



Tropical plantings and variegated flagstone turn a back yard into an inviting space to relax and entertain. Palms also provide privacy and help separate the yard from the house next door.



FROM NO FLASH TO BIG SPLASH A DESOLATE POOL AREA GETS REVAMPED INTO A LUSH OASIS

BEFORE THE REDO, there wasn't much privacy for *Ciro Delgadillo's* clients when lolling on their patio. That's because the houses are clustered so closely together in their area of Pacific Beach that the neighbors may as well be living with each other. In this case, the house next door loomed over the pool, practically colliding with the backyard wall.

Even though it was easy for the folks next door to ogle, there wasn't much for them to envy. Materials were outdated and landscaping was nonexistent — unless you counted the one lonely palm tree stuck in a bucket at the pool's south end.

"There was a clear underutilization of space and unrealized potential in the old design/layout," *Ciro* says. "The client wanted an outdoor kitchen, relaxation areas with comfortable furniture and a dining area. The pool needed a redesign for a more contemporary style and had to be made more shallow to accommodate grandchildren."

Collaborating with *Ciro's* Landscaping Inc. designers *Henry Hong* and *Kelvin Ching*, *Ciro* turned the patio space into an

exotic personal playground with a tropical feel. *Kentia* and *king palms* were planted along with *bird of paradise* and large, shade-loving tropical shrubs such as *Aucuba japonica* 'Variegata,' *philodendron* 'Xanadu,' *Phorium tenax* 'Yellow Wave' and *leather leaf ferns*. *Quartzite flagstone* in gold hues of *Autumn* and *Sunset* replaced *red-brick paving*, while *whitewashed wood decking* was replaced with *easier-to-maintain concrete*.

"We created individual activity and living areas with new paving at varying elevations," *Ciro* says. "The variation in the flagstone nicely ties in the new color scheme of greens, burnt oranges, reds, browns and subtle yellow tones, as well as complements the color scheme of the newly painted house."

A cascading water feature creates a focal point at the pool's south wall. At the pool's east end, a double counter was built: one side for casual dining, overlooking the pool; the other a swim-up bar with built-in barstools.

Too bad the neighbors no longer can take a peek. They'd have something to be envious about now. ❖