



Cool, Blue and Refreshing

Earl Fore's custom pools are inspired by his love of water

BY SHANNON CAVANAUGH

Mention swimming pools to Earl Fore, owner of Aqua Blue Pools, and he will recount memories of his favorite boyhood swimming holes, which he discovered off the dusty back roads of South Carolina. Those spring-fed waters were blue and ice-cold. They turned his lips purple (and chilled his grandmother's watermelons). On hot summer afternoons, he'd stand atop a high wooden diving board and look down, his teeth chattering from fear—and the

chill of his last plunge.

"I was ten and loved to swim. That water was so cold...and so clear you could see the bottom when you jumped in... we swam until we shriveled up," recalls Fore. "Really, the reason I love the water so much is that I'm a Pisces (the zodiac sign whose symbol is a fish)."

Fore is passionate about water, so it's no surprise that he named his company Aqua Blue Pools. Fore makes a big splash creating luxurious, custom pools for customers in

Charleston and Hilton Head—pools that he says will "make your head spin." He brings 36 years of experience to the task (with 18 of those years running his own business). Consequently, his company has won numerous awards for designing and installing pools that range in price from \$26,000 to more than half-a-million dollars.

This free-form pool features an integrated spa, a swim-up café-table and a rock waterfalls.



1. A secluded pool in downtown Charleston features a hidden, automatic pool cover to reduce evaporation and keep out debris. 2. An elevated spa enhances the effect of an infinity edge. 3. This breathtaking pool on Daniel Island takes full advantage of its surrounds. Notice how the spa disappears into the pool, and the pool into the waterway. 4. A classic circular pool and spa complement the lines of this contemporary home on James Island.

Fore recalls, “We built a pool overlooking the ocean on the Isle of Palms. It has a three-sided infinity edge and sits 14 feet in the air. That’s right, 14 feet in the air! When you’re sitting in the pool, you look out and feel like

you’re sitting in the ocean. It’s absolutely fantastic!”

There’s no shape or size of pool too big or small for Aqua Blue Pools’ staff. Today, the team consists of more than 50 professionals, including designers and craftsmen, who can turn an ordinary yard into an outdoor paradise. Their expertise encompasses everything from pools and fountains to outdoor kitchens and pool houses.

“We design outdoor areas all the way through: the water features; the seating around the deck; the mood of the lighting; the fire pit; and more. We can do a lot of neat things. Our professionals are trained to go out and envision a plan as if the pool was meant

to be there... it all flows,” says Fore.

Aqua Blue Pools stays on top of research, which now suggests that families spend around 70% of their time in the shallow end of pools. In response, the company offers beautiful wading areas, beach entries, waterfalls, and built-in tables and chairs that make lounging and entertaining in the pool irresistible.

Blending pool designs with the beauty of nature is what Aqua Blue Pools does best. The team presents their designs on the computer in 3-D—with animation and color—to ensure customers can envision what they’ll be

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getting. Pools are then installed and offered with extended warranties. And, just like family, customers can call Aqua Blue Pools any time after installation for follow-up service. This kind of commitment by the company is important in today's economy as more families, instead of traveling, are choosing "staycations"—spending more time at home and enjoying the outdoors around their own pools.

There are many things Aqua Blue Pool does to offer superior, cost-effective pool systems. For example, the company encourages the use of environmentally friendly products from Pentair, such as the Eco Select brand of pumps, filters, heaters and controls. These products help pool owners save the earth's resources by using solar power and conserving water.

"We also design pool systems to help owners save costs. It's all about being hydraulically balanced," says sales manager Mike Futeral. "Not only do we help customers save up to 80% of their pool-related energy bills, but also save

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on the usage of water and chemicals," he continues. "When the waterfall works right and the water circulates in balance with minimum maintenance, that all adds up to big savings in time and money for the owner."

"We're also big into using salt systems instead of chlorine. It's like pouring Morton's salt into the pool to keep it clean. Salt systems naturally produce chlorine by splitting sodium chloride molecules. With the salt system, your pool won't smell or turn your hair orange!"

Aqua Blue Pools is also a full lap ahead of the competition in staying on top of product

trends for high-end pools. The company is a member of the prestigious Master Pools Guild, a large network of professionals all over the world who specialize in pool design and products. As a board member, Earl Fore travels across the U.S. and Europe to inspect pool sites.

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As a result, his team now makes use of exotic pool materials, such as pebble finishes, glass beads (decorative beads embedded and exposed in the walls and floor of a pool) and \$120-per-square-foot designer porcelain and glass tile mosaics. The company also builds Koi fish ponds—a South Carolina trend that started in Italy (where people buy Koi from Japan for as much as \$15,000 apiece).

As employees of the oldest pool company in town, Aqua Blue Pools' staff knows from experience that there's nothing like the magical mix of sun and water to bring family and friends together for a good time.

Just ask Earl Fore. He enjoys reminiscing about the ice cold water of his boyhood. But in the same breath, he'll admit that, nowadays, "Unless the pool water is the optimum 84 degrees, I'm not going in!"

AQUA BLUE POOLS

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