



# GREAT HOME and GARDENING

ADVERTISING FEATURE

## Outdoor kitchens are ideal for entertaining all year round



looking to maximise their outdoor space for cooking, dining and entertaining – paving the way for an increase in the popularity of outdoor kitchens.

So what is an outdoor kitchen and how can homeowners maximise their value?

Matt Leacy, co-founder and creative director of Landart Landscapes, and president of the LNA Master Landscapes Association, shares his top tips for creating a kitchen outdoors – from what features to include, to how to install for your individual outdoor space and aesthetic.

“The outdoor kitchen,

in particular, is a feature that is increasingly becoming an expectation rather than a want for homebuyers and homeowners alike. People are starting to say “yeah, yeah we expect that for sure” whereas in the past they probably would have been happy with a moveable more makeshift set up barbecue,” says Matt.

“I’ve been advocating the idea for a while now that we should treat our outdoor spaces the same as our indoor spaces in terms of creating different spaces and functional dynamics.

“The same way that you have a kitchen

area, dining area, casual lounge area and a playroom indoors, you can create equivalent areas outdoors that serve the same purposes and help you unlock the potential of your space.

“You can do much more outside food-wise than simply cooking on a barbecue,” adds Matt.

“An outdoor kitchen can have cupboards, a fridge, sink and more – or it could be as simple as some cupboard space and a barbecue with a nice servery. If you wanted to do a bit more, you could look at installing a breakfast bar with some stools around it to make it

more social and to create a casual space for breakfast, a cup of tea or reading the paper. Add to that a more formal dining area with seating and lounge space and you have the makings of the perfect outdoor living and entertaining space.

“It depends on the size and layout of your outdoor space. If you’ve got a small courtyard, then you might consider an outdoor kitchen and bench top with stools for dining so you don’t have to clog up the space with a dining table as well as a servery. If you have a bigger space, you could have a full blown kitchen

with a sink, fridge, wok burner, dishwasher and cupboard space.”

“For foodies who love to cook, but don’t have great airflow throughout their property, it can be a challenge to keep the kitchen from stinking out the rest of the house,” says Matt.

“An outdoor kitchen can be the perfect solution for those who love cooking fragrant food without the long term smell – ensuring that everything, from Sunday roasts and barbecued meats to curries, can be cooked outdoors without cooking odours lingering inside for days.”

LANDSCAPE expert Matt Leacy looks at the growing trend in outdoor kitchens and why it’s here to stay.

Traditionally, kitchens

have been an indoor property feature for most homeowners and investors.

However, more and more Australians are

## Mistakes in legitimate tax deductions cost property investors thousands

BMT Tax Depreciation, a company that has worked with more than 400,000 Australian property investors to help uncover and claim legitimate tax deductions for the wear and ageing of their investment properties, has compiled a list of its top five tax mistakes commonly made by investors that likely result in millions of dollars of tax savings going unclaimed each year.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) recognises that the structure of a rental property and the assets within it can experience wear and tear over time and therefore allow tax concessions for investors to account for this deterioration. Quantity surveyors such as BMT are used to uncover these deductions and help maximise tax claims for property investors.

The chief executive officer of BMT,

Bradley Beer said the first mistake many investors make is not claiming all the legitimate items they are allowed to depreciate.

“Items such as smoke alarms, security systems, swimming pools and even garbage bins are often overlooked but hold valuable tax savings for property investors,” said Bradley Beer.

“Fixtures and fittings with a depreciable value less than \$300 can be immediately claimed in the first financial year.

“A garbage bin valued at \$250 and smoke alarms valued at \$145 are just two examples of items which are eligible and can generate immediate tax savings for applicable investors,” said Bradley Beer.

The second common mistake seen

by BMT is investors believing that their properties are too old to hold any deductions but the truth is that a property’s age does not necessarily rule out all deductions completely.

“In order to claim the capital works allowance for structural elements of a rental property such as walls, floors and ceilings, your property must have been constructed after 1987. However, owners of older properties can still claim deductions for renovations carried out after the relevant date, even if these were completed by a previous owner,” said Bradley Beer.

“They are also eligible to claim deductions for plant and equipment assets within the property such as carpets, hot water systems, blinds and stoves.”

Investors who renovate their proper-

ties are often not aware of scrapping deductions available for the assets they remove and replace.

“Ideally, a property should be assessed before renovation to determine the value for scrapped assets such as tiles or appliances like dishwashers and refrigerators, then after a renovation to account for new additions”.

The fourth common mistake seen by BMT is investors believing that because they purchased their investment property some time ago that they cannot benefit from tax depreciation or items that may have been missed in a previous claim.

“The ATO allows two previous tax returns to be adjusted so investors would be wise to examine whether they have missed anything and if so,

they should speak to their relevant advisor to have their tax return amended,” Mr Beer said.

Lastly, many investors can mistakenly believe that using an expert quantity surveyor to assess their property in order to maximise their tax claim will be expensive and therefore opt to ‘DIY’ their own claim.

“Some investors may not realise the cost of obtaining a depreciation schedule is 100 per cent tax deductible.

“By taking the time to explore the tax depreciation system and working with an expert quantity surveyor, property investors can avoid making these common mistakes and help ensure their investment properties are generating the maximum amount of cash flow possible,” Mr Beer said.

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