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# Pros Share the Design Features Their Clients Want Right Now

Designers on Houzz tell us the interior and landscape elements homeowners are requesting the most and why

 **Kyle Troutman** 5 hours ago  
Houzz Editorial Staff

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Home professionals on Houzz say that over the last few years, homeowners have been rethinking the design features and elements that are best for their homes. The pandemic redefined what's important for their clients. "Since people now have the option to work remotely, I am seeing a big trend of people wanting to invest in their homes," says Mary Patton, who designs home interiors in Houston.

And in the post-lockdown era, many homeowners are eager to entertain their families and friends in their homes again. "Clients are leaning more toward having unique spaces that could bring an element of surprise," says Tamara Marie, an interior designer in California. "Folks during the pandemic were investing in their living spaces; now it's time to show [them] off."






The global supply chain crisis has also influenced design choices. Homeowners have sometimes been faced with making stressful decisions such as whether to go with stock products with shorter lead times or wait indefinitely for more desirable selections to become available. Right now, pros say, their clients want less fuss.

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We spoke with a panel of designers about the interior and landscape design features their clients are requesting right now and what's gaining momentum in their areas. Read on to see which design elements they say are in demand right now.

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### Interior Design Features Homeowners Are Asking for the Most

**Durable materials.** Rozit Arditi, principal of Arditi Design in New York, says her clients are requesting heavy-duty materials and surfaces that are easy to clean. "People are spending a lot more time at home and want to make sure they invest in durable, longer-lasting materials," Arditi says. Homeowners with young children are also prioritizing durability to help their spaces stand the test of time.

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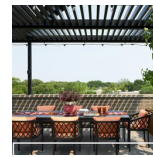


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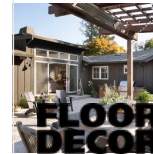
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**Open floor plans that remove the dining room.** Home pros are noticing a strong interest in open layouts that are simple, functional and comfortable. Laurie Dragunoff, interior designer at Decorative Interiors in South Carolina, says homeowners are asking for kitchen zones that combine the cooking, prep, entertaining and dining areas. “Many plans today do not include a dining room. This is the most underused room in the house,” she says. “[Instead], the space will include a casual area for a breakfast table used for daily meals and larger gatherings at holiday time.”

Homeowners are prioritizing function in these areas. They’re requesting elements such as swivel chairs at dining tables to take advantage of their open floor plans. “It is more flexible to swivel and talk to family in the kitchen and see the TV in the family room in the same chair,” Dragunoff says.

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**Color.** Pros note that their customers want more color infused into their homes — and that it might not always be a good thing. “Everybody wants a blue kitchen,” designer Patton of Houston says. “It’s so overdone, and everywhere. I’m trying to talk [homeowners] into investing in something that’s more timeless.” However, she’s excited whenever her clients want to add pops of color to their spaces.

Arditi of New York believes that homeowners are no longer attached to light gray walls and decor. “My clients are either more drawn to neutrals or earth tones these days. A lot more greens, rust oranges and deep purples along with natural wood tones,” she says.

Pros Share the Design Styles Their Clients Request the Most



**Indoor flora.** “I’ve seen a huge interest in learning to care for indoor plants to keep the air fresh,” says Brigid Wethington, principal interior designer of B.






Chic Interiors in Maryland. “I think a lot of these requests [from clients] have been influenced by the pandemic and a focus more on health and tranquility.”

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**Comfortable spaces for work and play.** Even though the world has opened up, many people are staying close to home. According to pros, homeowners are redesigning their spaces to embrace a new normal. “Home offices and ‘Zoom rooms’ are extremely popular,” Patton says.

They want interiors that are flexible for their changing needs, not just beautiful aesthetics. For example, “the luxe approach to a super-sleek contemporary look is changing and becoming more comfortable, softened by natural materials, adding color and other details to make it feel like a more realistic live-work space,” says Kim Coombs, president and founder of KBCO Design in Florida.

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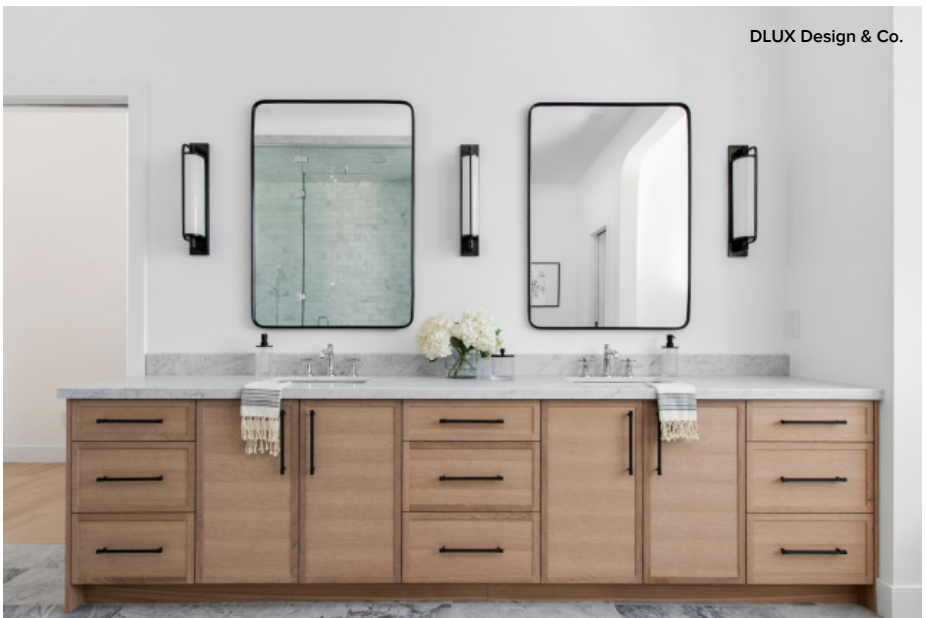
Growing Days by Tamara Day



**Layered spaces.** Marie of California, says homeowners want to add texture, layers and depth to their spaces. And other pros agree. “Many clients who initially wanted a very clean aesthetic are now begging for layers of personality,” says Mel Bean, who designs interiors in Oklahoma.

Designer Jessica Nelson in Seattle says homeowners are open to more elevated styles and bringing in a European feel, natural materials and color. “Also, clients are more OK with things that patina, like unlacquered brass and marble,” she says. “I love that we are moving toward everything not having to be ‘perfect’ forever.”

Your Guide to 12 Popular Decorating Styles




**Natural materials and softer hues.** “For our clients, from residential to big hospitality projects and commercial spaces, we are seeing a shift from the desire to use extremely luxurious shiny materials and accessories back to more matte finishes, natural materials and soft color palettes to make spaces feel more comfortable and approachable,” Coombs says. Ardit of New York adds that she’s seeing heavy usage of natural materials such as comfortable wools and wovens.

Meanwhile, homeowners also want features in their landscapes, gardens and yards that align with their interests.

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*Common manzanita trees are native to California. They can grow in poor, rocky soil with little water and are known to support local fauna.*

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### Landscape Design Features Homeowners Are Asking for the Most

**Native and sustainable options.** Many pros say native plants struggle less to survive in their natural habitat and can sometimes require less water, improve air quality and nourish local flora and fauna. These benefits are leading homeowners to embrace native landscapes.

“Many clients are wanting to have more of a connection with native plants that are more beneficial to wildlife and pollinators,” says Karleen Shafer, owner of Landscape Design & Associates in Michigan. “I see clients more concerned with nature and wanting to support it.”

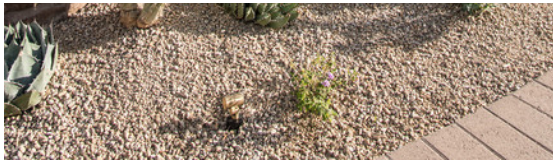
### 10 Native Trees Landscape Designers Love



Rachel Monteiro, owner of Rachel’s Landscape Design in Oregon, believes formal gardens that require high maintenance and lots of water and fertilizer are no longer in demand. “There is a strong trend toward sustainable gardens with the right plants in the right place for the long term,” Monteiro says. “Designers and clients are working to reuse materials that are already on-site and reduce the footprint of what they bring in.”

Michael Thiel, owner of





Plantaysia in Miami Beach, Florida, adds that low-maintenance and native plants are popular right now because people are starting to understand the importance of

sustainability.

Jeffery M. Smith, president of JMS Design Associates in California, has seen a rise in the use of subsurface and drip irrigation systems with tech that can shut off the water supply when rainfall is detected.



**Edible gardens.** Homeowners are also asking pros to help them build edible gardens. "I've put in dozens of vegetable beds, fruiting trees and berry bushes for clients," Shafer says. "People love making jam from their own berries and showing off their tomatoes!"


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**Outdoor entertaining features.** Travis Wyatt, president and principal designer at Unique Outdoor Desians in California. says his customers are asking for design  
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elements suited to outdoor entertaining. Sunken rooms, zero-edge pools, hidden lighting and modern water and fire features are the most requested items right now, he says.

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### The Takeaway

According to pros, homeowners are rethinking the look and functionality of their spaces and want their homes to reflect their changing lifestyles.

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