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CANADA'S BEST KITCHEN

Stunning Vancouver makeover captures national award

By Frank O'Brien

Kitchen renovation is among the mostly hotly contested categories in the annual national SAM Awards, presented by the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA), which draw eager entries from coast to coast.

The awards "celebrate excellence in new homes and renovation design" and are considered the "Oscars of the industry," according to CHBA president Richard Lind.

When the "Best Kitchen" awards were presented this April in Whistler, four projects from Metro Vancouver and one from Whistler were among five on the national short list, a telling indicator of the calibre of local contractors.

The award went, deservedly, to ReVision Custom Home Renovations of Vancouver, marking the first time the SAM has gone to an outdoor kitchen.

Todd Senft, president of ReVision, explains that the makeover grew from a client's desire for a year-round, indoor-outdoor entertainment centre, using an existing pool and flowing into the home.


"Challenging" barely describes what the job required. It involved a transformation beginning with the yard and eventually sweeping through most of the house.

There was difficulty, for instance, in accessing the site for a small bulldozer and an excavation team, overcome by laying 82 sheets of recycled plywood around the pool and concrete to protect pavers and plants.

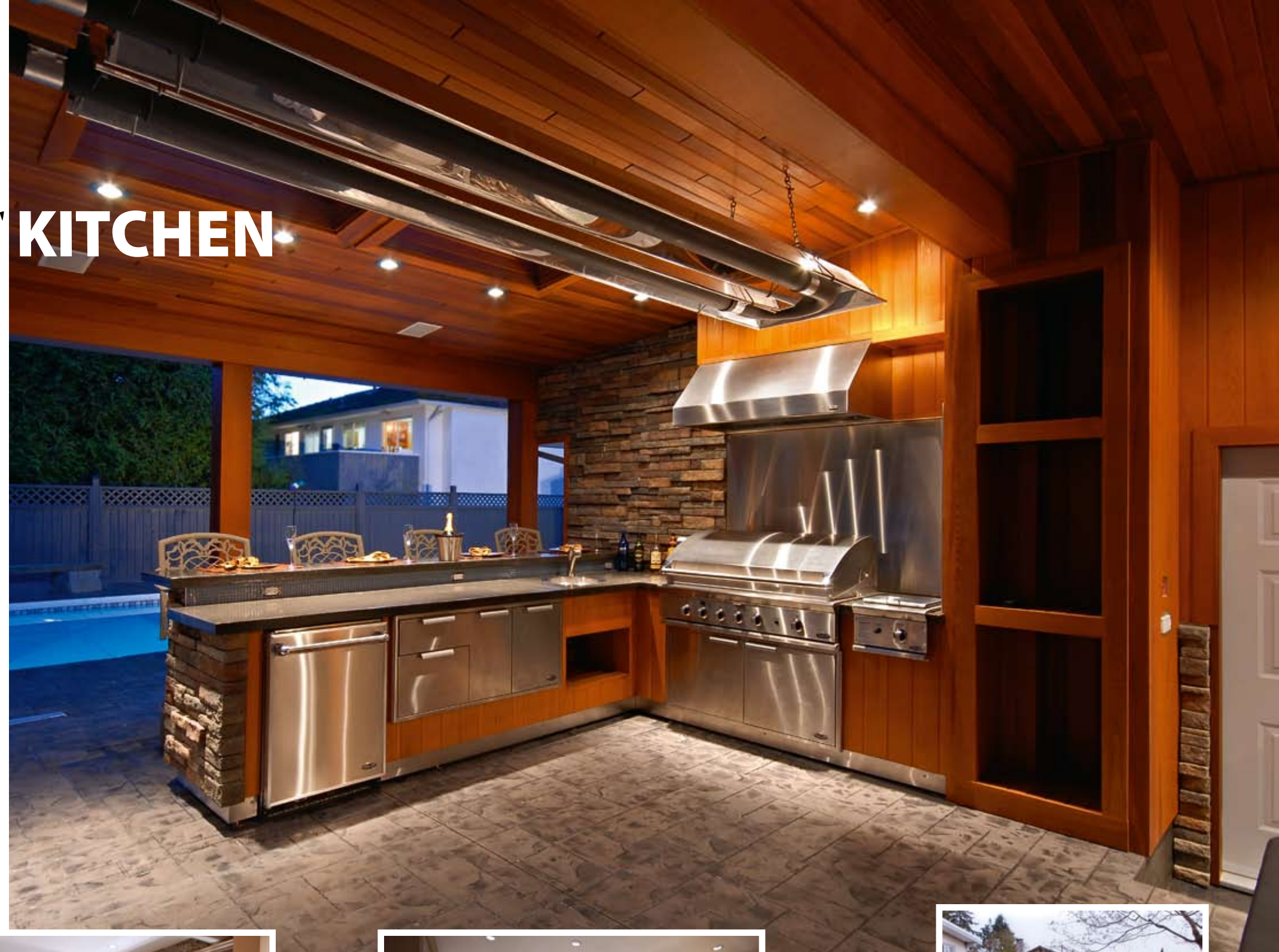
For the home's kitchen extension, ReVision and the client agreed on a West Coast contemporary theme, with a careful emphasis on reusing and recycling material wherever possible.

The kitchen itself is the centrepiece. Floored in stamped concrete and framed in cedar panelling, it features soaring wood beam ceilings with the heating and ventilation pipes exposed, yet with intricate Bose surround-sound speakers hidden inside. Open to the pool area, the kitchen is equipped with a stainless steel barbecue, other stainless steel appliances and a large stand-alone fireplace in Cultured Stone. Carrying on the durable theme for all-weather use, the counter tops are all concrete, and stonework is used to tie the room into the revamped pool and hot tub.

The kitchen carries inside the home, where hardwood floors, stone countertops and Cultured Stone highlights extend the West Coast contemporary theme.

The result is an award-winning entertaining area for a lifestyle characterized by large gatherings of family and friends 52 weeks a year. 

RIGHT: Kitchen flows indoors, where Cultured Stone, solid wood cabinets and hardwood floor carry on the West Coast contemporary theme.



ABOVE: Durable outdoor kitchen uses stamped concrete for flooring; concrete countertops and stainless steel appliances.



BEFORE: Work began with adding a new patio and pool area with new pavers and stamped concrete. Existing old-growth plants were salvaged, and old pavers were re-used.