



The Perfect Patio

Creating an adult paradise while keeping it kid-friendly.

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How do you create a backyard space that's perfect for entertaining adults while staying kid-friendly? This was the biggest question Lesley and Todd Eberhardt faced last year when planning a backyard remodel for the wooded, one-acre lot that surrounds their Minnesota home. At the time, outdoor entertaining options included only a raised cedar deck that extended off the second story of the home. The backyard was just a "swampy, grassy area with a lot of water runoff, so it didn't get used much" says

Todd. "We had a swing set, but it got too muddy to have the kids out there." **Above:** TBD

The Eberhardts recruited Mom's Landscaping & Design in Shakopee to transform the muddy backyard into an intimate outdoor setting for entertaining while creating a space for their three young children to play. "We wanted the luxuries of an interior space brought out into the awesome outdoor environment," says Todd.

The new backyard, completed last summer, includes a large patio area built with natural



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Above: TBD flagstone pavers and patterned blue stone. The patio area includes a wood-framed outdoor pavilion protected by a copper roof that will patina nicely as it weathers. The pavilion forms a striking outdoor room that includes all the amenities; there is a ceiling fan and electrical outlets that offer power for lighting and a home theater system. Antique-looking gas lanterns are installed on the perimeter of the pavilion to offer the subtle charm of warm “candlelight.” A double-sided, natural stone fireplace can be

enjoyed when sitting both inside the pavilion and outside on the exposed deck. An attached pergola slightly shades the outdoor kitchen, which has a built-in gas grill, refrigerator, and covered storage areas. The adjacent bar is built with matching stone and topped with marble countertops.

A nearby water feature creates the sound of a babbling brook, and a natural stone sculpture graces a gentle flowing fountain. The water feature is similar to a very shallow pond and is

surrounded by smooth stones, so it’s safe for the kids to run through it and jump in it. “The kids love it now — it’s a special treat for them to be able to go out there,” says Todd.

The stone patio deck extends from the pavilion to another “outdoor room” created underneath the home’s existing cedar deck. The underside of the old cedar deck has been refinished with Tigerwood decking planks that give it the finished appearance of a beautiful wooden floor. This finished ceiling creates a

natural shelter and beautiful view for the eight-person hot tub sunk into the natural stone deck below.

“We didn’t use the old backyard much, but now we are out there every week,” says Todd. “We use the hot tub as a place to ‘hunker down’ when it is cold out. We have fires and invite the neighbors and friends over and make s’mores. It’s like camping without ever having to leave the backyard.”

Above: The patio deck transformed a muddy yard into an intimate space by using natural flagstone pavers and patterned blue stone, which are perfectly suited to weather a Minnesota winter without buckling or cracking.