



Skip Phillips, (Questar Pools and Spas), is a world renowned designer and one of the most respected pool professionals in the world. The following excerpts were taken from the fall 2008 issue of *Luxury Pools*.

Reflections of a Pool Designer

Principles that inspire aquatic masterpieces

Color theory: Good designers focus on the fact that a pool owner looks at the pool 90 percent of the time, and is in the pool only for the remaining 10 percent. Therefore, a primary function of the pool is to *reflect*, a concept that's been known and used for 3,000 years.

Darker colors reflect more than lighter colors, but dark isn't always appropriate. In fact, some applications a bright white is desirable, picking up blue casts only by depth perception. However if you put that same pool indoors, it could look anemic. In that case the designer will introduce a color, keeping in mind the graduations that will occur based on water depth.

Many people think that they want a blue pool, but in a backyard environment, green typically blends in much better with the surrounding landscape.

Before construction begins: When a good designer visits the site for a new client's pool, he or she will be sensitive the line-of-sight. With emphasis on how the pool will look from the house. The designer will look inside and outside the house to see if there are opportunities to incorporate materials or shapes in the design of the vessel. The designer should strive for a seamless effect, blurring the distinction between the vessel and its surroundings.

Deciding whether the pool should be geometric or freeform is a critical step, and sometimes the answer is *both*. For example, you can have a geometric design on the house side, picking up some of the geometrics of the house. The pool can then terminate into a more natural or freeform backdrop, making the transition between the geometry of the house and the natural flow of the yard.





Design criteria: There are three aspects to any pool: structural design, hydraulics or mechanic design and cosmetic design, which includes material, proportion and scale. If a vessel is structurally sound and has proper hydraulics but is unattractive, it's a failure; if it's attractive but it cracks, it's a failure; if it's structurally sound and attractive, but it dumps 20,000 gallons into the neighbor's yard due to a mechanical problem, it's a failure. The answer is obvious: A good design has to score on all three elements.

More than swimming: A writer recently visited me at my house and asked me, "How often do you use your pool?" and I said "Every day." It was January at the time. So she asked, "What's the temperature of the water?" and I replied, "58 degrees F." She asked surprised and countered, "You go swimming in a 58 degree pool?" and I answered, "You didn't ask me if I go swimming, you asked me if I *use* my pool". You see, my kids and I race boats on the water, we use the spa and I sit by the pool to have a glass of wine with potential clients. I can't imagine not having this pool, for many reasons then swimming.



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