

TRADITIONAL HOME.

2021

OUTDOOR

ROOMS & RETREATS™

Make Room to Relax

Beautiful porches,
patios, pools
& sunrooms

Bring
Indoor Style
& Comfort
Outside!

Fresh Color Schemes, Fabrics,
Furniture & Details

Glass Ceiling

Chances are no one needs to be encouraged to go outside this Connecticut family home. Even in winter, everyone's likely already there.

WRITTEN BY LUANN BRANDSEN
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Frequent travels to Germany and Switzerland introduced clients of designer Christina Roughan to the idea of enjoying an outdoor room even in the heart of winter. “My client called, and she and her husband wanted to create an outdoor space for four seasons,” says Roughan, of Roughan Interiors in New York City and Connecticut. “He had been impressed that even when he was in a business meeting in the mountains, he was often in a glass space enjoying an amazing view. He wanted a glass addition for their backyard.”

Though not in the Swiss Alps, the clients’ Georgian-style Greenwich, Connecticut, home boasts its own enviable view. Beyond capturing the waterfront scenery, the couple had another directive. “They sat me down and said, ‘We really want our family to use it,’” Roughan says. “They wanted a place to have fun and to enjoy life with their four children and extended family.”

Conversations about a chic and friendly space for graduation parties, holiday gatherings, and family movie nights under the stars unfolded, along with requests for an adjoining firepit area and an outdoor kitchen with dining space.

Teaming with Tim O’Malley of Argus Development LLC and architect Cormac Byrne, Roughan collaborated on a flexible 1,000-square-foot glass enclosure accessible through the dining room’s French doors. Three walls of movable bifold glass with screens surround versatile furnishings selected for year-round entertaining, dining, and relaxation.

“It can be anything they want it to be,” Roughan says. The family can open all the doors on summer days, use screens in the evenings, or enclose the entire heatable space when the snow falls, staying toasty thanks to a heated floor. The multi-purpose, welcoming space provides room for working from home, an intimate dinner party beneath dimmable lights, or a 100-plus-person cocktail reception that spills onto the lawn.

Right The firepit’s location ensures the best water views and creates a sense of movement. “Can you imagine being in this setting with the fire on?” designer Christina Roughan says. “It’s like, ‘Hello! I’m not leaving.””
Previous pages An enclosure with three walls of movable glass adds four-season gathering space. “We had to find a light fixture large enough, that looked really cool, that was very sturdy, and that would give enough light,” Roughan says.





IF YOU HAVE OUTDOOR SPACES,
IT'S ALMOST LIKE YOU HAVE A
WHOLE EXTRA HOUSE."

—designer Christina Roughan



Left The addition's columns and pediment-style glass roofline nod to the home's Georgian-style architecture.
Below "We wanted a round table because the space is so square and we needed that soft line," Roughan says.

MAKE IT YOURS

Designer Christina Roughan shares tips for designing a distinctive outdoor space.

Buy what you love.

Roughan encourages clients to go with their gut. They are living in the space, so she always takes their cues while making selections for the layout, palette, and furniture.

Think functional. Of course you want beauty. But if you live in an area with humid or moist conditions, it's important to make sure you purchase cushions and carpets that resist mold.

Think about how you'll use your space. Will there be a pool, greenhouse, pergola, barbecue station, or is it much more simple? Then integrate all the necessities to make your space highly functional and enjoyable for its intent. Roughan notes that she recently transformed her own patio kitchen into a place to dine and watch movies.



Designing for maximum versatility and comfort required constant attention to what was beautiful, functional, durable, and in sync with how the family lives. Roughan does admit pushing for the draperies a bit, appeasing any concerns about blocking the view with a tieback option, though she favors the dreamy visual of them flowing in a breeze.

The designer explains that unlike an interior room, this space portrays a totally different backdrop and lifestyle spring, summer, fall, and winter. "The outside dictates. I just follow that by changing up pillows and small details," she says.

All that attention to detail translates to happy clients, Roughan says. "It's been so lived in that it has so many stories already. It's an incredibly special space."