

what's new?

HOT TOPICS WE'RE HEARING ABOUT ▶

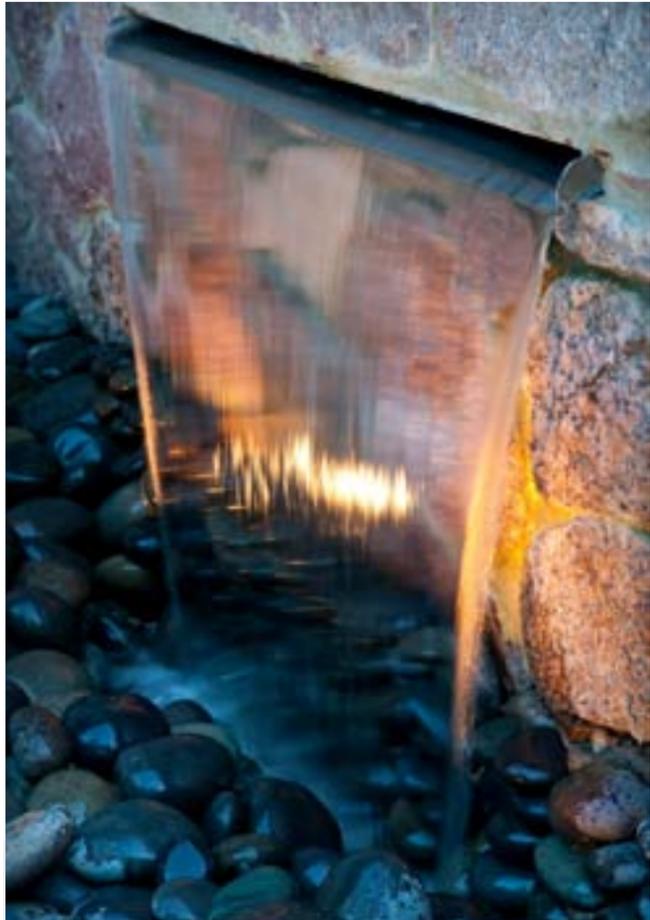


PHOTO: JAY WESTHAUSER

Pondless water features

are gaining in popularity as water is becoming a limited resource. Water-wise planting and construction, along with the use of native materials, are still other strong trends connected with being more environmentally ethical. LED lighting is a trend that is catching on, as the technology becomes better and the quality of the light produced improves.



JAMES M. DRZEWIECKI, ASLA, *Ginkgo Leaf Studio*, Milwaukee, WI, ginkgoleafstudio.net, 262-376-5050



Vegetable gardens

are becoming more common. What are really beginning to be important are sustainable gardens that save rain water for irrigation, don't use any chemicals at all and incorporate brewed compost tea to create super-nutrients. Natural rock water features have always been big here.



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Yearning for water

Introducing water into landscape designs can be as simple as adding a fountain or as elaborate as a large wandering stream and waterfall. Water adds a cooling touch in the summer's heat. The sound of water is meditative and helps rejuvenate the spirit while also attracting nature. Recirculating designs make them easier to maintain and clean.



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Saving money with natives

In tough economic times, nothing is trendier than saving money. And in drought-prone California, nothing is trendier than saving money with water-wise landscaping. Property owners here are replacing thirsty lawns with plants that require just a fraction of the irrigation—and return many times the joy. Native species, which have evolved in sync with the region's Mediterranean climate, are popular for their ability to withstand long dry spells without rotting out in heavy winter rains. But plenty of non-native plants can do the same, for a landscape that looks spectacular in every season. One example is this Japanese-inspired garden in Palo Alto, California.



JOHN BLACK, *Verdance Fine Garden Design*, verdancedesign.com, 650-321-4242



Fireplaces

While all my designs are completely unique from one to the next, there is one underlying theme that has become very popular in recent years: fireplaces. I can't stress enough how hot they are in the residential landscape. All my clients know that they want to have a pool, patio and lounge area, but [in New Jersey] there is such a small window in the year to really enjoy those features. By constructing a fireplace into their landscape, they are able to extend their stay in the yard from early spring to late fall. Fireplaces can fit any style of home or landscape.



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Demand for grasses grows

Ornamentals make the softest rustling sound while they dance and move with the breeze, require little water or care, grow rapidly, and produce flowers that reflect and capture light. In Southern California, the trend toward ornamental grasses in the landscape has grown. Wholesale growers now offer dozens of fascinating species. There are grasses for every region and soil type that range in size from diminutive tufts such as Autumn Moor Grass to dramatic Maiden Grasses that stand up to 6 feet tall.



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