



## *Outdoor hearths that bring people together.*

**W**hether it's the familiarity of a simple iconic campfire or the luxury of an outdoor living space, there is something about an outdoor fireplace that brings family and friends together for a true night of enjoyment. From stone and stucco structures to brick wood-burning ovens, these tips for outdoor fireplaces are sure to keep you warm this winter.

### **FORM**

The first thing to consider is whether you'd like a portable fireplace or a permanent one. Portable hearths offer endless options for placement in a backyard, and they come in a variety of designs and finishes. A permanent fireplace can be custom-designed and either added on to your home or created in its very own location. A fire pit is a happy medium, offering a comfy campfire feel with a permanence that's separate from the home.

### **FUNCTION**

How do you plan to use your fireplace? An outdoor fireplace will immediately become the focal point in your outdoor setting so make the location part of your entertaining area where guests can comfortably mingle and relax. If you plan to cook

in your fireplace, you'll need to incorporate a space for cooking prep and utensil storage.

### **FINISH**

Common materials for both freestanding and built-in outdoor fireplaces are stone, stucco, tile and brick. You'll have plenty of designs to choose from, and matching your home's exterior as well as your backyard or patio's overall design shouldn't be a problem. A stucco finish adds texture and can offer a Mediterranean or Southwest aesthetic, while brick is classic and stands the test of time. A natural stone surround lends itself to a more rustic feel. Consider adding interest to the inside of your fireplace by laying brick in a herringbone or other pattern. And coordinate with your interior living spaces by including a stone, wood or other mantel design.

### **FUEL**

There are two camps of fire lovers in this world — gas and wood burning — both equally enthusiastic about their chosen method. No doubt, wood provides the most natural ambience and is easy to install, but it can cause a lot of smoke and is difficult to get licensed in some areas. Gas is smoke-free, which means no chimney is required, and it's typically safer than wood. However, gas fireplaces require pipeline installation before building the fireplace. ♦