



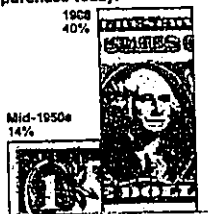
Take a dip

Cool pools, spas are still hot sellers

REMEMBER the kidney-shaped pools you used to swim in as a kid?

HOMEFACTS

■ A higher percentage of the average family's income goes toward making a home purchase today.



SOURCE: Census Bureau

Copyright News Service

Well, pool design has come a long way since then. Yesteryear's basic swimming pools have given way to pool-scapes that rival the lushest tropical lagoons and cost as much as a small house to design and install.

Today, few pools are unaccompanied by a Jacuzzi. Many have detailed landscaping, waterfalls, built-in platforms for sunbathing and handpainted accent tiles.

A nearby cabana is convenient for guests and completes the resort-at-home feeling. And even the smallest backyards can accommodate a handsome lap pool.

Pools and spas are not only aesthetic, they offer significant physical fitness and health benefits. And, of course, a pool or spa adds value to a home.

A POOL OWNER, whether he has a large pool or a lap pool, finds that his pool is not only functional, but has

also turned his backyard into a social and recreational center.

Pools can bring families closer together. They get people out of the house away from television. They even bring parents and their kids closer together. And, for many, the pool is a status symbol.

Residential pools used to be boring blue rectangles ringed by concrete and lawn chairs. Jungle gyms of exposed plumbing supplied heat and chemicals for the water.

Today's backyard pools and spas are stylish, lavish and interesting. Pool contractors report a boom in demand for pools with such fancy extras as waterfalls, landscaping, gazebos, whirlpools, computerized control systems and colored underwater lights.

Many home owners tailor pools to their home and backyards, using extensive landscaping, the goal is to make the pool look like a natural part of the topography.

SOUNDS GREAT!— but how does anyone afford it? The solution for many is a home equity loan. Families remortgage their homes to finance pools that cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

Prices of pools vary according to size and construction material. Concrete is most expensive, fiberglass less so. Pools with vinyl liners are least costly.

The big bonus in putting a pool in their back yard is the control you gain over your leisure time. Many people find that designing their own backyard resort is less expensive — and more convenient — than having a condo on the beach or a mountain cabin.

Pool contractors report that the most requested extra feature is a spa or Jacuzzi with jets for heated water (approximate price: \$4,700).

Spas are very popular and many customers favor poolspa combinations. They offer a favorite method of relax-

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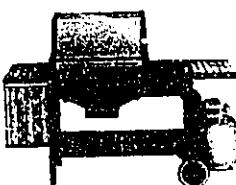
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