



## Spa specs

### Let the facts soak in before you take plunge

**Y**OU'VE DECIDED to take a soak — you're going to buy a spa or hot tub!

With the wide variety of styles and types available, it's certain you will find one that suits your needs.

Before you buy your spa, think about these questions. Soak on them a little. They'll help you make the right decisions.

Spas can go just about anywhere, as long as the floor can support the weight. You can have one that's above ground or — with a little excavation — inground, too.

A SPA can go lots of places inside your home. In your master bath. In a home gym, with a sauna and exercise equipment. Or an enclosed patio or family room.

Outside, you can place your spa on a deck or patio, alongside a pool or within a romantic gazebo.

If you plan to put your spa outside, be sure to consider the location and angle of the sun and whether you'll be away from any street noise. When you sit down for a soak, you'll want to relax in privacy. Also, check on the access to utility lines.

IF YOU can't decide between inside and outside, then maybe you should consider a portable spa.

Portable spas can be moved from one place to the next as your mood strikes you, so you can be outdoors in the winter and indoors in the summer, or the other way around.

Spas come in many sizes to accommodate one, two, three or more people.

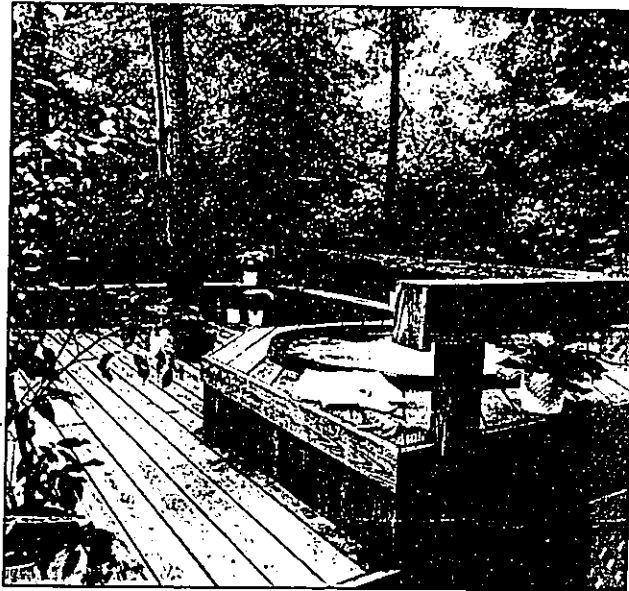
If you're planning on doing lots of entertaining with friends and family, you should consider a larger spa. Larger spas are good ideas for big families and folks more than 6 feet tall.

If the spa is going to be your private little get-away-from-it-all space, then a smaller one would probably do.

THE NUMBER of gallons of water your spa will hold will tell you two things.

First, it will help you determine the overall weight of the unit and where you can install it. A gallon of water weighs some eight pounds.

Second, it will give you an idea of how much water must be heated and an idea of how much energy will be needed to keep the water warm.



A spa/hot tub combined with a backyard deck can add to a home's value and living space. This one uses Wolmanized lumber.

MANY DIFFERENT shapes are available to suit any location you choose.

Wooden hot tubs are round or oval. Manufactured spas come in circles, squares, rectangles, octagons and other shapes.

Customized concrete spas can be any shape or size you choose because

they're individually designed and built. And spas come in a rainbow of colors.

Your local NSPI professional can discuss the variety of options available to help you select the spa or hot tub that's right for you. Or, to receive a Spa Planning Kit, send \$1 to: NSPI 2111 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, Va. 22314.

## Make a splash with newest wet look

**T**HE BACKYARD pool used to be the ultimate status symbol, right up there with a Rolls Royce in the garage and

a Rolex on the wrist. But a funny thing has happened to this one-time luxury. The fitness fad became a life-style and suddenly, owning a pool be-

came just one more way to keep in shape.

The pool and spa industry now exceeds \$5 billion in sales yearly. More than 4 million pools — traditional and lap — exist in the United States. That's a lot of chlorinated water.

If space or expense is a factor in your pool planning, consider a lap pool. Usually about 40 feet long and one-lane (about 5 feet) wide, lap pools are about half the cost of traditional pools. They are easier to maintain than larger pools and can be constructed in side yards or long, narrow back yards that are too small for regular pools.

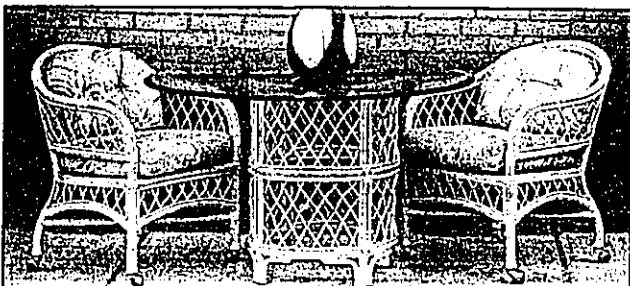
A sloping back yard can be terraced and used as a setting for a graduated series of pools, wading pools and spas. Plantings of water-loving flowers and greenery can enhance a pool's setting.

The traditional-shaped pools (rectangular, round, kidney and figure-eight) are still used where space is available. The most frequent request, however, is for the free-form look.

BORN OF NECESSITY and odd-shaped spaces, the free-form pool can transform an ordinary back yard into a secluded grotto. Using native stone to pave the patio and walkways around the pool emphasizes the dramatic effect. Using dark blue for the bottom rather than the traditional light blue adds to the mysterious quality of the pool while cutting down on heating costs.

One disadvantage to using either a design on the bottom or a dark color is that a swimmer in distress won't show up as quickly as one against a light blue background. If there are children or poor swimmers in your household, it's something to consider.

The old "bath house" idea has been revived with the increased use of such enclosed and semi-enclosed structures as pool houses and gazebos. These go far beyond the cabanas of the '50s, and can be used year-round. Decks have expanded to wrap around the



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

What's a pool without the appropriate setting nearby and if that's your goal, then wicker should be your game. This wicker setting is by Henry Link and one of several patio groupings on display at Charles Furniture Warehouse, 222 E. Harrison, Royal Oak.