

# HOME

SOUTH

## Alfresco kitchens are the hot new thing

Backyard barbecues taken to a new level. There's much more to outdoor kitchens than meets the eye. By LAURA POND

**GONE** are the days of men standing around outside manning the barbecue while women make all the necessary preparations indoors for outdoor entertaining.

Cooking is now a social activity and outdoor kitchens provide the perfect space for hosts and guests to interact, with a new realm of cabinets, drawers, cooktops, ovens, benchtops, fridges, dishwashers and more, surpassing the days of a solitary barbecue.

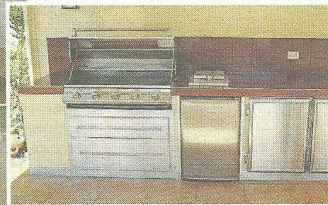
Michael and Valerie Barnes of Willetton recently had an outdoor kitchen designed and installed by Alfresco Kitchens.

"We didn't have a huge amount of space to work with but we've maximised what we do have," they said.

As a birthday present from his wife, Michael now has a large barbecue, cabinets and a fridge outdoors, which he has already given a workout.

"Despite the cool weather, I've had friends over for lunch and the outdoor kitchen has proven so easy and enjoyable to use."

The Barnes had always thought about an outdoor kitchen but had no idea of the scope of products available.



"There were things I didn't even think were possible outdoors," Michael said.

"Our outdoor kitchen has four binneries in the cabinets, which are perfect for serving up food from the barbecue and taking straight to the table."

Something else many people aren't aware of is the varying state regulations relating to outdoor kitchens, as set out by EnergySafety.

For example, if you have more than three walls in your alfresco area it's

classed as an enclosed space, which means you'll need to have a flame failure barbecue and exhaust canopy.

Other requirements include that the clearances between the gas barbecue and the building must meet the requirements of the Gas Standards (Gasfitting and Consumer Gas Installations) Regulations 1999.

Benchtops are also an important factor, with a range of options in tile, stainless steel and granite.

Ric and Denise Piel from Alfresco Kitchens recommend granite for benchtops that will be out in the elements.

"Granite is UV tolerant and won't heat up like stainless steel does," Denise said.

"All of our kitchens are weather and fire-proof, with everything specially designed to suit the outdoors."

There are a variety of Perth businesses catering specifically for the outdoor kitchen market and it's best to consult one of these to ensure you're abiding by all of the necessary regulations. ■

# renovations