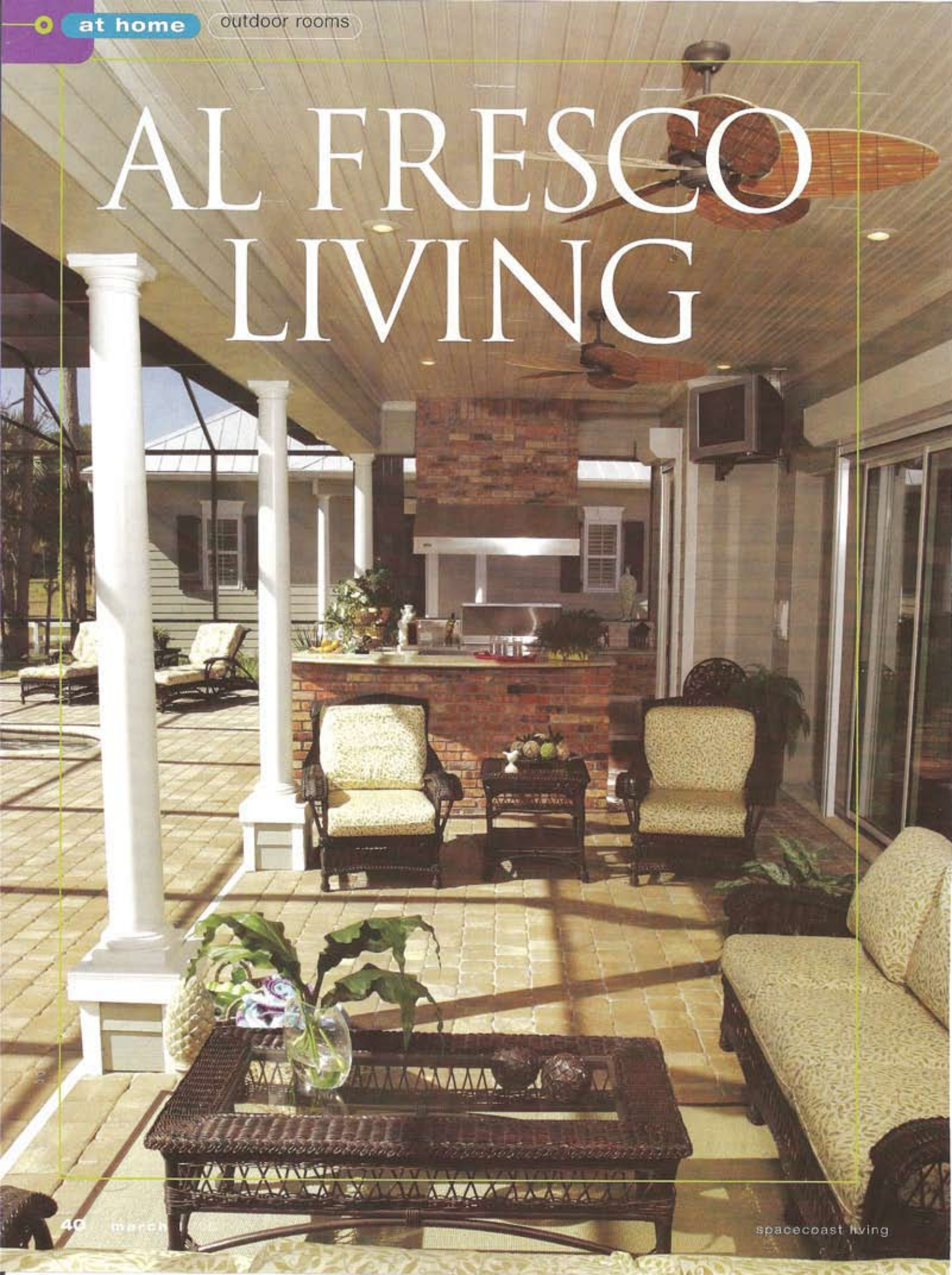


ALFRESCO LIVING



IT'S NOT CALLED A "PATIO" ANYMORE!



That slab of concrete off the back door designed to hold the hamburger grill has now been transformed into one of the most important areas of the home.

LEFT: The outdoor room at Christopher and Ginger Burton's home has a wide-open feeling. Subtle but smart colors and natural stone and pavers are used throughout. Design is by Pacita's Home Collection.

TOP: Steve and Sylvia Clary's outdoor room, surrounded by a nine-foot wall, is private and cozy. Sylvia's passion for deep sea fishing and art personalize the space. Design is by Sylvia and Renee Clary-White of CCC Holding, the family business.

Renamed the "outdoor room," the once-humble patio has grown to include a pool, kitchen, bar, sitting area, entertainment center and décor befitting the nicest of interior rooms.

And while \$200 billion was spent last year by homeowners on remodeling, one third of that total went for outdoor amenities.

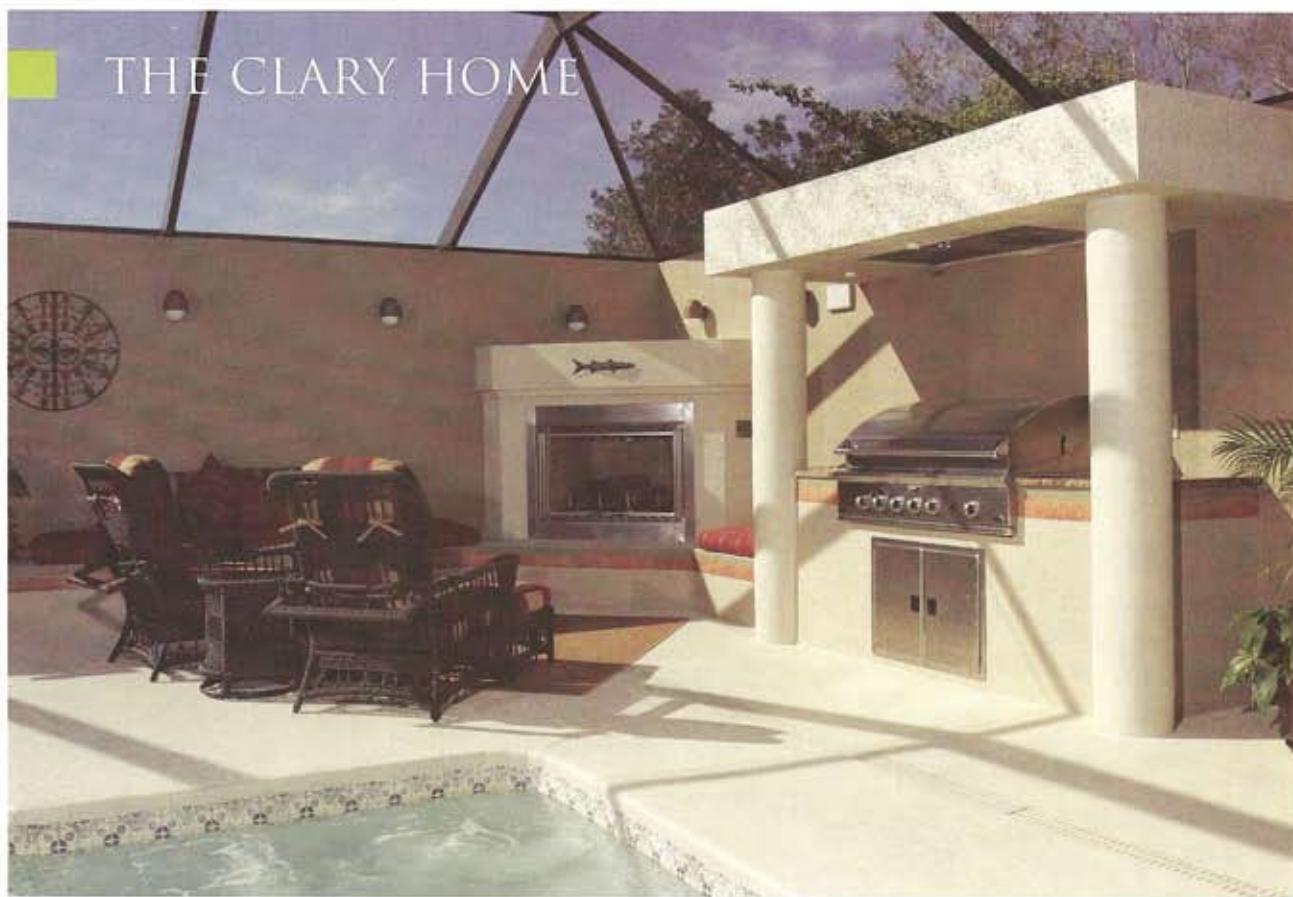
"I literally live out here," says Steve Clary of his outdoor room in Palm Bay. "We have everything we need to be outside and still be very comfortable; it's our favorite room of the house."

Steve and wife Sylvia employed the custom design and build services of CCC Holding Company Inc. to add on the room, which is built around a pool and waterwall.

Nine-foot walls are softened by interior landscaping and built-in seating areas decorated with outdoor-worthy upholstery and pillows. "It's totally private and peaceful," says Clary, "but with the screening above we have the sky elements and breezes of outdoors."

Clary's daughter, Renee, who owns CCC Holding along with her brother, Charles, designed the area, which includes a summer kitchen, two different dining areas, several intimate seating areas

THE CLARY HOME



TOP: With fireplace chilly evenings are no problem: 1: glass tile waterwall with school of fish; 2: outdoor lighting bathes walls at night; 3: multiple speakers bring music to entire area; 4: copper fish with Lincoln penny scales created by Sylvia.

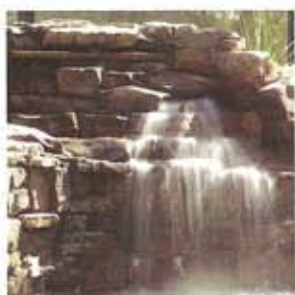
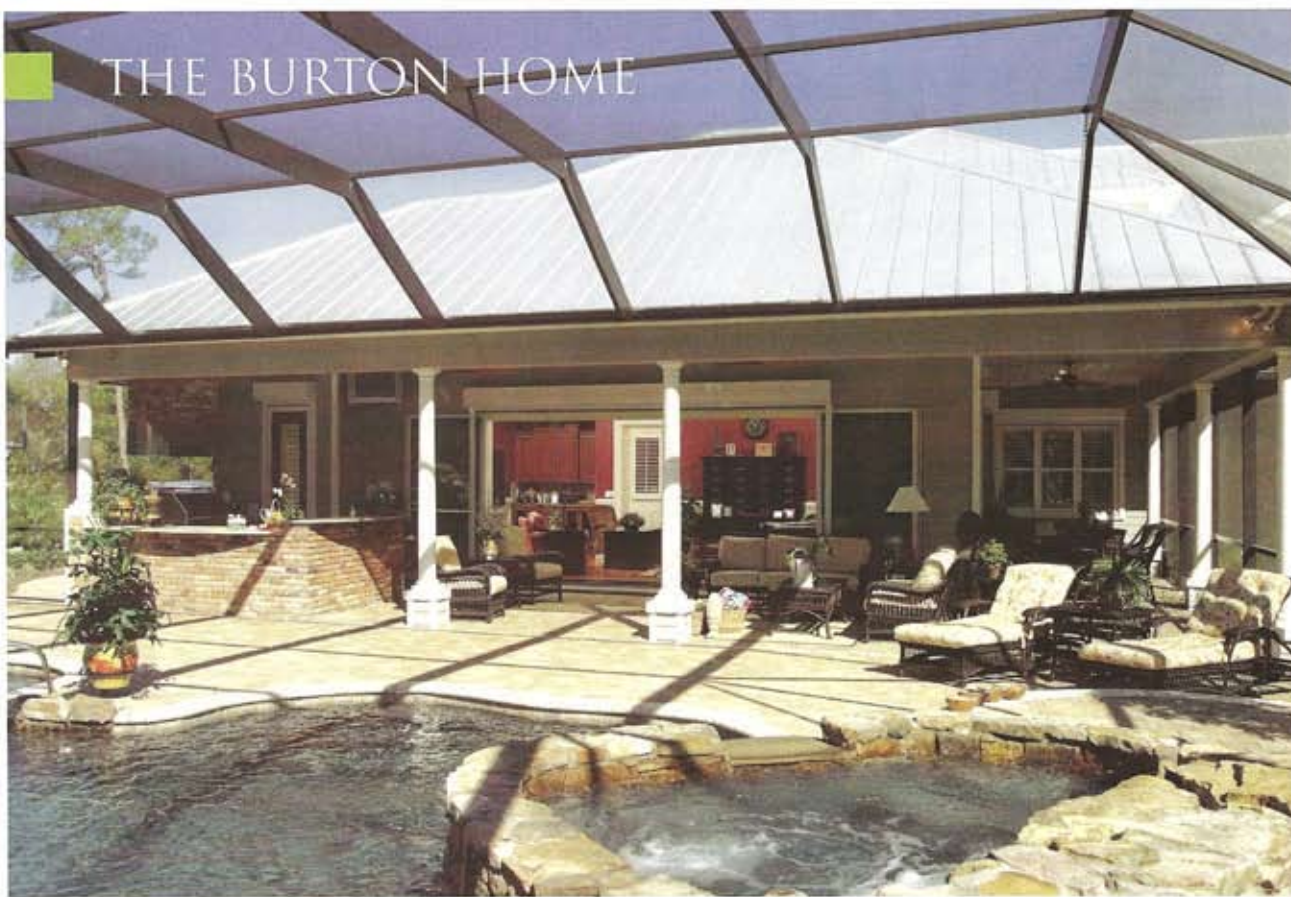
and a gas fireplace. Custom lighting meets the needs of practicality as well as ambience. "We also wanted music out here," explains the homeowner, "but didn't want it drowning out half the room and not reaching the rest. So we decided to have six speakers installed in the walls spread throughout. Now we have background music that has a consistent volume, allowing people to converse."

The beautiful corner stone fireplace ensures the room's use on cooler Florida evenings, as the gas logs produce enough heat to make the sitting area around it very comfortable. Clary can even control the temperature, when the August heat prevails, by use of

a water mister installed the length of the room. "These are common out West," he explains while demonstrating the very fine mist of fresh water shot out of the narrow pipe. "It will lower the area temperature by as much as 20 degrees."

Clary likens the area to an adult playroom, although he admits his six grandchildren thoroughly enjoy their visits. Having a portion of the room under cover allows them to enjoy the outdoors even during rainy spells. "This is where I start my day," he says gesturing to a table and television made cozy under a blue beaded board ceiling and surrounded by Cabana-style drapes in shades of rust and gold. "And this is where we spend as much

THE BURTON HOME



TOP: The Burtons and their guests can prepare food, watch television, dine and lounge around with large numbers of friends and family. 1: falling water soothes; 2: table in the pool gives resort feel; 3: period fan is consistent with wicker furniture; 4: full-featured summer kitchen.

time as possible."

Christopher Burton shares Clary's sentiments. "We designed our outdoor area specifically so that we could spend a lot of time there, not only to relax as a family, but to enjoy friends as well," he said of his home in the Lake Washington area. "We wanted the best of all worlds, so some areas have beautiful cypress wood ceilings while others are covered with screening; and then we left other portions open directly to the outside." A twenty-foot-high fountain in the outdoor pond provides water movement and sound, which the Burtons find peaceful, while a negative edge on the pool provides additional natural illusion. Burton installed a tel-

evision over the outdoor bar but confesses it gets used only when guests congregate in that area. "And we do use this part of the house for a lot of entertaining," he says. The summer kitchen would be any cook's dream rendered in old Chicago brick and granite with nearby dining and sitting areas appointed with weather-resistant yet attractively styled furniture.

Burton's company, Christopher Burton Homes Inc., built his home and spectacular outdoor area, but one of his favorite features is the swimming pool installed by Intercoastal Pool & Spa. Termed a "sport pool" by the industry, it features shallow edges all the way around the pool with a gradually deepening area in the



When the angle of the sun is pleasing, screens roll up out of sight.

center. "This means a lot more people can enjoy the pool at one time," offers Burton, recalling the days when entertaining in the pool meant bunches of people clustered around the pool steps. "But we did enhance the area some." "Enhancements" included adding caves and in-pool tables as well as a fog machine. "Friends call it our Disney pool," he laughs, "but we love to entertain out here, and we truly enjoy this part of our home."

Tom Davis of Viera Realty confirms that Clary and Burton represent an important trend in home building and buying. "Most homeowners today want to blend outdoor and indoor living areas," he observes. "They are judging homes based on their ability to use the outdoor space along with the interior." Outdoor kitchens are replacing the old barbecue grill as fans, recessed lighting and weather-resistant upholstery extend the practical comforts of interior living to the out-of-doors.

While the Florida-lifestyle trend is to move outside, the Florida weather can present a few challenges. One of these is the wicked western heat that coincides with that wind-down time of day. "We really use our outdoor area," says Davis of the home he bought in the Summer Lakes area of Viera. "We keep the family room open to the pool deck, and it becomes an extension of our interior. But the lanai area built off to the side had a western exposure which made it almost unusable in late afternoon. The heat and the glare also intruded into the interior space making it impossible to see the TV."

Davis found a workable solution in a fairly new product offered by JK Studio Designs, which installed a retractable solar shade. The attractive screen drops to the pool deck and blocks the

western sun when needed. "The lanai is now a very pleasant area to use at all times," confirms Davis, "and the interior room temperature dropped about seven degrees. We actually improved the use of two areas by installing the 21-foot-wide shade."

The solar shade system provides a homeowner 90 to 95 percent UV protection, noticeable heat reduction and, since it is retractable, no vulnerability to hurricane winds. The material allows the air to move freely and offers privacy from others looking in while allowing homeowners to see out. These go-anywhere systems can be operated by hand or motorized, and, for the traveler, can be installed with sun and wind sensors that will raise and lower the shades in response to the weather. "Not every patio area has the perfect exposure all of the time," says Jeff Kleinman, president of JK Studio Designs; "the shades are an attractive way to extend the use of an outdoor room or even to help create an area of privacy if the outdoor area is close to other homes. And a huge side benefit is the protection it affords to the adjacent indoor areas as well."

Kitchens, bars, fireplaces, fans, classy furniture, sound systems and televisions... what more could a pool and patio area need? While homeowners are busy making their "outdoors" just as luxurious as their interiors, the outdoor industry is hard at work accommodating them. Last year consumers spent \$3.4 billion on new weather-resistant furniture and more than 10 times that figure on landscaping and garden improvements. Chimineas, fire pits and portable heaters are in demand to extend the season for outdoor living. Even sales of mosquito eliminators have risen in recent years. Where we used to drag plants indoors to re-create



When sun is too bright, shades come down to provide UV protection and heat reduction without blocking view or breezes.

nature, it seems we are now dragging our indoor accoutrements outside to enjoy nature.

Interior designers declare that only imagination and innovation can limit our blending of interior spaces with outdoor living. Clary's well-appointed outdoor room is a fine example of this philosophy. Adding to the living-room feel of his patio area are several beautiful pieces of art. Queried about risking art, especially paintings, to the outdoor elements he chuckles, "Sylvia painted that specifically for this room; we love to be around art so she did that with paint made for the outdoors."

There is no doubt that along the Space Coast homeowners are demanding well-designed "outdoor rooms" that greatly expand the usable square footage of their homes. And those who give a little extra thought to their personal preferences in lifestyle can easily customize an outdoor space that becomes their most favorite room of all. *سيز*

More Information:

For more information on contractors and products mentioned in this article please see the following:

CCC Holding Company, Inc., owner Charles Clary and Renee Clary-White, phone 952-1199 or e-mail at info@claryfl.com

Christopher Burton Homes, Inc., owner Christopher Burton, phone 757-3247 or see www.burtonhomes.com

Intercoastal Pool & Spa, by appointment, phone 242-4921, or see www.icpoolspace.com

Shade Solutions by JK Studio Designs, owner Jeff Kleinman, phone 504-3390 or e-mail at jkstudiodesigns@aol.com