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Pages 12-13



From outdoor living to offices: 2020 design trends for your home Page 10



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KATIE CHARLOTTE/PROVIDED

This home in the Captain's Island section of Daniel Island features folding glass doors off the master bedroom, allowing the homeowner to savor the best of the indoors and outdoors at the same time.

# From outdoor living to offices

## 2020 design trends are about getting the most out of your home

BY DAVID CARAVIELLO  
*Special to the Post and Courier*

**T**he natural beauty of the Lowcountry captivates newcomers and locals alike. From rivers and creeks to oaks and palmettos to marsh grass and Spanish moss, the coastal landscape is central to life in the Charleston area — and a large reason why many residents want to bring the outdoors in.

That's particularly true now, as people are spending more times than ever in



Wegner

their homes. When it comes to the most prominent home design trends of 2020, near the top of the list is finding a way to merge indoor and outdoor living, and take full advantage of the breezes, views, sunshine and comfort that natural surroundings can provide.

"One of the biggest things that I continue to see is people who want

indoor-outdoor living," said Curt Wegner, founder of Curtis Daniel Homes. "That's really manifested itself in folding glass doors and sliding glass doors, in terms of creating a bigger opening that makes the patio feel like it's part of the house. We have such great weather here in the Lowcountry, and people want to be able to take advantage of that."

The uncertainty defining 2020 has placed an added emphasis on almost every aspect of outdoor living in the Charleston area — from pools and

docks to outdoor kitchens and dining spaces. Joseph Froneberger, a Realtor with The Agent Owned Realty, has seen a resurgence of "garden rooms" in homes with smaller lots or downtown, perhaps featuring hardscaped surfaces with patio furniture and a lawn area for pets and children.

"Many builders or buyers are learning or rediscovering the importance of our local architectural vernacular," Froneberger said. "Piazas and porches not only look 'Charleston' and serve as nice places for outdoor living, but were built

on the south and west sides of homes to catch the prevailing ocean breezes and to shield the home from the afternoon sun. ... These things being given more

weight in the building and design process today.”

Many residents seek to “extend the seasons” by installing heaters in their outdoor areas, Wegner said, something previously seen only at restaurants.

**Froneberger** And covered patios are growing in popularity because they don't feature the railings and screens of decks and screened-in porches, which can get in the way of Lowcountry views.

“I think the covered porch is preferred, because you're not taking away from the views,” Wegner added. “Everybody is nervous about the bugs, but I'm seeing retractable screens being used more often. They're becoming more affordable, so we can build a space with unobstructed views of the marsh or the river, and then later in the day when the bugs come out, press a button and have the retractable screens come down.”

## Warm tones and wallpaper

That effort to capture the natural surroundings extends inside the house, in the form of components like floor-to-ceiling windows or natural elements and textiles used in décor and furnishings, according to Mount Pleasant interior designer Allison Elebash.

“We are bringing the outside in with natural elements such as wicker, raffia, rope and earthy textiles,” Elebash said. “These elements are all being used to add texture and natural vibe to indoor spaces. For example, we love to have a jute rug as a base, layered with antique rugs on top, or we may

add a sculptural wicker piece to a room with more formal furniture.”

Barn doors also continue to be a favorite, perhaps with more modern hardware that allows for more variation in their look. And Wegner has found many homeowners are fond of curbless showers, where the floor of the bathroom runs flat with the tile of the shower, leading him to implement that detail in his new home designs such as those in the Shell Landing neighborhood of Mount Pleasant.

And while some homeowners still



JULIA LYNN PHOTOGRAPHY/PROVIDED

**A breakfast nook with a view of Shem Creek offers another way for this Mount Pleasant home to bring the outdoors in.**



MARGARET WRIGHT/PROVIDED

**Outdoor patios, such as at this home in the Grassy Creek neighborhood of Mount Pleasant, now often feature both ceiling fans for summer and heaters for winter allowing residents to extend the seasons and enjoy that sought-after Lowcountry lifestyle all year long.**

prefer the “open concept” floor plans that often group the kitchen, living and dining areas into one large space, that trend appears less in favor than it once was because of current events.

With some exceptions, open concept is “a thing of the past,” Froneberger said. “People are discovering that different rooms evolved for different purposes for a reason, even if some of those rea-

sions are evolving.”

While buyers still want a natural flow and perhaps even the ability to see from room to room, “architects are shifting away from completely open floor plans,” Elebash added. “With people spending a majority of their time at home, we've seen a resurgence in a second TV or family room to allow different members to enjoy their own downtime without being on top of one another.”

An overreliance on gray as a paint color is also fading, Froneberger added, with more homeowners turning to warmer tones such as coral or chocolate brown, or coastal-influenced hues using blues and greens.

Creating areas inside the home where family and friends can gather, whether that's a chef's kitchen or dedicated bar area, remains a favorite.

Randolph Cooper, a designer with Southeastern Galleries, said that using mixed metals in the kitchen — combining brass



**Cooper**

hardware with brushed nickel fixtures,

Please see **DESIGN**, Page D14



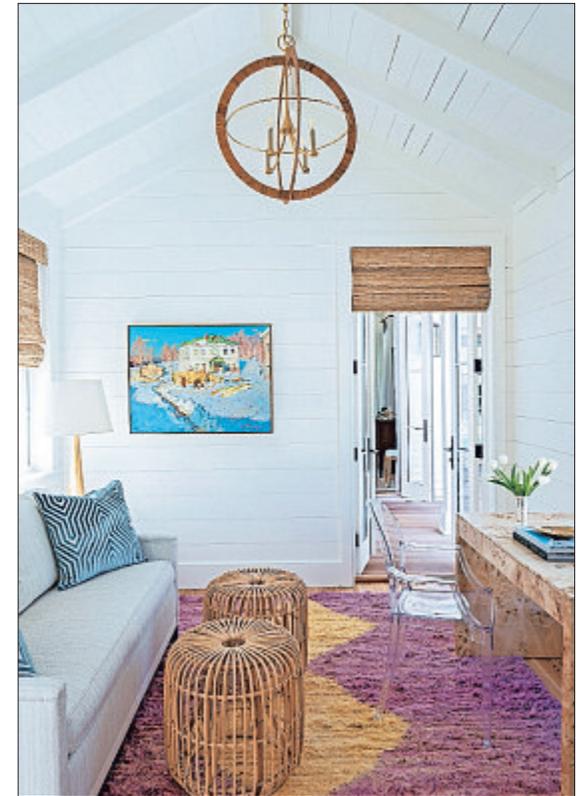
JULIA LYNN PHOTOGRAPHY

Natural elements, evidenced in the wood floor and ceiling of the butler's pantry of this home on Shem Creek in Mount Pleasant, add texture and help bring a natural vibe to indoor spaces.



JULIA LYNN PHOTOGRAPHY

Large, spacious kitchens remain a favorite of homeowners, especially now with many families doing most of their dining and entertaining at home.



JULIA LYNN PHOTOGRAPHY

Home offices have become more popular with more people working from home. The office/study in this Sullivan's Island home features a sofa that converts to a Tempurpedic queen bed to accommodate guests.

## DESIGN, from Page D11

for example — is gaining in popularity. And wallpaper, he added, is an interior trend that's back to stay.

"The pandemic has almost inspired a Renaissance of sorts," Cooper said. "People are taking a step back and reflecting on their homes. I have had many clients ask how they may 'revitalize' their spaces, indoor and out. Many clients are repurposing outdoor spaces so that they are able to use them for a more socially distanced style of entertaining."

## Spaces for school and work

That reflection has led to a redefinition of new home design. With school up in the air for this fall and many students facing the prospect of learning from home, many homeowners want a space they can dedicate to their child's schoolwork. That could be as simple as a dining room that does double-duty as a one-room schoolhouse, or a room where a student takes classes online.

"There's been an increase in demand for the 'children's office,' or (the room) where they're being schooled from home," Froneberger said. "It might be a separate room, or it could be a carved-



KATIE CHARLOTTE/PROVIDED

Barn doors, such as this one in a home in the Captain's Island section of Daniel Island, continue to be a favorite with hardware evolving to give them a more modern look.

out corner of living space, such as the dining room. There's a lot of uncertainty right now as to what form school will take in the coming year. Even when we're back to normal, I believe many parents now understand the impor-

ance of having a dedicated part of the home for their child to feel comfortable spreading out their homework."

Similarly, the demand for home offices has skyrocketed as more and more professionals work from home. "The

No. 1 thing is the office," Wegner said. "It used to be, we'd think about having one office in the home. But I think now people are recognizing that they need maybe at least two spaces within the home that can be somewhat private."

Wegner has also seen homeowners seeking dedicated "Zoom rooms" where they can conduct the teleconferences that have become a staple of working at home during the pandemic. "Maybe in the past it was called a pocket office—a small space big enough for a desk and a computer," he said. "I think that small pocket office is going to continue to be more and more prevalent, as we all realize we don't have to jump on planes to have productive face-to-face meetings with people around the country."

From children's study spaces to multiple home offices to ways that both maximize and mimic the outdoor surroundings, home design trends in 2020 are all about trying to get the most out of your home—while still maintaining those individual touches that make each house unique.

"People are in their homes more than ever right now," Elebash said. "They want to create refined, yet lived-in places that can ultimately feel like a sanctuary from the outside world."