



COOL POOLS

THESE SIX HIGH-TECH,
UNIQUELY DESIGNED SWIMMING
HOLES WILL HAVE EVERYBODY
INTO THE POOL THIS SUMMER

By GENE MENEZ

SPEC DELIVERY

ROLLINGWOOD



CHARLES DAVIS SMITH (SPEC); PAUL BARDAGY (PLAYGROUND); CHRIS DIAZ/SHUTTERBUG (SHADE)

Designing a pool to fit a homeowner's needs is one thing; designing a pool when there's no homeowner is a completely different challenge.

That was the task for architect Matt Fajkus when drawing up a 5,000-square-foot spec home and pool in Rollingwood. Working on a lot that slopes down to a creek,

he oriented the home so that the courtyard and pool at its back would look over the creek.

"You're mostly looking at a canopy of trees and the horizon beyond," he says. "It's quite an idyllic view. It feels as if you could be in the countryside even though you're a few minutes from downtown."

The negative-

edge pool, which has lights that can change colors, makes up most of the home's courtyard. Though the pool is rectangular, an adjacent hot tub has a trapezoid shape to complement that side of the house.

The pool, which can be accessed via the kitchen and living room, sits next to a covered outdoor dining area.



WATER PLAYGROUND

DRIPPING SPRINGS

This is not so much a pool as it is a water park. Located on a 100-acre property in Dripping Springs, this 125,000-gallon pool—which was designed by Darwin Harrison and constructed by Modern Design+Build—is so large it has areas for both children and adults to enjoy. Young children can wade in the semicircle-shaped kiddie pool. Older

kids enjoy jumping off the boulders into the deep section of the pool, which goes down 12 feet.

Adults have the option of swimming up to the rock bar, sitting on underwater bar stools and placing cold beverages in holes that have been cut out of the rock specifically for that purpose. Most of the Lueders limestone used for the pool was harvested

from the property.

The homeowners and their guests can also enjoy playing volleyball in the pool, a geyser that goes off every hour and an area under the waterfall where people can sit and feel the rush of water coming down on their heads.

Says Jan Sotelo, founder of Modern Design+Build, "This is basically the family's little private playground."

MADE IN THE SHADE

WEST LAKE HILLS

Pools settings don't get much more tranquil than the one behind a uniquely designed home nestled neatly below the trees in West Lake Hills. Designed by renowned pool builder Jim Mowry in the late 1990s, the amoeba-shaped pool features pebble tec plaster that gives it a

shimmering effect when the water spills down its sides.

Because the pool is surrounded by trees, "the water stays pretty chilly, in shadow, until the Fourth of July," says the homeowner, who wishes to remain anonymous. "And then it's just perfect from July 4 until late August."





POOL HOUSE WESTLAKE

This 18,000-gallon pool in Westlake played a significant role in the design of the entire house. Because the lot had stunning views to the south, the home and pool were placed to best take advantage of

those views, says Kim Power, senior associate with Dick Clark + Associates, the architecture firm that handled the project.

"The pool was one of the primary features," she says. "It's situated between the house

and the view, so that you're always looking at it. It gives you a resort feel over there."

The negative-edge pool, which was built by Design Ecology, and deck space can be accessed through the liv-

ing room, dining room and study. A sliding glass door allows the homeowner to enjoy the outdoors without even having to step outside.

"You feel like you're hanging out by the pool all the time," Power says.

SKY HIGH

ROB ROY

Acrophobes need not hang out at this multilevel pool complex high over a ravine in Rob Roy. The entire space is anchored by a rectangular main pool. On one side of that pool is a current pool, which the homeowner uses for training.

"She's a swimmer, and she loves to do her laps," says Celeste Reese, president of C Reese Design, which handled the project. (Mezger Homes constructed it.)

The complex also features a hot tub, a waterfall, multiple seating areas, composite decking and metal rails for safety.

But the most spectacular spot in this space, however, is what Reese has dubbed the Sky Deck: a circular sitting area high above the ravine that is connected to the rest of the complex by a winding catwalk.

"You feel like you're floating over that ravine," Reese says.



SWIMMER'S DREAM

TARRYTOWN

CASEY DUNN (DREAMY), PAUL BARDAGY (POOL HOUSE); COURTESY C-REESE DESIGN (SKY HIGH)

You can travel the world and may not find a pool like this one tucked behind a home in Tarrytown.

This lap pool combines the latest in technology and attention to detail for a homeowner who frequently swam in Barton Springs Pool but wanted something closer to home, says Ben Dozier, founder of Root Design Company, which designed and constructed the pool.

"We basically brought Bar-

ton Springs to her," he says.

The pool features a rare knife-edge perimeter overflow on all four sides. "There are only a handful of those in the world," Dozier says.

In addition, the pool has two settings. The first one allows the homeowner to eliminate the waves bouncing off the walls and hitting her when she swims, much like the pools used in the Olympics. A second setting allows for the waves.

"That makes the workout

harder," Dozier says. "It's like swimming in a lake or ocean."

The pool also has a system that forces oxygen into the water and knocks down the chlorine. That eliminates the chlorine smell and "helps you float better," he says.

Though Root Design is better known for its glass-enclosed pool that's cantilevered over Lake Austin, Dozier says this Tarrytown pool is "one of the top 10 in the country. It's one-of-a-kind." ▲

