



# Operation: outdoor oasis

SUFFERING FROM THE BACKYARD BLAHS? SPRUCE UP YOUR LANDSCAPE WITH IDEAS FROM AREA EXPERTS

**T**ime to rethink that American dream: The perfectly manicured lawn with the white-picket fence is no longer the backyard brass ring. Today's outdoor emporiums are well-designed wonders with decks, pergolas and patios; pools, ponds, spas and waterfalls. Overwhelmed by the options? Fear not: *Bergen Health & Life* has called up some professional-grade support. In the following pages, six local landscape pros share common design challenges—plus top techniques for getting it right.



COURTESY OF CIPRIANO LANDSCAPE DESIGN

**MISSION:** Resort-style redo. It might resemble a haute island getaway, but this tropical retreat resides right in Saddle River. "People want the resort look in their backyard," says Chris Cipriano, owner of Cipriano Landscape Design in Ramsey. "They want a place where the family can gather and relax."

For this lush space, Cipriano began with a dramatic focal point: the 8-foot-tall sandstone waterfall. Different levels of rock create a cascading effect of the

water that you can swim under—just like in the tropics—while bright vegetation adds color and texture. Cipriano's flora philosophy: the bigger the better. "We tend to plant in large masses. We'll use 10 or 15 of each plant in one group; then, on the next level down, use 20 or 30, so the layers get larger and larger," he explains. Oriental spruce, holly, ornamental grasses and a mixture of perennials (roses, coreopsis) and annuals (geraniums, impatiens) make for a flourishing setting year round.