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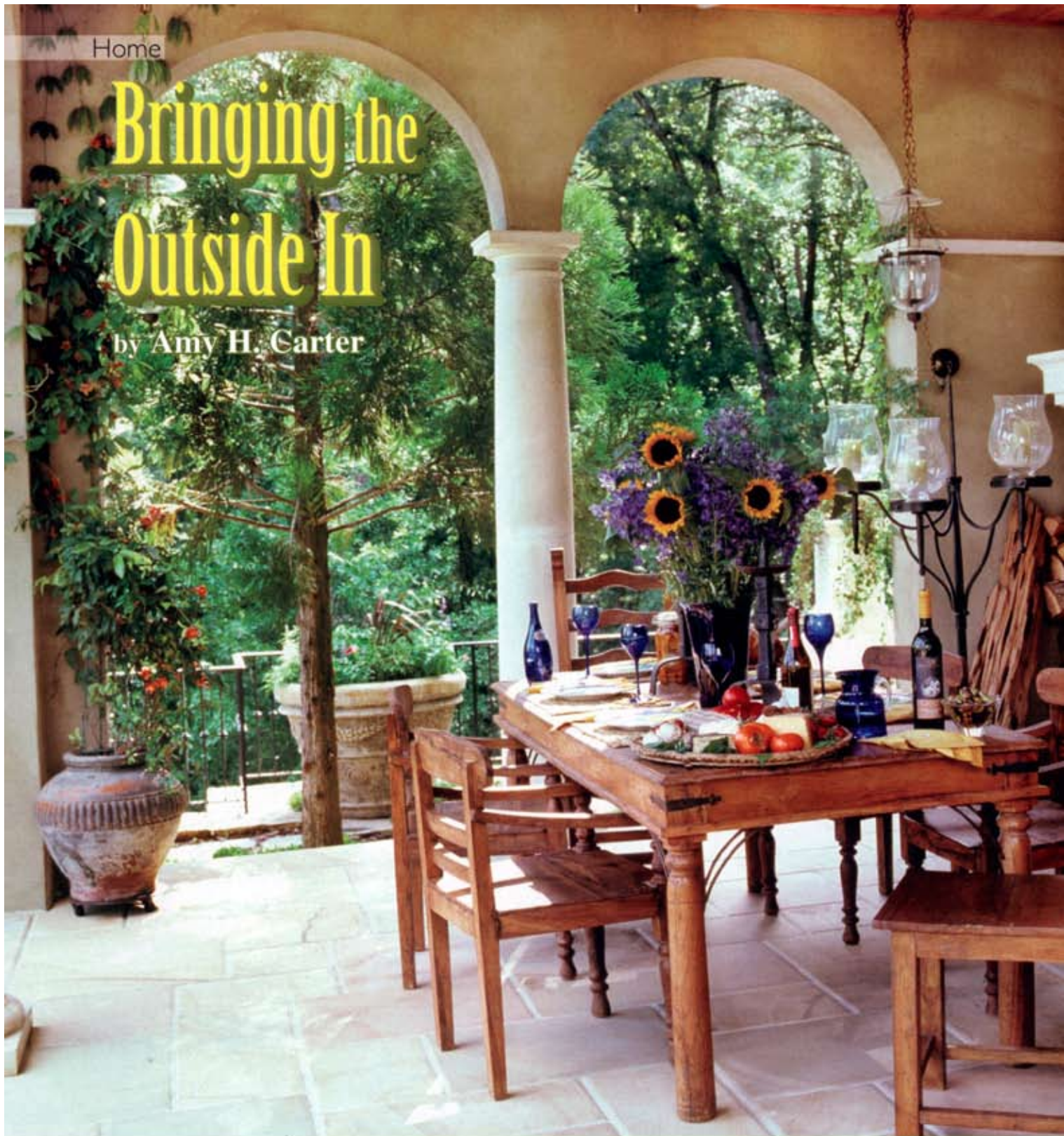
The **Outdoors**

A look at the many ways
to spend your leisure time

Home

Bringing the Outside In

by Amy H. Carter



Imagine a room formed by a ceiling of live oak limbs and decorated with drapes of Spanish moss, lit by the twinkling of stars and the light of the moon. Is there any home trend more soothing than the blending of outside and in?

Modern home design has created another room out of the outdoors, a room as popular and entertaining as the kitchen or family room, and every bit as essential to our well-being.

"People have gotten to where they just enjoy being outside because it's so restful and peaceful," says William H. "Bill" Harrison,

architect and founder of Harrison Design Associates of Atlanta and St. Simons Island, Beverly Hills and Santa Barbara, Calif.

The outdoors is one of the few places immune to the tumult of the times. While newscasters and economists sing the blues over bursting bubbles, the blue birds whistle in praise of new life busting out all over.

The design and construction of outdoor spaces has become one of the fastest growing segments of the housing industry, a trend that began 10 years ago. Bill says clients on both coasts and many points



PHOTOS COURTESY HARRISON DESIGN ASSOCIATES

Architect Bill Harrison, founder of Harrison Design Associates, creates an illusion of being indoors in the outdoor rooms of his Atlanta home by using common themes in both areas—wood ceilings and beams, terra cotta tiles and stone floors, and arches that define doors and windows. Surrounded by the beauty of nature and the comforts of the house, Harrison's outdoor rooms offer the best of both worlds.



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in between are "cocooning" at home, opting to invest in well designed outdoor spaces that host every day family meals and special gatherings of friends with equal ease and economy.

"People are entertaining more in the home rather than traveling. It started with 9/11. People don't want to travel as much. The current economy has just reinforced that. For \$100 you can entertain your family and another family with food and wine and everything else. If you go out somewhere that's out the window."

His own Atlanta home and lifestyle are reflections of this trend.

"We have dogs, so we eat outside and the dogs clean up and you just hose it down," Bill says.

An arcaded loggia with a tile floor and outdoor fireplace overlooks the lawn. Arched French doors lead into the enclosed kitchen and keeping room. Bill blurs the line between two formerly distinct spaces by using common architectural themes throughout – the terra cotta tiles of the loggia mirror the stone floor of the kitchen and keeping room inside, as do the wood ceiling and the exposed wood beams.

"The outside room feels like a room but it's not glassed in," Bill says. "It's the same architecture. There's a nice connectivity. You should always make the outdoor spaces relate to the main house." ■