

by Shawn
Gilliam

Turn a boring deck plan into a beautiful one by adding arbors, built-in benches, and planters that give blooms the platform they deserve.

Decks with Extras



PHOTOGRAPHS: MICHAEL JENSEN; BUILDER: JAMES FORSLUND; REGIONAL CONTRIBUTOR: TRISH MAHARAJAM



Hefty arbors
(*above and top*)
join a cherry tree
to provide the
deck with spots
of shade.

Splashy Retreat

Lisa and Doug Lambert didn't want a small, mass-produced deck stifling their backyard fun. So they made sure the structure built onto their Issaquah, Washington, home was geared for dining, hot-tubbing, and visiting with friends. But Lisa and Doug didn't just settle for more space. "We wanted something loaded with interest, something that would wow you," Doug says. "So many decks are flat and symmetrical with very little going on except for the foundation structure."

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Decks with Extras

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Railings, steps, and planters break the deck into smaller, more intimate spaces (*left*). The Lamberts also incorporated gates to help keep their young children and dogs out of the spa area.

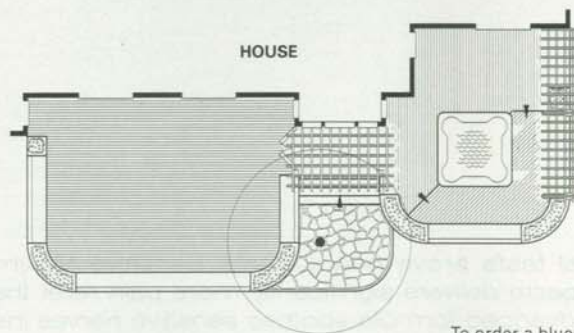
The deck offers plenty of room for a table and chairs, where Lisa and Doug like to visit with neighbors (*below*). Despite its roominess, the structure is scaled appropriately to the house.

Two arbors—made of redwood, like the rest of the deck—deliver the vertical impact the Lamberts sought. The arbors are functional, too, providing shade and a place for climbing roses or clematis to someday grow. Planters filled with annuals provide the colorful blooms for now.

Built-in benches tie into the planters and the deck rails, providing plenty of room for guests to sit back. Chairs pulled up to a round table suffice for a smaller gathering. “The best part of the deck is its generosity,” Doug says. “We can fit loads of people out there and never feel cramped.”

One end of the deck even holds a spa (see plan, *right*), which the Lamberts usually treat as a dunking pool for playing with D.J., their toddler son. “What I love about the tub is that it can animate the deck and bring people to life—or calm them down,” Doug says.

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