



Award-winning residential project in Dallas

By **Scott Webb**

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"They wanted to accomplish a lot in a fairly tight space."

That was the mission and the caveat for Southernwind Pools, AQUA Choice 2009 winner in the Concrete Pool or Pool/Spa Combination category. Meeting that goal within the strict confines of the property required ruthless spatial planning. Access to the yard was further restricted by several 70-year-old oak trees that could not be disturbed.

With three children under the age of 6, the homeowners wanted the project to be kid friendly. So Southernwind incorporated the following:

- a safety gate at the entry to the pool,
- a 6-inch-deep tanning ledge for toddlers,
- an 18-inch-deep walkway to provide shallow access from the tanning ledge all the way to the other side of the pool. This ledge extends 8 feet under the bridge to provide an additional shallow play area,
- two 10-inch spillways from the spa to add another feature for children in the play area,
- a shaded play area provided by the second bridge between the house and the seating area, and
- antique iron spigots, imported from France, which provide playful water features in both corners at the shallow end of the pool.

For the parents, this miniature play land offers:

- rotating massaging jets in the sides and foot-well of the spa for 10 or more adults,
- a gas fireplace just steps away to take the chill off cool evenings, also comfortably seating 10 or more adults,
- a seating area on the far side of the pool that allows complete relaxation for parents while maintaining a watchful eye on children's activities in the house and in the pool, and
- benches built around the raised walls that provide additional seating when entertaining large groups.

At the homeowners' request, even the family dog was considered in the design. A special tunnel/passageway was built under the part of the house closest to the pool. This allows the dog to readily access the grass yard without opening a gate or entering the pool area.

This project included these special touches, as well:

- hand-painted white accent tiles, imported from Mexico, which add an elegant playfulness while providing a striking contrast against the French Grey Diamond Brite quartz interior,
- ornamental gas lamps on the house and pillars that add a sense of old French country charm, and
- steps, benches, a tanning ledge and 18-inch depth play area accented by 1-inch-square blue safety tiles.

The unusual selection of styles, features and materials came together to create a seamless backyard activity center. This project gave the entire family exactly what they were hoping for, and much more.

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