

How Many Options Are There In Choosing a Backyard Pool?

(NC) — How many times have you pictured yourself swimming early morning laps in your own pool, or wished that the kids had a backyard playground where you could keep an eye on them, or even imagined parties around the pool on summer evenings?

How many times have you thought about buying a pool but dismissed the idea because of the cost? Perhaps it's time to take a second look.

The cost is within reach of many families according to the Canadian Spa and Pool Association (CANSPA) which estimates that many people who buy pools each year earn less than \$30,000 a year.

And pool ownership is an investment that pays off by making the home a more inviting place, adding to its resale value and providing an alternative to a crowded beach, resort or commercial pool. **The basics**

A basic inground pool starts at between \$8,000 and \$10,000. The final cost will depend on its size, the materials used and the landscaping required. Even if you live high atop a mountain, deep in a valley, or only have a small amount of space in which to build, these obstacles can be overcome.

Name your fantasy! A desert oasis, tropical paradise, oriental garden, or Spanish courtyard are not out of reach. It's up to you to create an aquatic environment that reflects your personality, lifestyle and budget.

One distinct trend in pool design is to add natural materials and elements to enhance the natural setting — stones, boulders, bricks and wood combined with colourful foliage can create a delightful effect.

Challenging sites such as sloping backyards, difficult landscaping or limited space shouldn't deter you from buying a pool. Cliff-hanging pool, kidney-shaped pools and above ground pools can handle even the most demanding needs. And remember, pools can be custom-fitted to a lot in almost any shape you desire.

The most practical shapes are simple geometric designs that complement the lines of your home, won't compete with landscape and allow for creative use of the surrounding area.

A rectangular pool is best for serious exercise. An L-shaped pool is ideal because adults can swim laps in the long end while children can play and be taught to swim in the shorter leg of the L.

An unusually shaped pool may be the only way to save a favorite tree or conform to the natural terrain. You can create your own fantasy island by building a free-form pool with a waterfall churning from an underwater ledge and a bridge crossing to the raised deck, spa and barbecue.

If you do a lot of swimming, but are short on land — small pools are the answer. The long, narrow shape of a lap pool is ideal for tight spaces or sloped properties. It may measure 10 by 40 feet and range in depth from three to five feet.

Another option is a play pool with shallow depths of one metre at both ends. It's perfect for adults who want to play water basketball and volleyball at one end while children play at the other and swimmers do their laps in between.

Create a haven
If your family does a lot of outdoor entertaining, design a pool area that is picturesque. Gazebos, sunscreens, cabanas, pool houses and barbecue pits can create a total outdoor living area.

Have a barbecue on your patio deck. Use your pool house to dry off after a swim or to enjoy a late-afternoon refreshment. Create a haven for your family and friends.

If your budget is flexible and you do a lot of entertaining, build an enclosed hospitality centre. It allows you to dine and lounge without having to run in and out of the house to get your food and beverages. Consider equipping your pool area

with a guest house complete with kitchen. Or build a greenhouse to use as a pool house and dining room.

Even for a limited budget, the list of moderately-priced extras is long: heaters (or as an option, solar panels); automatic pool cleaners which do over 80 percent of the job of cleaning a pool; heat-retaining pool covers; slides, whirlpool spas and hot tubs and additional fencing and landscaping items.

Whatever your dream, there's surely a pool that can match it. But don't wait for the heat of the summer to make your dream come true — now's the time for thinking about the hot days that lie ahead.

For the name of a CANSPA dealer in your area contact: **Canadian Spa and Pool Association, 6303 Airport Road, Suite 305, Mississauga, Ontario L4V 1R8, or call Toll Free 1-800-263-6103.**

Breakfast: Still The Most Important Meal

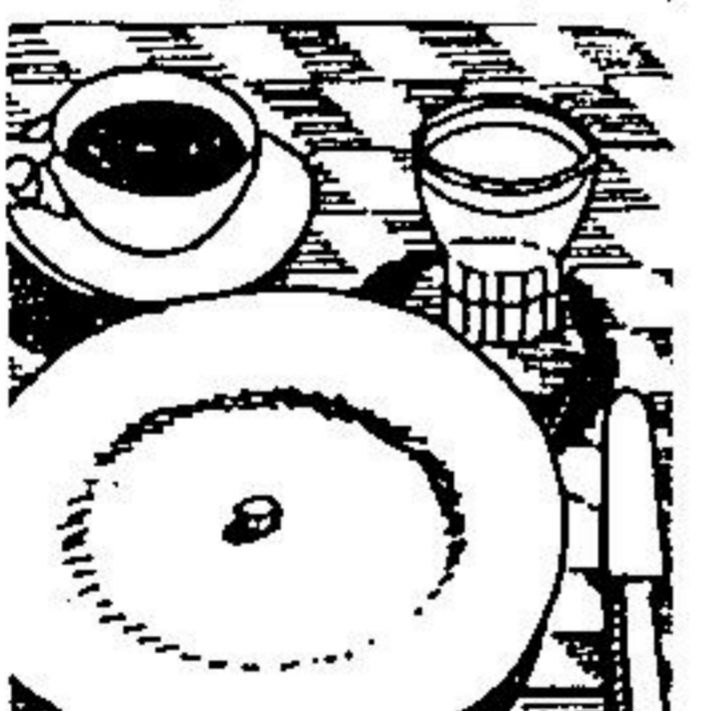
(NC) It is a common yet harmful practice. The popular North American habit of skipping breakfast is not a healthy one.

After a night of fasting, energy levels need replenishment. The basic nutrient levels in the bloodstream should be restored before daily energy demands require tissue breakdown to maintain the essential supply to cells performing key roles.

So breakfast remains the most important meal of the day. And, skipping breakfast will not help in weight loss. In fact, it may encourage heavy eating later in the day.

Similarly, especially if weight loss is the motive, eating only once a day (even if that meal is breakfast), will not necessarily result in the desired weight loss. If the 24-hour need for nourishment and calories is met in one meal, the liver's ability to store glycogen will be exceeded. The glucose that cannot be stored as a result, stimulates the production of insulin. The glucose is stored in the adipocytes (fat storage cells) as fat.

After eating only one meal, the body still has a considerable need for energy. To meet this, it turns muscle protein into glucose, rather than burning fat, for energy. The muscles are needed to burn fat, and fat is burned more easily when insulin levels are low. This is why



three meals a day are so important.

For weight loss or maintenance, three nutritionally balanced but lighter meals are effective. In fact, a diet plan that includes a complete meal replacement formulation may actually ensure healthier, safer weight loss. With a quality meal replacement program, nutritional needs are better met, without the calories.

This column is an excerpt from Dr. Allan Sommersall's recently published book, **Your Very Good Health**. Dr. Sommersall is Vice President, Health/Communications of Shaklee Canada Inc. If you would like more information about the book, nutrition, or diet, call Shaklee at 1-800-263-9138.



OTTAWA—Every generation, once its membership gets beyond middle age, is prone to imagining that the world is going straight to hell in a hand basket. I try to remember this ancient truism every time I find myself fondly recalling the good old days, or speculating about the awful environmental and moral morass into which our present policies are taking us.

But I have to speak sharply to myself or I tend to forget that the good old days weren't as good as memory suggests, and our current situation isn't as bad as it may sometimes seem. These attempts to overcome the biases associated with getting longer in the tooth tend to

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This is not meant to solicit homes already listed for sale.

Home Thoughts

(NC) — "Most Canadians are comfortable with the idea of belonging to more than one place. We are largely a nation of people who have come from other parts of the country, or from somewhere else as immigrants or as descendants of immigrants. And we know what it means to put down roots and pull up stakes, sometimes again and again. Of course, for some people the attractions of home are overpowering. Familiar comforts and surroundings, closeness of family and lifelong friends, personal memories and shared traditions combine to fashion unbreakable bonds between individual and community, bonds which make the idea of "leaving home" all but unthinkable.

But many others among us have grown accustomed to switching our jobs, revising our goals, changing our home address and even our home towns and regions. In short, many Canadians are used to moving. We may move in response to a challenge, in pursuit of an opportunity or in surrender to curiosity about what lies over the next hill. Whatever our motivations, for many of us moving has become a basic component of the Canadian experience, part of being free in a large and ever-changing homeland.

But as we move forward through life, all of us glance back from time to time, remembering where and what we have been, reflecting on our personal experiences, honouring our heritage and our traditions. That is part of the Canadian experience too.

Whether our roots are across the street or across an ocean, they are never far from our hearts. It is much the same with home towns, whatever their size, wherever they are. They remain with us for life. This is particularly important for Canadians because history, economics, technology and a continuing spirit of adventure have led so many of us to claim association with multiple home towns—familiar and sometimes beloved communities that touched us and taught us, or perhaps just made us warm and welcome at some point along life's way.

"In 1987 Canadians observed the 40th anniversary of the proclamation of the first Canadian Citizenship Act, an important step in our country's progression towards nationhood. During the anniversary celebrations, we often described the freedom and opportunity that come with Canadian citizenship as being founded on three bedrock principles: equality, diversity and community. There, in those few words, is the idea of Canada itself. It is the idea that helps make Canada a homeland for over 25 million of us and a beacon for countless millions of others around the world. We have been so successful in drawing upon the world for our citizens, and in making them feel at home here, that we have earned British economist Barbara Ward's designation as "the world's first international nation."

— from "Being Canadian" by David Crombie, 1988.

founder, however, when I consider the mail service.

I have been reading a book called "Country Life in Canada" by a man named Canniff Haight, originally published in 1885. Mr. Haight was a farmer from the Hay Bay area of Ontario's Lennox and Addington counties.

The book mourns the honesty and industry of life around Hay Bay 50 years earlier. As Arthur Lower noted in an introduction to the new edition "As man has always done, he contrasts that age of primitive innocence with the sophisticated degeneration of his own increasing years."

But Mr. Haight did give credit where credit was due, to the postal service, for example. In the 1830's, Mr. Haight reports a merchant posting a letter from York, that is Toronto, could not get a reply from Montreal in less than 10 days, or sometimes 15; and from Quebec, the time required was from three weeks to a month.

It was also expensive. To send a letter to a destination not more than 60 miles away cost fourpence half penny, or about nine cents. Fifty years later, when the post office had been taken over by the young govern-

ment of Canada, the same letter could be sent from Halifax to Vancouver for about three cents, one third what it cost under the British for a mere 60 mile journey.

And thanks to the new train service, the speed of the mails by the 1880's was blinding. You could mail a letter from Kingston, say, at 6 pm. of a Tuesday, have it delivered in Montreal at 11 am the next day, Wednesday, and have a reply in Kingston by Thursday Noon. The letter was delivered, you'll note, not stuffed into some super mailbox in the approximate neighbourhood frequented by the addressee, and it was delivered 17 hours after it was posted.

There are days when many of us would settle for the level of service available even before the trains, in the 1830's. From five to seven days for a letter from Toronto to Montreal doesn't sound bad at all when one hundred and fifty years later it can take 10 days for a letter to get from Toronto to the Ottawa valley.

Just as we are not paranoid if everyone really does hate us, so memory does not betray us if we imagine the mail service was once better. It was. A lot.

Have you hugged your real estate agent lately?

By J. Duffner

If you are a homeowner, like it or not, you are in the real estate market. There are only three things you can do — buy, sell or hold. Most of us have, for one reason or another, decided to hold. That does not mean that we should not be aware of what is going on concerning our investment. And, make no mistake, it is an investment. In nine cases out of ten, it is the biggest investment you will ever make. It is in your best interest to protect it by staying informed.

Everybody says MY accountant, MY lawyer, MY banker, but in most cases there is a lot less money involved, and it is not affecting you and your family in so many different ways, as own-

ing a home or wanting to buy one.

So let me suggest you find yourselves that one special real estate professional and make him/her YOUR agent and, perhaps over lunch, obtain information and advice that is certainly worth the price of a lunch.

Planned zoning changes in your area, recent sales, market value of your home today, discuss your mortgage, changed capital gains tax rules, new services in your area. Ask him/her about leverage in real estate. There is no end to it. Don't forget to ask to be called when that special deal comes up.

You don't have to be buying or selling right now to do this and

YOUR Agent knows and understands that, but his time is limited and the only way he/she earns a living of course, is by buying and selling for their clients. Perhaps you have information that is helpful to him. It is a business lunch where information is exchanged.

In no other field have so many sharp, competent ladies risen to positions of prominence. It might be a good idea to take your wife along. Come to think of it, they don't call it 'family home' for nothing you know. Please share some of your experiences with me and send your comments to the publisher of this newspaper.

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