

CHARLOTTE **URBAN**

HOME

SUMMER 2008

Designs | Lifestyles | Investments | Improvements

Renovate!

Why Now It Makes
More Sense than Ever

The Backyard
Staycation

7 Hot New
Products
for Outdoors

Photo courtesy of Sub Zero and hhgregg Fine Lines

All Decked Out



Concrete tiles offer beauty and integrity in one package.

With temperatures and gas prices on the rise, homeowners are looking for creative ways to revamp outdoor living spaces in pursuit of more enjoyable family time at home. A deck is the perfect place to relax and catch up, but when wear and tear of your traditional wooden deck requires excessive maintenance, your family spot can end up anything but relaxing. Consequently, homeowners are realizing total deck makeovers can improve quality of life and the home's value.

Wooden decks burden homeowners with high maintenance routines – constant weatherproofing, tacking down warped boards, and clean-up of trapped leaves and debris. Underneath, there is useless space due to water drainage through unsightly ceilings.

John Shane built his dream home more than 17 years ago but was never satisfied with his elevated wooden deck that didn't provide the look and feel he desired.

Shane went the traditional deck route and hated it from day one because it never looked finished. Desiring an upscale outdoor living space that would be durable, easy to take care of, and beautiful, he found the perfect solution with concrete tile.

Shane contacted Hartstone in Glenview, Kentucky, a company that makes handcrafted concrete tiles. Uniquely produced and slow-cured at a constant 56-degree temperature in a former underground limestone mine, no two Hartstone tiles are identical and are reminiscent of

ancient limestone pavers with the added strength and durability of a concrete surface.

"Our concrete tiles offer beauty and integrity in one package," said Ron McLeod, owner of Hartstone. "They are strong, exceeding PSI crush test limits, and are dimensionally uniform for easier installation." McLeod recommends hiring an experienced contractor to appraise deck stability and offer recommendations such as additional floor joists and support columns to accommodate additional weight and provide stability.

Since converting his deck, Shane has created a more inviting family retreat and discovered additional outdoor living space underneath. The once unusable lower level now has a solid ceiling, light fixtures and furniture. Clean-up is a cinch, and maintenance routines only require the application of a penetrating sealer every three years.

Shane received two upscale outdoor living areas for the price of one. Now, when rain threatens an outdoor party, he simply moves the event downstairs, and the beautiful tile provides the perfect backdrop for any family or social gathering. ❖

Ready to "deck out" your home? Have your contractor call Hartstone at 502-938-4306 or go online to www.hartstonetile.com.