

The Heart of the Home The Fireplace!

Fire has captivated us since the beginning of time, watching a flickering fire can be mesmerizing. In olden times we needed fireplaces in the home for functional reasons, for warmth and to cook our food, but today, ambiance is the order of the day. Fireplaces are becoming a must for every room, one in the Living room, Family room, and one in the Master suite is very common. We also see fireplaces in Master baths, Kitchens and in guest rooms. Fireplaces lend a touch of magic, the variety of their designs make them appropriate in all of these settings.

Outdoor fireplaces on patios, near the pool and bar-b-q's complete a garden landscape and expand our living space. They create a sense of warmth and tranquility and allow us to linger outside on long summer evenings. Indoor fireplaces were the "Kitchen's" of our ancestors' homes. While visiting my grandmothers' birth place (a small village in Italy) I was able to see her old home and found the inhabitants still cooking on an open, indoor fireplace just as my great grandmother had done, it was amazing.

The traditional Wing chair was created to sit near the fireplace and the wings were meant to shield the face from the heat so that the waxy make up people wore would not melt. Today nothing seems more inviting on a cold winters evening than to curl up in a deeply cushioned similar styled chair to enjoy the warmth of a brightly burning fire.

As a nostalgic touch I like to add walk-in fireplaces in large Kitchens. They are beautiful and captivating. Since the 1994 earthquake new laws regarding fireplaces protect our safety, Check with a General Contractor but, I find it very easy to add or replace fireplaces. People tend to think of fireplaces as immovable objects - but in one hour they can be gone! In their place new, larger boxes and beautiful limestone mantles. Wood mantles surrounded by bookcases give a fabulous look. More formal carved marble mantles are available in a variety of colors and styles and can change the center feeling of a home, the choices are unlimited.

Convenience has become a major factor in the development of our fireplaces. Chopping and storing of heavy wood logs, not to mention removing ashes is no longer necessary. Today artificial logs along with embers that glow look so real, with an on and off switch or a remote control you can sit back in your easy chair, turn the fireplace on or off, raise or lower the fire, and think...we've come a long way baby!