

## A MIMI SPECIAL REPORT: BACKYARD TRENDS



# Welcome to the Oasis

Using a secret shared by many of today's top interior designers, *Moscarino Outdoor Creations* takes outdoor living to an entirely new level. Water features are now an integral part of the backyard experience—and that's not all.

by **Bill Yurgen**

**S**o you've made some improvements to your backyard—maybe a patio, maybe a bed here or there. But for some reason you feel it still hasn't come together. Perhaps something is missing that you can't quite put your finger on.

I have a suggestion. Go outside, sit, relax, and close your eyes. Now describe your backyard by using your non-visual senses. If you have a really good design, you may be enjoying the fragrance of lilacs strategically planted in order for you to enjoy one of nature's more sensual delights. A month or two ago it would have been the sweet scent of a viburnum announcing spring's arrival, just like the smell of burning leaves and a nip in the air tell you it's fall.

Now what do you hear? If it's the drone of traffic or neighbors who sound like they are right in your yard, your landscape is lacking



**A pondless waterfall provides tranquility and is cost effective.**

a couple of key elements. First are sound barriers, like several arborvitae planted so they cut the sounds emanating from next door, or maybe a tree line that masks traffic noise.

And what is left to hear with this newfound quiet? If your eyes are still closed, imagine the sound of water bubbling or cascading and the sounds of nature that are drawn to water in this backyard oasis. Birds serenade you with their songs and soon you are completely relaxed, away from it all, and yet still in your own backyard.

"A smart landscape design will integrate the smells and sounds of each season as much as the visual," advises Tom Vitou, chief designer for Moscarino Outdoor Creations. "It means the difference between simply looking at a yard as though it were a two-dimensional photograph and walking into a three-dimensional design you can truly experience. By 'layering' various elements, we can create a space that is a delight for all of the senses."

Tom is referring to an interior design technique popularized by Cleveland's own Christopher Lowell. Lowell takes a bare room and adds layer after layer of design elements to create a stunning design that delights the senses with highlights, shadows, textures, and colors.

Carrying the same technique outdoors, Tom and the team at Moscarino can create an outdoor oasis that ties your "design" tastes to nature for a remarkable natural paradise—right outside your back door.

"The key to our success is our use of water," Tom describes. "Primal in its effect on the senses, a water feature instantly attracts wildlife and people seeking peaceful

relaxation. We began adding waterfalls to our repertoire as a solution for clients seeking to mask outside sounds while providing some genuine 'eye candy.' As with all of our designs, we can landscape these to be either low maintenance or more involved with a complex combination of plant materials."

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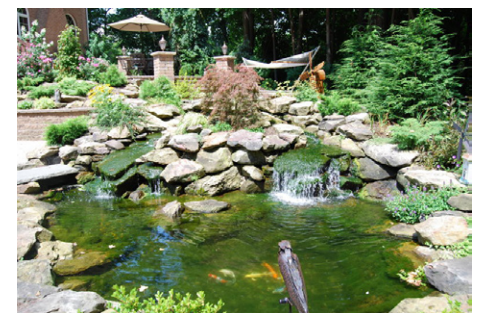
But, as word of mouth regarding Moscarino's wonderful waterfall creations traveled, clients began asking for other types of aquatic features. And the team delivered.

"In addition to our classic water feature designs, we also offer traditional mirror or reflection ponds, contemporary vanishing edge water features, waterfalls and ponds with koi fish, and, for those who want a low maintenance water feature at a very reasonable cost, pondless water features where a waterfall terminates in a stone-filled reservoir. We can even do a simple bubbler."

So let's try this exercise one more time. Close your eyes and relax. Now, imagine yourself in your back yard. There's a slight breeze and finches are fluttering in the trees. You smile as you listen to the rhythm of water cascading down a waterfall in your private oasis.

And it isn't just a dream.

*If you would like to make your daydream a reality, call Moscarino Outdoor Creations, at 440-235-3790, or visit [CreateMyLandscape.com](http://CreateMyLandscape.com).*



**Moscarino's water features span from simple bubblers to reflection ponds to contemporary vanishing edge water features to multi-level waterfalls and ponds with koi fish and plants.**

## Pond Pointers

- Ponds create a gathering spot for family and friends.
- Ponds are an ideal tool for teaching children about eco-systems.
- The sounds of a water feature are a therapeutic way to de-stress.
- Ponds provide a valuable haven for wildlife at a time when natural habitats are being killed off at record rates.