

# CHAMPION REVISION

A boring back yard gets a knockout makeover



Round columns with vertically applied gold quartzite ledge stone flank the bar. Poured-in-place, cast-concrete tops serve as cocktail tables when needed.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the main back yard. In one corner, a small U-shaped barbecue counter weighs in at fairly useless. In the other corner, a dining table smooshed up against a pool weighs in at nearly dysfunctional. And in the middle, a feeble lawn serves no decisive purpose.

The challenge presented to Harry Thompson of Torrey Pines Landscape Co.: Transform this yard into a beautiful area for entertaining, with a functional outdoor kitchen, usable dining space and comfortable lounging zone — without blocking the panoramic view stretching from the Rancho Santa Fe Farms golf course to the ocean.

Round one: the barbecue area.

“The improved chef’s corner incorporates a curved island with a granite countertop

that has plenty of room for prepping food, a barbecue with side burners, a sink, an ice caddy, a refrigerator and ample storage,” Harry says.

Across from the barbecue, a second island accommodates guests, who can sit under the shade provided by a wooden arbor. They can opt to either enjoy the vista or swivel around on their bar stools to chat with the cook.

Round two: the lawn.

Leveling the sloping lawn area and replacing grass with exposed aggregate banded by smooth, pink-based terra cotta concrete created a pleasant seating area between the barbecue spot and the bar.

Round three: the dining space.

“To reconcile the elevations, we added matching concrete steps,” Harry says. “By



BEFORE

adding a terrace wall, we created a gracious lower-level space for the dining table and chairs, as well as an additional bar counter. The granite bullnose countertops here and elsewhere match the interior kitchen countertops.”

And the winners are ... the homeowners, who got everything they asked for and more. ❖