

Galerie

8 Designers Share the Secrets to Creating the Perfect Pool House

These cabanas marry high design with indoor-outdoor functionality to bring a vacation-like experience closer to home

BY JILL SIERACKI

MARCH 18, 2022

With spa-inspired outdoor showers, tropical palettes, and expansive chaises, resort cabanas conjure the wistfulness of dreamy destinations. Now people looking to quell their sense of wanderlust at home are tasking designers with transforming their pool houses into vacation-worthy experiences with eating areas, gyms, media rooms, guest quarters, and so much more. “For most people, the pool house is a quiet place to get away from the main house; it’s a place to lounge, hang out, and relax around the pool. But I also see people using them to entertain,” says Atlanta-based architect [Stan Dixon](#), who has conceived pool houses with everything from home offices to rooms for yoga, meditation, or massage. At an oceanfront estate in Palm Beach, Dixon used a pool house as a tropical lead-up to the home’s entry. “It’s a bit of a destination. I wanted to create a home that felt very seamless from inside to outside.”





Eric J. Smith designed this Westchester County, New York, pool house with a bluestone floor that seamlessly connects the indoors to the outside.

PHOTO: DURSTON SAYLOR

Form Meets Function

To maximize that escapist mind-set, pool houses need to be self-supporting, with a kitchenette, bath, and storage—no matter how big or small. “You start to think with the attitude of designing a boat: How can I be clever about building things in and getting the most out of every cubic foot of space?” says architect [Eric J. Smith](#), who suggests using under-counter appliances such as refrigerator, freezer, and warming drawers, or matching the color of the cooktop to the countertop for a chic yet functional interior.