

Enjoying the outdoors

Builders spark home entertaining with special amenities

By Marcy Marro

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Summer is here, and that means spending time outdoors. Here are some local builders and communities that offer the best in outdoor entertaining.

• Gerstad Builders and custom builder Rock Creek Homes have the experience and skill sets required to design and construct the perfect adult playground for outdoor parties and family gatherings.

Consider whether you want a patio or wood deck. If a hot tub and/or swimming pool are desired, then an electrician is required. If a grill and/or a pool heater are desired, then black pipe needs to be stubbed out at the rear of the home.

Gerstad can install custom decks, low voltage decorative lighting and brick paver patios. Additionally, patios can be constructed with traditional concrete, colored concrete or brick pavers. Hot trends with Rock Creek Homes' customers are stamped concrete patios, masonry fireplaces and screened-in porches.

For more information on Gerstad Builders, visit www.gerstadbld.com or call 815-385-4495. To learn more about Rock Creek Homes, call 815-923-2717 or visit www.rockcreekhomesil.com.

The outdoor kitchen is one of the most luring additions to today's new homes, and one that will increase the property value, while providing a place to entertain.

Today's outdoor kitchens are being designed and built with the same attention to detail and amenities as the indoor space, with the additional perk of being able to enjoy the outdoors. It is important to understand the conditions

that will dictate the space and how to address them. Selecting and enhancing the best location, implementing appliances and materials appropriate for the climate conditions, and product selections are all integral parts of the process.

Today's spaces are typically built onto existing patios, decks and pool areas that are easily accessible from the home. The best way to combat the elements is to create a space with shelter. The layout of the outdoor kitchen is another important choice. A more relaxed floor plan helps make the outdoor kitchen the perfect gathering spot, with areas created for food preparation, serving, eating and gathering. There are a variety of options available to customize your outdoor kitchen, including grills, wine coolers, pizza ovens, refrigerators, sinks, etc.

For more information on building your dream outdoor kitchen, call Orren Pickell Designers & Builders at 847-572-5200 or visit www.pickellbuilders.com.

Each of the six completed high-rise buildings at Lakeshore East is capped with a landscaped, rooftop sundeck that provides residents views of the community's award-winning park, river, lake and cityscape.

Lakeshore East's first phase of 25 unique low-rise Parkhomes includes 10 three-story homes with enormous rooftop terraces and a pair of single-level penthouses featuring private terraces atop seven-story buildings.

The mixed-use Aqua, the community's newest building, features a combination rooftop garden with sprawling terraces and park features. The 80,000-square-foot deck features gardens, gazebos, pools and cabanas,

hot tubs, a running track, fire pit and grills. Indoors, a 35,000-square-foot amenity floor provides fitness facilities, indoor lap pool, spa with hot tub, sauna, steam and massage room, a private party suite with catering kitchen, coffee bar and lounge, media room, billiards and game area, business and conference center, library, skygarden and concierge services.

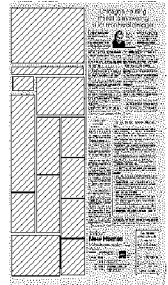
Aqua's dramatic design is produced by outdoor balconies and terraces that form unique contours of different sizes and shapes that change gradually from the lower to the higher part of the 82-story tower.

For additional information on Lakeshore East, call Leila Zammatta of Magellan Realty at 312-493-8200 or visit www.magellansells.com.

Lexington Square, Ten East Delaware and Winthrop Club are three new Chicagoland developments that offer rooftop spaces for residents.

Lexington Square in Bridgeport has single-family rowhomes with private rooftop decks, available for immediate delivery. Located six blocks from U.S. Cellular Field, residents have great views of the skyline and fireworks at the ballpark.

"At this price point, Lexington Square is the only new-construction rowhome development that offers private rooftop decks," said **Jeff Benach**, co-principal of Lexington Homes, developer of Lexington Square. "Buyers appreciate having this extra outdoor living area, especially when they learn that a grill and full patio furniture set will fit on the deck. It's the perfect spot to host barbecues during the summer or enjoy dinner with your family on a warm evening."



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For more information on Lexington Square, call 773-523-5900 or visit www.lexingtonchicago.com.

In the Gold Coast, buyers have access to their very own rooftop oasis — the Ten Club — at Ten East Delaware. The exclusive rooftop-level clubhouse features one of the Gold Coast's only outdoor rooftop pools, sundeck and garden, in addition to a fitness center and private dining room.

"From the architecture to the upscale amenities, everything at Ten East Delaware hints at the luxuries of European living, and The Ten Club is no exception," said Michael Reschke, chairman and CEO of The Prime Group Inc., the developer of Ten East

Delaware. Residents will enjoy escaping to the rooftop for an afternoon of relaxation, whether lounging poolside, strolling the gardens, or enjoying the gorgeous lakefront views.

For information on Ten East Delaware, call 312-397-1010 or visit www.teneastdelaware.com.

On track to become the first residential highrise in the Midwest to be certified LEED Gold, the Winthrop Club in downtown Evanston is a 15-story condominium building with rooftop gardens. The gardens help mitigate heat islands and reduce storm water runoff. Winthrop Club also offers a south-facing sundeck accessible via the building's indoor pool area and clubroom.

"Today's buyers have many options, so they shouldn't settle for anything but the best, whether it's location, price or outdoor space," said Bob Horner, co-principal of Evanston-based Winthrop Properties, developer of Winthrop Club. "While it's become expected that a condominium residence includes a private balcony, it's something else for the building to also offer a common area sundeck, not to mention an array of green roofs that help the environment. At Winthrop Club, our residents get it all."

To learn more about Winthrop Club, call 847-328-4700 or visit www.winthropclub.com.



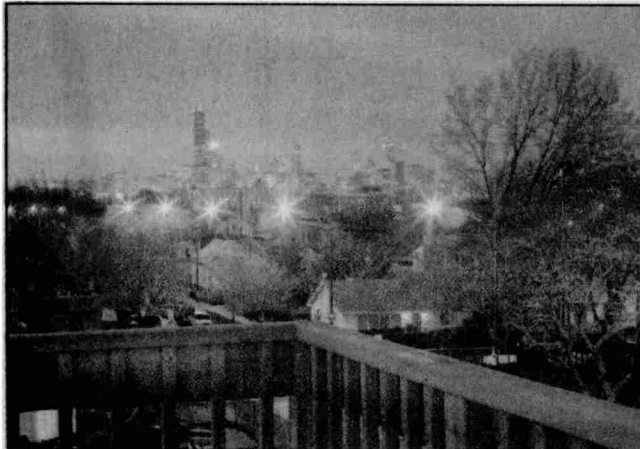
Rock Creek Homes offers stamped concrete, which is as durable as real stone, creates the same architectural appeal, is easy to maintain and costs less to install.

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Custom and semi-custom homebuilder Rock Creek Homes can construct the ultimate outdoor entertainment paradise.



Private rooftop decks are a standard feature at Lexington Square, a single-family rowhome community in Bridgeport by builder Lexington Homes.