beer dispensers, outdoor refrigerators, and winterproof sinks. Stainless-steel cabinets are stylish and practical in outdoor uses. It’s like having a whole extra kitchen.

Remember that good planning is key to your outdoor space. It is good design that adds value, both in terms of what the house is worth and in the livability of the home.

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