



news release

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**WEBER® OUTDOOR ROOM TRACKING STUDY™ RELEASED:
*Nation's Only Study That Tracks How Consumers Define, Plan, and Use Their Homes'
Outdoor Space***

PALATINE, Ill., March 25, 2003 – A growing number of Americans are making the “outdoor room”—which has been characterized by home and design experts as a defined outdoor area with a cooking, eating, and sitting space—an integral part of their home, according to the Weber Outdoor Room Tracking Study, the nation’s only study that tracks how consumers define, plan, and use their homes’ outdoor space.

Over one-third of outdoor room owners surveyed say that the design of this area is equally as important as the design of their homes’ interior spaces. Nearly half of those surveyed who do not own an outdoor room say they are interested in having one (44%) and of those, 28% say that they are at least somewhat likely to create an outdoor room this summer. Importantly, over a third of outdoor room owners say that this space adds to their quality of life.

The Weber Outdoor Room Tracking Study consisted of surveying 1,000 stand-up gas grill owners with household incomes above \$75,000.

While consumers are adopting the concept of the outdoor room, the term itself is still working its way into their vocabulary. Industry experts use the term “outdoor room” frequently, only 20% of those consumers surveyed who do not own an outdoor room had heard the term before, and among outdoor room owners, only 32%.

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How Consumers Define The Outdoor Room Itself Varies:

<i>What is an outdoor room?</i>	Owns an outdoor room	Does not
An enclosed or screened deck, patio, porch, room, Florida room, sun room	33%	36%
A deck, patio or porch	16%	9%
An outside/outdoors room, living or sitting place	14%	10%
An entertainment place	7%	4%
An outdoor kitchen or place to cook	6%	6%
Other mentions	24%	35%

In addition, outdoor room owners consider the space to be an outdoor room (78%) while 6% think of it as an outdoor kitchen only, and 15% consider it to be a bit of both.

Where The Outdoor Room Resides

Ninety-eight percent of outdoor room owners surveyed say it is part of their primary residence. Two percent say it is part of their second or vacation home. Fifty-one percent of outdoor room owners say this space is located in a backyard; 35% say it's on their deck.

Components of the Outdoor Room Among Owners

Outdoor room owners surveyed are equipping these spaces in ways that reflect the care they use in designing indoor areas of their home:

- The outdoor room is decked out with a variety of products: Most common is the patio dining set (79%) and flower beds (78%). About 66% have a seating area with furniture separate from the dining set.
- In addition to owning a stand-up gas grill, other cooking equipment includes a smoker (10%), a charcoal grill (7%), turkey fryer/cooker (7%), and a range or cook top (3%).
- Outdoor room owners enjoy electronics: 38% report having an outdoor stereo system or speakers, and 9% say they watch television outside.
- Many owners include other outdoor kitchen components in addition to their grills. These include cabinets/storage area (18%), countertop/cooking island (12%), refrigerator (11%), sink and running water (9%), and range or cook top (3%).

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- Outdoor room owners also incorporate leisure or sports equipment in the space, such as a swimming pool (28%) or a hot tub (18%).
- Other frequently used components include torches for lighting (35%) and an outdoor wood-burning fireplace (15%).

Outdoor Room Components Desired by Non-Owners

In addition to a gas grill, non-outdoor room owners who plan to build an outdoor room this summer want these cooking appliances in their future space: A range or cook top (14%), turkey fryer/cooker (14%), smoker (12%), charcoal grill (8%).

These same survey respondents also plan on equipping their outdoor room with a stereo system/speakers (64%), hot tub (53%), torches (52%), television (33%), or/and a patio heater (30%).

Outdoor Room Design—Who Does It

The outdoor room owners surveyed planned the space without any help (61%). About one-third had “outside” assistance: These homeowners turned to do-it-yourself retailers (15%) and contractors (13%) most often for help.

Those who say they had outside help are more likely to have professional landscaping (44% vs. 33%), hot tubs (26% vs. 15%), refrigerators (16% vs. 8%), and cocktail bars (11% vs. 4%) compared to those who did not employ assistance.

When and How the Outdoor Room Is Used

Thirty percent of outdoor room owners surveyed say they use their space *daily* during the spring and summer months. Forty-nine percent use it *at least* a few times a week during these peak months. The heartiest souls (5%) continue to use their outdoor room daily in the fall and winter months, and 30% use it a few times a week during this time.

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Outdoor room owners enjoy the area in a number of different ways. At the top of the list are informal entertaining (85%), relaxing (82%), family meals (79%), reading (54%), and listening to music (40%). Careful not to mix business with pleasure, less than 1% use their outdoor room for working.

Twenty-six percent of outdoor room owners surveyed say that their space can comfortably accommodate one to nine people, 45% say 10-19, and 29% say 20 or more.

Weber-Stephen Products Co. is headquartered in Palatine, Illinois. In 1952, founder George Stephen designed the Weber® kettle with a lid that allows outdoor cooks to grill in all kinds of weather. A family-owned business for more than 50 years, Weber has grown to be a leading exporter of outdoor grills worldwide. Weber charcoal and gas grills are available at select home centers, hardware stores, department stores, patio stores and other retail outlets. For more information on Weber products, recipes, and tips on grilling, please visit www.weber.comTM or call the Weber Grill-Line, which operates from April 1 through Labor Day, at 1-800-GRILL-OUTTM.

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