



**P**eople are gravitating toward maintenance-free home designs that are functional, durable and entertainment-friendly. They want to spend relaxed time with friends and loved ones without worrying about housekeeping.

In Sedona, with its mild climate nine months out of the year, the home's interior design often centers around an indoor/outdoor lifestyle. People want to come here and swim in their pools, enjoy the outdoors, go for a hike and walk in with muddy red boots and not worry about white carpeting or a light-colored sofa. It's a very hands-on approach to interior design.

Families want to hang out. They are congregating in game rooms, in media rooms and around smaller tables—both in the kitchen and outdoors—that are more intimate than the big long rectangle with someone sitting at the head.

# Interior Design Trend for 2017

## Comfortable Living in Maintenance-Free Homes

**Indoor sofas are becoming much more user-friendly.** In addition to tried-and-true leather options, outdoor fabrics are making their way indoors. People can sit on a Sunbrella chenille sofa with a wet bathing suit and not worry about damaging it. Pretreating fabrics with nano-tech technology also reduces maintenance headaches: If someone spills a glass of red wine on the sofa, it doesn't stain. It rolls right off.

**Other durable design elements that are growing in popularity** are placing porcelain tiles in bathrooms; selecting veneer, laminate, and foil cabinets; and installing floors that don't scratch. I am seeing a big shift to natural stone and very smooth-textured hardwood floors. Oak is coming back. People weren't using oak for a long, long time. It's now becoming very popular. People are distressing oak, white washing it or cerusing it—highlighting the contrast between the grain and the rest of the surface. Flooring is becoming much more rustic. People would rather be outside enjoying the weather than cleaning and sealing their floors.

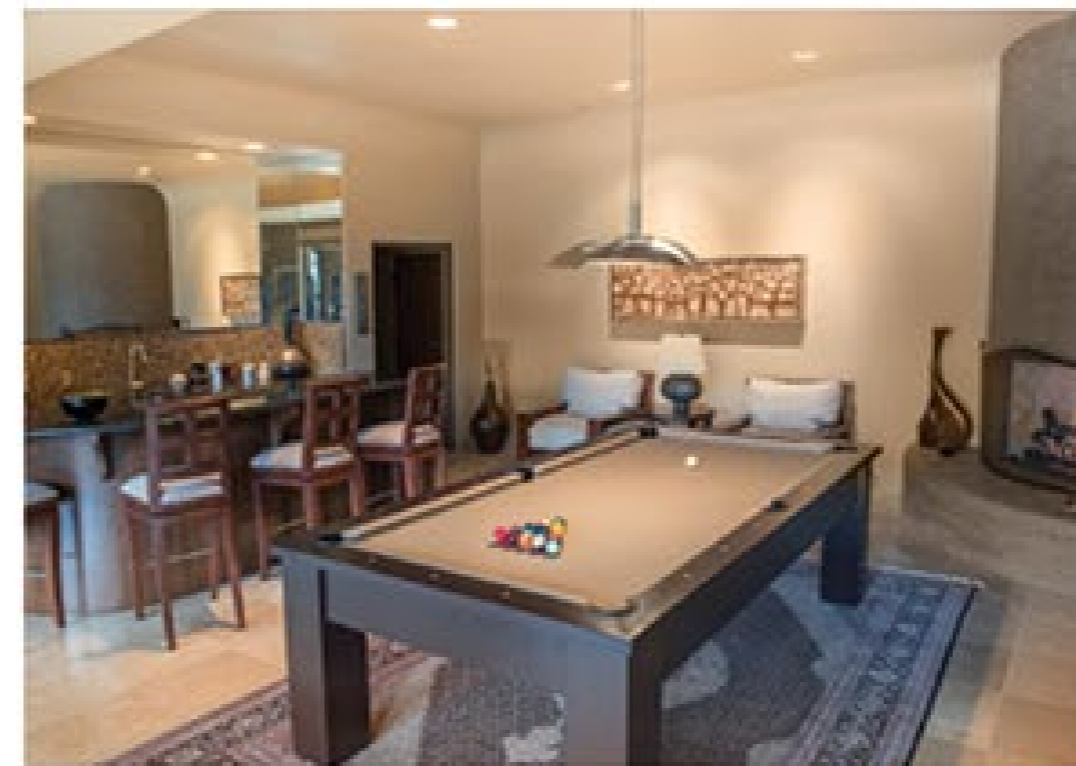
**Outdoor spaces are becoming intimate living areas.** People are treating the outdoor space just like they are treating the indoor space. They are using area rugs, outdoor sectionals, swivel chairs, covered televisions, refrigerators, water features, sculptural elements, and a fire pit. I recently designed an outdoor dining table that has fire coming out the center. It's a gorgeous focal point for people to sit around and enjoy.

**Technology is playing a bigger role in functional design.** People want a smart-home approach. They want convenience at their fingertips whether they are in the kitchen, the bedroom or outside. They want to charge their phone with ease, activate the air conditioning or heat before they arrive, turn on the television if they are swimming in their pool, and control their lights with their phones.

Ultimately, however, designed to fit a person's personality and be easily livable. People don't want to be stuck in a niche. They want the freedom to be who they are. **ES**



Written by Stephanie Larsen, an award-winning interior designer in Sedona, Arizona.





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