

Escape Route

Get away from it all without ever leaving your home.

BY HEIDI DOERFERT

WHAT IS IT ABOUT GOING ON VACATION THAT GIVES US PERMISSION to relax? Maybe it's because the stage is set for nothing else! From a poolside lounge to an outdoor restaurant where you can gaze at the stars while you dine, vacation spots intoxicate us with their decadence. When it ends, you wish you could somehow capture the feeling and bring it home. And, why shouldn't you? Our incredible California weather demands we extend our living spaces beyond the walls of our house. And, in these trying economic times, more homeowners are trading in that once-a-year escape for a retreat on their own property

To do this, it's important to hire someone who understands how to create your idea of relaxation. West Bay Landscape Company has been doing this for years, turning their clients' back yards into vacation retreats. With two decades of experience in both private and commercial landscape design, construction and maintenance, owner Kevin Troyan says his company has a distinct difference in how they do business. "We're 99% in-house," he explains. "Our talented team includes craftspeople skilled in many trades such as design, carpentry, tile and masonry, concrete, outdoor lighting, as well as irrigation and planting." They understand how the parts of the puzzle go together and what the finished product should look like. "Being 'In-House' allows us to use very few subcontractors, giving us more control over the quality and schedule which can save our clients lots of frustration and money."

Your experience with West Bay begins with a free consultation where Kevin and his team can get to know your desires for your landscape. Are you looking for a tranquil area to put up your feet or will you be entertaining dozens of guests? "No two projects are alike," says Kevin. "We want to fill the needs of each individual client." A West Bay landscape designer will create a conceptual drawing of your project with a cost estimate right up front. "We do this so that when you are trying to make a good financial decision about your project you have the information you need."

Steve Sutherland of SSA Landscape Architects in Santa Cruz knows firsthand what it's like to work with West Bay Landscape. He and Kevin have known each for more than 25 years and have worked together on many projects, including Steve's own backyard.

West Bay built a Mediterranean outdoor living room designed by Steve. Using large, custom-cut sandstone for the patio and seat walls, the space is crowned with a natural gas fire pit in the center. Instead of the typical lava rock, terra cotta pellets were used inside of the fire pit for a modern look. The heat it gives off allows the Sutherlands to enjoy their al fresco family room all year long. "We used drought-tolerant succulents to add color and texture. It gives the space an eclectic Santa Cruz twist," says Steve.

Steve points out that when he works with West Bay Landscape either personally or professionally, he knows he and Kevin share the same desire for high quality work. "Most contractors give you one, bottom-line number without any breakdown," says Steve. "Kevin,

on the other hand, is very fair and transparent with his clients; he provides them a detailed cost estimate so there aren't any surprises."

Kevin & Steve collaborate regularly on projects. "Steve has great talent and vision. I call on Steve regularly to consult on projects," says Kevin. "Every project I work on with Steve always results in something special."

Kevin and Steve agree that the desire for backyard kitchens is still going strong. A hot new trend is pizza ovens. "Cooking outdoors is a really a form of entertainment now," remarks Steve. "Pizza ovens are great because they aren't just for pizza. I have a client in Capitola who uses his for chicken, fish, steak...you name it. It's perfect for homeowners who love to cook and entertain."

A couple in Santa Cruz wanted a pool but didn't have the space. West Bay Landscape Co. built them an in-ground spa with a natural stone wall wrapped around it, designed by SSA Landscape Architects. This stunning backdrop doubles as a fun water feature for their children, with water flowing out of six beautifully cast bronze spouts designed by Steve. "Mom and Dad are happy and so are the kids!" says Kevin.

To learn how West Bay Landscape Co. can transform your yard into the ultimate escape, call them at (408) 271-0510 or visit their Website at www.westbaylandscape.com. To learn more about SSA Landscape Architects, call (831) 459-0455 or visit them online at www.ssala.com. THM

