

Hints For The Home



Today's Fireplaces: So Hot, They're Cool

(NAPSA)—According to data from the National Association of Home Builders, the three features new home buyers want most are an upgraded kitchen, an outdoor porch or patio and a fireplace. Usually, the fireplace is in the family room or living room. If a home has two fireplaces, chances are the second one will be in the master bedroom.

Nearly 60 percent of the 1.8 million new single-family homes built this year will have one or more fireplaces. New technology and manufacturing processes, new materials and the wide range of fuel and venting choices serve to provide a fireplace for literally any room in the house, whether traditional, contemporary or ultramodern. Here are just a few of the new things you can find at hearth specialty retailers across the U.S.:

- A see-through unit that burns for two rooms simultaneously
- A fireplace that doubles as a mirror when not in use
- Weatherproof outdoor models, including a ring of fire with a functioning fountain in the center
- Appliances in which the flames flash in pebbles or glass beads
- Portable fireplaces
- Umbrella-type patio heaters and fire pits.

Accessories are considered the “jewelry” on the front of a fireplace. New material used in frames, doors and trim help the appliance fit beautifully within any design scheme. Laser-cut metals and etched glass can upgrade the appearance of older homes as well as new construction.

The aesthetics of fire and the ambience it provides are enhanced in different types of surrounds:



Homeowners can choose from a great number of types, sizes and shapes of fuel-efficient, high-performance fireplaces.

marble and granite for upscale, formal fireplaces; fieldstone and mesquite cliff stone for casual contemporary installations; customized ones and many that look customized in tile, stucco, metal, black, copper and many more design concepts.

If you're even thinking about a new home, now is a good time to discuss a more fashionable, bigger or different-style fireplace with your contractor. There are many fuel and venting choices that can be installed nearly anywhere you like. Your hearth retailer is the most knowledgeable source of that information, along with all you need to know about certified installation and codes. You can use the retailer's highly trained specialists to do your installation unless the contractor is responsible for it.

Much more than a place to light a fire, the hearth has become a major element in quality of life for the American home.

For more information, see the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association Web site at www.hpba.org.