

# Creating “Rooms” Outside

Homeowners are expanding the livable area of their homes by creating “rooms” outside on the lawn, porch or patio,” says local Pinch A Penny franchise owner Bob Pittman.

He has noticed a trend in outdoor living during his eight years of ownership. Unlike the plastic chairs and tables of times past, many are investing in stylish, customizable outdoor furniture that mimics indoor décor. Homeowners are including summer kitchens, fireplaces and beautiful landscaping in their outdoor living spaces.

“People would not consider spending thousands of dollars on a patio group eight years ago,” he says. “Now the outdoor product arena is growing as people are spending more time outdoors. That’s why customers will invest \$5,000 to \$14,000 on patio furniture and other accessories.”

Pittman’s store carries a wide variety of commercial grade residential outdoor furniture, grills including Big Green Egg, and modular prefabricated summer kitchen cabinets. Traditional wicker lines that are actually a PVC compound and contemporary lines made of aluminum are designed to weather the elements. The immense selections of fabric choices for cushions are made of colorfast acrylic yarn that won’t fade or be bleached by chlorinated water.

Like most small businesses in the area, Pittman’s store took a hit during the recession. “Luxury patio furniture tends to be last on the spending list,” he says. “The upside to that is people are not taking as many vacations, but investing more in their outdoor oasis by their pools.” 🌳

