



# OUTDOOR KITCHENS

## THE HEART OF OUTDOOR LIVING ON LBI

From sunbathing on the beach to surfing in the ocean to lounging poolside — summertime living on Long Beach Island has so much to offer. Perhaps the most rewarding pursuit is the simple gathering of friends and family to recap the day, catch up on family gossip or debate the results of the latest sporting event. There is no better place to engage in such banter than relaxing in an outdoor kitchen preparing for the latest summer meal. According to Luke Reynolds of Reynolds Landscaping, “An outdoor kitchen quickly becomes the hub of coastal living, the place where all gatherings eventually gravitate to at the end of the day.”

Once considered a utilitarian feature for flipping burgers and grilling steaks, outdoor kitchens have become multi-functional, equipped with all the cooking features and accoutrements of their indoor counterpart. From pizza ovens to side burners for boiling lobsters and corn to multi-burner grills with searing and warming capabilities, out-



door kitchens, especially those with seating, are the perfect hang-out space and heart of outdoor entertaining.

“When designing an outdoor kitchen, “says Reynolds, “the location, shape, and size of the structure must be finalized early in the planning process along with its orientation to other features in the landscape.”

Whether U-shaped, L-shaped or a straight run of cabinetry and appliances, the design of an outdoor kitchen should complement existing accessory features and promote easy circulation through the property. An outdoor kitchen can be oriented outward to capture a stunning bayfront view or inward toward a wall-mounted tv to encourage group interaction.

Kitchen appliances should be heavy-duty, durable, and rated for outdoor usage to ensure long-term performance that withstands the harsh coastal conditions of LBI. Keep in mind the old adage, “you get what you pay for,” when purchasing all motorized equipment. Highly rated appliances from a well-reviewed company can reduce the need for repairs and frequent equipment replacement. A well-designed kitchen should also be equipped with basic accessories to facilitate food prep and clean-up like a trash/recycle bin and sink. If a sports bar atmosphere is envisioned, consider incorporating a kegerator or wine refrigerator into the kitchen layout.

From prefabricated, all-weather composite to custom-built hardwood to natural stone applications, the materials used in the construction of an outdoor kitchen and storage cabinetry are diverse — accommodating a vast array of styles and taste preferences. Construction materials can be selected to complement existing hardscaping, architectural elements of the home or a specific color palette. Granite is highly recommended as countertop surface for its durability and aesthetic and offers many color options from which to choose.



According to Reynolds, if space is a limiting factor when designing an outdoor kitchen, consider expanding inward to create an al fresco room within the garage space to increase exterior living and entertaining possibilities. Most township zoning ordinances restrict fire features such as grills and side burners to an outdoor setting. However, these requirements can be met if a vent hood is mounted over the grill station and a non-combustible facade, such as marble or travertine, is installed behind the outdoor kitchen wall.

Both functional and aesthetic, an outdoor kitchen and sitting counter bridging the gap between indoor and outdoor living is a must have to create the perfect venue for al fresco congregating and entertaining during the summer season on LBI.—*Elaine Sisko, Reynolds Staff Writer*

For more information or to view our vast portfolio of custom outdoor kitchens, we invite you to peruse the website of Reynolds Landscaping, [www.reynoldslandscaping.com](http://www.reynoldslandscaping.com). To schedule an appointment to discuss design possibilities for your upcoming outdoor kitchen project, please contact Reynolds Landscaping via phone at 609-597-6099.

