

suburban life

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“

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—Derek Blasker, Pool Designs

Dive Right In

WITH A FIBERGLASS POOL FROM POOL DESIGNS, HOMEOWNERS CAN SPLASH AROUND WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT EXPENSIVE LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE.

When it comes to beating the summer heat, heading down the shore certainly has its appeal, and the local swim club is always an option as well. But for homeowners who prefer not to deal with traffic en route to their getaway—or crowds upon arrival—there is nothing better than simply walking out the back door and taking a dip in their own in-ground pool, or just relaxing by the water with a good book and a favorite cocktail.

Prime swimming season may be drawing to a close, but now is the perfect time to start planning for the pool of your dreams so it's ready to go for next year's warmer months. As homeowners are mulling their choices, Derek Blasker, the owner/operator of Pool Designs, says fiberglass pools have several notable benefits over their gunite or vinyl liner counterparts, not the least of which is the much quicker and stress-free

installation process.

Pool Designs has been fulfilling that need for clients throughout eastern Pennsylvania and the state of New Jersey since its founding in 1998. Now in its second generation as a family business—Blasker took the reins from his grandfather in 2020—the company offers unmatched customer service on its way to creating beautiful backyard oases in a timely fashion.

“Our website is poolinaday.com, because we show up in the morning with nothing done and we leave at the end of the day with a pool in the ground filled with water, fully plumbed, with the lights installed, and all of the equipment set up,” Blasker says. “The only thing left after we leave is to run the electric from your house to the equipment; if you have a gas heater, the gas from your house to the heater; and the masonry work.” The construction and cure periods for gunite

pools may take as long as six to eight months, and there are multiple inspection phases for a liner pool. With Pool Designs, the contract states that within 30 days of permit approval and the arrival of the pool shell in its yard, an installation crew will be onsite. Even though summer is drawing to a close, it's not too early to think about splashing around with the family next summer.

“That's one major beneficial aspect of it,” Blasker says, “and the other is the basic cost of ownership.” He explains that the upkeep for a gunite pool over the years will include resurfacing, repainting, and acid washing, while a liner pool will have to be drained every seven to 10 years to have the liner replaced.

“With a fiberglass pool,” he adds, “what it looks like when it goes in the ground, that's probably what it's going to look like when you die. You're never going to acid wash it,

you shouldn't ever resurface it, and you're not going to paint it. You don't have to worry about cracks, either, because if you use a reputable manufacturer, there's a lifetime structural guarantee on the pool." Pool Designs is a certified installer of Latham fiberglass pools—one of the most respected manufacturers in the industry—thanks to the comprehensive training programs its crews have completed at the company's headquarters in Florida. Blasker describes Latham as "the best in the business," and lauds its lifetime guarantee on the structure as well as its warranty against blistering and peeling on the finish.

"If you have a problem with your pool, you contact us," he adds. "We'll file the warranty claim for you and take care of everything in terms of scheduling it and then getting everything fixed. We'll pump the water out and store it on the side of your pool for you, so that all of your water will go back in. Whether it's a hole, a crack, or a gouge, Latham's team will make the repair, and after they leave you can't even tell that anything was ever wrong."

Blasker recommends that homeowners never drain the pool, have the water tested at least once or twice a month by a pool store to make sure it's balanced correctly, and keep all equipment clean and running efficiently. Pool Designs can help with those tasks, as it is a full-service company offering openings and closings, weekly maintenance, and more for any type of pool. It also has a retail store with all of the extras a family may need.

"I tell everybody, 'Once you're my customer, as long as you still like me, you're my customer for life,'" Blasker says. "I will test the water, I will service the pool, I will maintain everything, and I will file the warranty claims on the customer's behalf. If they need toys, chairs, or an outdoor kitchen, just come to me and I will be their guy for life."

Pool Designs is just a phone call away. Blasker welcomes the opportunity to start that relationship, and he relishes the idea of showing off all of the options available. One of the downsides to fiberglass pools is the lack of customization, but Pool Designs and Latham offer a wide variety of shapes, sizes, and depths. Also, customers can incorporate amenities like tanning ledges, shelves, spas, and water features. Other popular add-ons include LED lights, robotic cleaners, and automation capability.

Seeing the end result after the project comes together never gets old for Blasker, who started working for his grandfather as a teenager and continued through his time in law school. Blasker was a trial attorney for



Examples of Pool Designs' installations

14 years, but he happily returned to the pool business and continue the family tradition.

"I get to see the people from the beginning all the way through to the end of their project, and I get to be part of their whole backyard experience," he says. "Everybody has my cell phone number so they can reach me if they have any problems. I get text messages and pictures all the time from people showing me how they're enjoying

their backyard. In the end, it's great to see grass turned into an oasis." ■

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