

naturalLiving

Spring/Summer 2014

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HOME LIFESTYLES: THEN AND NOW

Plus

THE NATURAL
EVOLUTION
OF CARS



FEATURES

06 Timely Matters

Technological and societal changes reshape families and lifestyles.

10 Inside Style, Outside Charm

Outdoor living has become more popular than ever in the 21st century.



IN EVERY ISSUE

naturalNews

03 Home is Where the Hearth is
Gas Emerging as the 'Natural' Energy Choice in North America

naturalChoices

04 Hot Off the Stove
The ingredients may be similar, but the recipe for a modern kitchen looks a bit different today than it did years ago.

naturallyBetter

09 Retro No More
Hot water has always been in style.

naturallyGood

13 Recipes
Scallop, Pineapple and Bacon Skewers with Jalapeno Vinaigrette and Turkey Cheeseburger Meatloaf

naturalFit

14 Driven by Change
From crank starts to gas guzzlers to NGVs, cars have come a long way.

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Home is Where the Hearth is

Forty years ago, writer John McPhee wrote an article in “The New Yorker” that looked at America’s renewed interest in fireplaces. Today, that interest continues, as U.S. census data shows that more than 50 percent of new homes built in the United States in 2011 had at least one fireplace, and one in 20 homes had two or more fireplaces. However, our interest in fireplace design and its environmental impact has evolved along with our fascination with fire.

Today’s fireplaces are less likely to burn wood, which reflects both the growing concern with public health and the environment. Some cities, such as Berkeley, California, and Montreal, Canada, have already banned wood-burning fireplaces (in 2008 and 2009, respectively). But that’s not the only reason consumers are moving from the more traditional wood-burning models and to gas fireplaces.

Kathy Repp, brand manager at Heatilator in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, confirms that the hearth market has shifted from wood to gas in recent years. “One of the primary reasons it’s shifting to gas is for convenience,” she says, noting that people prefer flipping a switch to going through the time-consuming and messy process required to build a fire with wood.

Today’s gas fireplaces offer sleek design options that fit any style of home and can be used either for warmth or ambience. Instead of a large brick or stone fireplace that dominates the room’s design, fireplaces can be artistic additions that provide a contemporary style component as well.



According to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association, about 70 percent of hearth products sold to the consumer market today are gas-powered. Cleaner-burning, easier to use and more efficient than wood, gas is appealing to consumers from both an environmental and an economic standpoint. ■

Gas Emerging as the ‘Natural’ Energy Choice in North America



Recent innovations in drilling technology, combined with discoveries from natural gas shale formations, has made natural gas the most promising energy source emerging in North America today. Comprised mainly of methane, natural gas is the cleanest burning fossil fuel available and produces less combustion byproducts than coal or refined oil products.

The Energy Information Administration estimates that natural gas-fired electric generation plants will account for nearly one-half of all new power plants added through 2035. The recent growth in the United States means there is enough total gas resources to meet current demand levels for at least a century, the American Gas Association reports.

With an abundant supply, improved technology for reaching it, and the promise of a cleaner, more environmentally friendly product, gas has made itself the “natural” choice for fueling today’s homes. ■



Hot Off the Stove

The ingredients may be similar, but the recipe for a modern kitchen looks a bit different today than it did years ago.

By Kristy Alpert

While some people may shy away from the idea of handling precision-sharpened blades and can't help but shudder at anything that involves the word "flambé," for modern-day home chefs like Dennis J. Trigg, standing behind an open flame and a scalding hot pot is the ultimate comfort zone. A self-proclaimed epicure, Trigg has been sautéing, seasoning and simmering for more than 25 years in his home kitchen where he cooks from scratch every day.

"I'm a bit of a foodie, so I'm up for just about any culinary challenge," says Trigg, an appliance specialist at Ferguson Enterprises and Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery. "I even photograph my food and text the images to my friends in other states."

FLOUR-POWER REVIVAL

Over the years, the changing culinary scene has churned out more and more passionate home chefs like Trigg, a Chantilly, Virginia, resident. Similar to the resurgence of the trend of cooking with organic and natural foods over a low-burning flame, modern-day gastronomes are making their way back into the kitchen and ditching the processed, micro-waved and convenience meals popular in the 1980s and 1990s.

"I believe home cooking really evolved and changed in the 1970s," says Trigg. "Unlike the '50s and '60s, where two to three full meals were prepared in a very traditional manner, in the 1970s home chefs were making it a more social, family event. Today we're seeing less of the convenience factor that arose in the '80s and '90s. Home chefs are now willing to spend a little extra money on organic, quality ingredients and spend more time in the kitchen preparing a meal from scratch because they know it is healthier than a pre-prepared meal."

The farm-to-table movement of eating locally grown food to gain the most nutrients and seasonal vitamins and the new Nordic style of cooking coming from Norway that involves a return to the basics of simple low-flame cooking with rustic utensils (oftentimes including twigs and stoneware) has played a huge part in the return to cooking at home. Still, it's hard to miss the role nostalgia has played in getting people

back in front of the stove top. More and more, people are looking to reconnect with their past by digging up older recipes and are seeking communal dining opportunities that break the mundane eating patterns of the past decades.

That certain smell that brings you back to the days you sat in your grandma's kitchen; the secret ingredient your mom used to make her cookies extra gooey; even the taste of a simple yet perfect grilled cheese hot off the gas griddle after a long day playing outside; these are all memories associated with homemade foods.

"There is always a sense of nostalgia with food," adds Trigg. "Americans want to know where their food is coming from, and know that it is coming from a good source. The whole 'farm-to-table' trend is really big; not only is it [food] more nutritious, it also tastes better. Americans are becoming more educated about how the foods we eat [and the way we cook them] affect our health and overall well being."

A COLORFUL PAST

An appliance expert with more than 26 years of industry experience, Trigg notes that although many kitchen trends change from year to year, one constant in the industry is the longevity of appliance finishes.



Color was huge in 1960s and 1970s, with shades like harvest gold and avocado seen on everything from gas ranges to electric mixers; but white and off white soon took over as the standard appliance finish in home kitchens.

“Appliance color trends have certainly changed over the years, from all-white appliances to bright pastel colors to nature-inspired hues,” recalls Julie Wood, manager, Appliances PR for GE Appliances. “Stainless steel has held consumers’ interest in recent decades, and in 2012, GE introduced a new premium finish called Slate.”

Indeed, stainless steel has been the standard for quite a while in home kitchens, despite there being other color options out there for consumers (i.e. red ranges for a pop of color, etc.). The aesthetic appeal and professional kitchen vibe aside, there is at least one downside to stainless steel appliances: There seem to always be hard-to-remove greasy fingerprints around every corner.

Aside from simple color changes, kitchen appliances, in general, have changed dramatically since then. Where once the stovetop ruled the kitchen, with an occasional fondue pot taking center stage every so often, nowadays kitchens are outfitted with everything from commercial-kitchen, quality griddles to custom-fit pizza ovens, center-island, TV-chef-style stoveops to warming drawers, speedcook wall ovens, and more.

ONE CONSTANT: THE GAS STOVE

With so many moving parts and changing styles in home cooking, the one ingredient that has always remained the same has been the stove. Without the stove, a kitchen just wouldn’t be a kitchen. The first practical gas stove was invented in the early 1800s, and even with the new modifications and modern conveniences added to the concept over the years, the general technology has stood the test of time. And for good reason: With a gas stovetop, the cook has complete control of the dish, with instant on temperatures, precision flame control, and no residual heat on the burners like electric.

“The majority of professional chefs choose gas for good reason,” says Trigg. “The precision control you



have when cooking with gas is excellent. There is a kitchen trend happening right now where homeowners aspire to have professional-grade appliances in their kitchens, and the majority of professional-grade stoves and ranges are gas.”

While older gas stoves were merely functional and required a pilot light, today’s gas stoves use electronic ignitions and boast cool features like downdraft ventilation to eliminate the smoky

kitchen syndrome, tri-ring burners that add even more temperature control to the game, and even Wi-Fi-enabled gas ovens that allow you to control your oven directly from your smartphone.

Even with the newest advances in gas cooking, if left with the decision to choose gas or electric, like most professional chefs, Trigg would opt for the natural option. “Sometimes, less technology is better, like in the case of a power outage,” he says. “Manufacturers have continued to update their designs to reflect the changing trends of the kitchen. But ultimately, if your electricity goes out due to weather, you can often still prepare a meal with a gas stove.” ■





Timely Matters

TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIETAL CHANGES RESHAPE FAMILIES AND LIFESTYLES.

By Tonya McMurray

Thirty years ago, video phones and talking computers were the things of science fiction. Amazon was only a South American river and maps were paper, which once unfolded never quite seemed to make it back to their original form.

Today, Skype™ and Apple®'s Siri® are mainstream. Amazon likely brings to mind a massive marketplace for books, music and much more. And, maps are readily available on your smartphone with step-by-step navigation to lead you to the front door of your destination.

The last 40 years have seen tremendous change in family life, the ways we communicate, and how we spend our time.

CHANGING FAMILY ROLES

One of the most important changes over the last several decades has been the increasing number of women in the workplace, says Dr. Stephanie Coontz, director of research and public education at The Council on Contemporary Families and a professor of history and family studies at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women made up about 37 percent of the workforce in 1972. By the early 2000s, women made up nearly half the workforce. Approximately 75 percent of all women with children at home also work outside the home, and 40 percent of women are the primary breadwinners in their families.

Women's increased participation in the workforce has been fueled both by the women's movement and by economic necessity. Coontz pointed out that wages for all but the top earners have stagnated, creating more of a need for women to work. At the same time, she said, many women have found that they like to work and find personal satisfaction in their jobs.

Women are far more likely today to stay in the workforce even after they have children. Coontz said this is especially true for educated women, who typically want to use their education and for whom work is needed to maintain a desired standard of living.

"Those who opt out are a small minority," Coontz says. "More women say they want both work and family."

As women moved into the workforce, they began to demand more of their partners at home.

"If they were going to be co-earners, they wanted co-helpers at home," Coontz says. "Men may have started grudgingly, but just as women realized they liked work, men realized they like doing things at home."

She says men have tripled their involvement in childcare over the last 40 years, and men under 30 typically report enjoying some aspects of home chores.

"There is an increase in the number of men who want more family time," Coontz says. "In fact, men now report more work-family conflict than women. Men are looking for more involvement at home."

BUSY FAMILIES

At the same time that parents are more likely to be employed full time,

there has been a dramatic increase in the number and kinds of activities for children – everything from after-school programs and summer camps to sports and music.

The increase in children's activities to some degree is driven by parents' increased work responsibilities, says Dawn O. Braithwaite, professor of Communication at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a senior fellow with the Council on Contemporary Families. Children's activities help keep children busy and provide supervision while parents work.

Braithwaite says there is also an increased expectation that children will develop skills that will both help them in the present (for example, developing social skills) and prepare them for the next stage of life (for example, getting into a better school).

"In some ways, this carries into adult life as well, as adults develop their own sets of activities – going to work out or learning to play the piano," Braithwaite says. "Every family member may have their own individual set of activities that may or may not be shared by other family members."

Children's activities tend to be more supervised now than they were 30 or 40 years ago – giving rise to the "helicopter parent" always hovering nearby. Parental concern about child safety means that children are often enrolled in structured activities or have increased parental involvement in activities rather than going out to explore and play unsupervised.

"Rather than children being expected to create their own fun, parents are much more involved in choosing or helping children choose activities in which they will engage," Braithwaite says.

A TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTION

Along with changes in family structure and activities, changes in technological advances have drastically changed family life.

Convenience foods meant frozen dinners that still took half an hour or more to cook in the oven. Now, families zap frozen dinners, or even made-from-scratch meals, in the microwave in a matter of minutes.

Back then, families typically had one television and a limited number of channels (some of which might not come in well if the weather was bad). By the 1990s, cable, and later satellite, gave families a wider range of television channels, without regard to proximity to the broadcasting station. Today, the average family has access to hundreds of television channels, and watches "television" not only on television sets, but on computers, tablets and smartphones.

A family movie night in the past meant a trip to the local theater (which didn't have surround sound). In the 1980s and 1990s, video cassettes and later DVDs gave families the option of watching a movie at home. Today, families download movies and seasons of popular television shows from Netflix, Amazon, Hulu or other online services.

And computers, not that common until the 1990s, are now found in most homes. In addition to full-function desktop and laptop computers, tablets and smartphones provide a smaller degree of computing power.

"The ubiquity of the PC, Internet and cell phones has changed the way

(continued on page 08)



(continued from page 07)

we work and play in countless ways,” says Dr. Linda Young, psychologist and senior scholar at The Council on Contemporary Families.

Smartphones, iPads® and e-readers are important tools for leisure time for many families. Children now carry cell phones so they can stay in contact with parents during their many activities. Parents send emails to coordinate family chores or decide who will pick up the kids. And, families use Skype, Facebook and other social media to stay in touch over long distances.

“Families are more intimately connected across distances when careers, college, immobility or the military take family members away from each other,” Young says. “Some research shows the average college student communicates with parents over 13 times a week – far more than forty years ago.”

Computers and social media even change how people meet, says Dr. Michelle Janning, professor of Sociology at Whitman College and senior research fellow at The Council on Contemporary Families.

“When people have a romantic interest in someone else and they opt to go out on a date, the date now consists of two people and their smartphones,” Janning says. “In addition, it is increasingly likely that they met this person via an online dating site.”

Rather than photo albums, we memorialize family life with social media posts, she says. No longer do families have rolls of undeveloped film; instead, they are much more likely to have dozens of photos that have not yet been downloaded from their phones.

MOVING FORWARD

Technology has also made its way into vehicles – with on-board navigation systems, connections for smartphones and satellite radio. Computers now control many aspects of automobiles, even telling drivers how many more miles they can drive with the gas currently in their tank.

Concern over a car’s gas efficiency is higher now than in the past. Cars tended to be big, and there was little concern over how many miles per gallon a car could drive.

But as gas prices increased – sometimes steeply – and as climate change has become a bigger concern in recent years, consumers are paying more attention to energy efficiency in their vehicles. That has led to smaller and more efficient cars as well as an increasing interest in alternative fuel sources.

In small, but growing numbers, consumers are turning to compressed natural gas vehicles.

FedEx, UPS, and Frito-Lay are just a few of the companies switching significant portions of their fleets to natural gas, says John Graves, an author who has written about America’s alternative energy sources. All three companies have announced significant investment in vehicles and fueling stations to support a move to natural gas-powered fleets.

And while companies with large fleets are the early adopters of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles, consumers are also beginning to look at the technology. While there are still challenges that must be addressed before natural gas vehicles have widespread consumer acceptance, Graves says he expects consumer use will continue to grow over the next decade.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The focus on energy efficiency extends beyond vehicles to household appliances. Driven both by the desire for cost savings and con-

cern for the environment, consumers now pay more attention to their energy use.

Technology advances have allowed manufacturers to create appliances that use less energy and also give consumers more control. For example, newer natural gas water heaters allow homeowners to set temperatures for off-peak and peak usage times. Once set, the water falls below its normal set point during non-peak times (such as during the day when everyone is at work or school), but automatically reheats at peak usage times (such as during morning showers or in the evening when the dishwasher and washing machine may be running).

The desire for energy efficiency means that consumers more carefully examine fuel choices. Because the cost of natural gas has declined over the last couple of decades, many homeowners have begun to explore natural gas alternatives for many standard household appliances, including clothes dryers, water heaters and cooling systems.

A DIFFERENT WORLD

Changes in technology and society have brought tremendous change to families over the years. As family life has become busier and more demanding, efficiency and convenience have become more important in everything from food preparation to communication.

With an ever-increasing focus on climate change and tightening budgets, energy efficiency is increasingly important to consumers, who are beginning to look at fuels such as natural gas as a way of benefiting both their budgets and the environment.

Many of these trends are likely to continue as they shape family life over the coming decades. ■



Retro No More

Hot water has always been in style.

By Kristy Alpert

When it comes to technology in the home, few eras brought about more advances in consumer convenience than the 1970s. From computers to automated appliances to highly efficient water heaters, the decade laid the groundwork for a lot of what consumers can now find in homes as everyday conveniences.

But much has changed over the years. Modern technology has since touched virtually every facet of daily living, transforming PCs into tablets, telephones into portable microcomputers and standard water heaters into tankless units.

A MODERN MAINSTAY

Even though the technology has been around for many years, there's nothing retro about the modern-day gas water heaters on the market today. Hot water still makes for a happy home, but today consumers can take control of their happiness with the latest advancements in gas water heating technology.

"Over time, efficiencies have improved for water heaters," says David Chisolm, vice president of Marketing for A. O. Smith in Ashland, Tennessee. "In general, gas water heaters have always offered the benefit of quicker recovery as well as enhanced performance, but water heaters now have more effective insulation properties."

Although gas water heaters have stood the test of time for many decades, the gas water heaters of today make the tanks of 40 years ago seem like a distant cousin

out of a tin can ... with a standing pilot light, of course. Along with enhanced insulation technologies, modern gas tank features include:

- More efficient combustion technologies that get more energy

from the combustion process into the actual water versus wasted energy escaping out the flue;

- Alternate technologies like tankless, condensing technologies, hybrid technologies, and tank models that vent with PVC pipe that all offer improved temperature control;
- Programmable setback controls that allow users to set temperatures for off peak and peak usage times; and
- High performance software with intelligent diagnostics.

ENDLESS HOT WATER, ENDLESS OPTIONS

More efficient gas water heater technologies, like tankless units, provide opportunities for thrifty homeowners to save money on monthly utility bills while also enabling consumers who may be more interested in conveniences like larger garden tubs or body spray systems to enjoy more hot water on demand.

Storage tank water heaters cycle on and off throughout the day to maintain the desired water temperature in the tank. "With the efficiency levels achieved with modern insulation technologies, water heaters may only turn on once or twice in a 24-hour period

if there is no demand for hot water," says Chisolm. "Modern water heaters are more similar to insulated thermoses, storing the energy from the combustion process in the hot water until it is needed to better provide for the peak demand period, when most households have simultaneous needs for hot water (showers, dishwashers, clothes washer, etc.)."

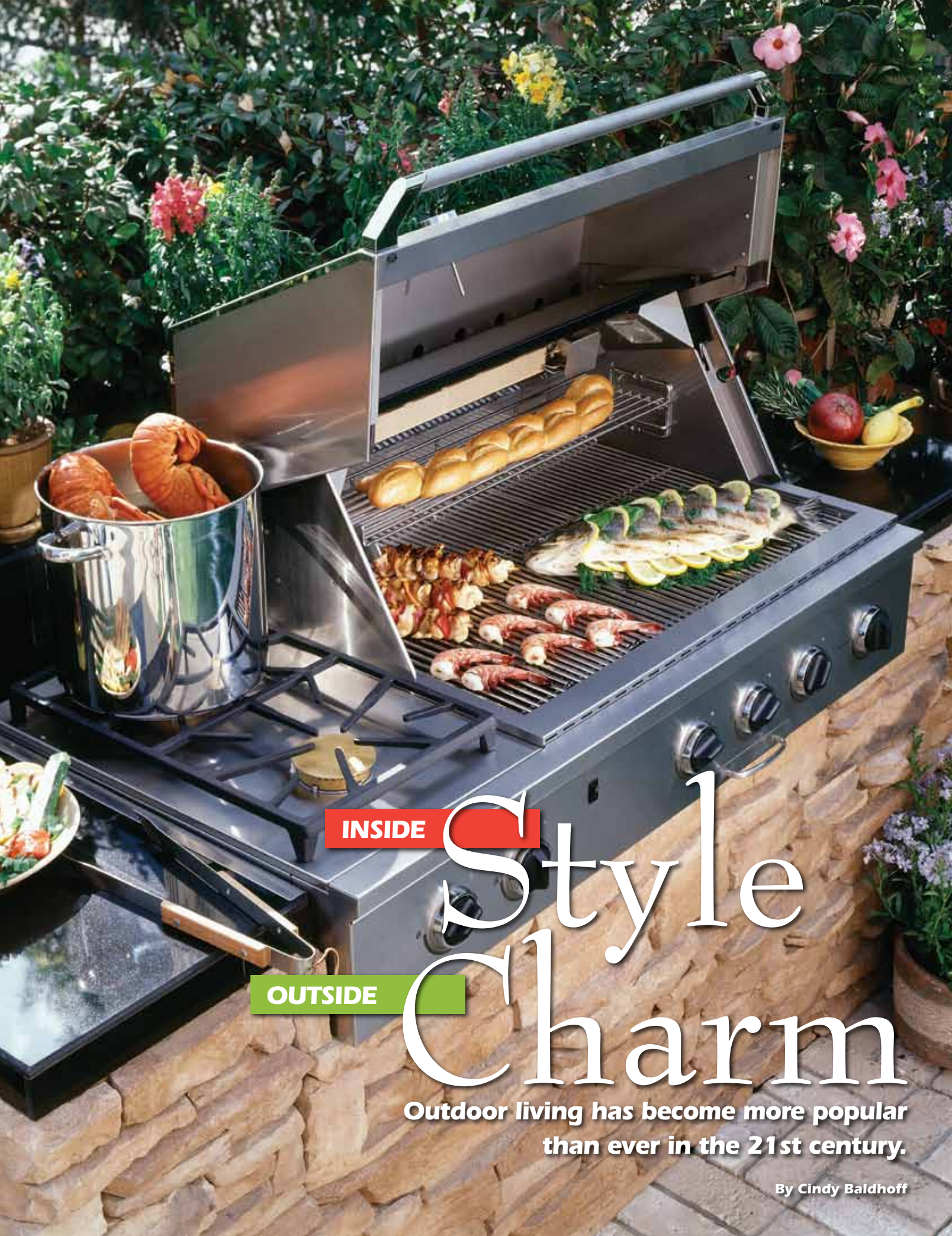
Unlike the standard, one-size-fits-all tanks of decades past, there are many options in gas water heating on the market today, making it easy for consumers to get a unit that fits their lifestyle – and their pocketbook. ■



Jay Leno stands in front of the newest addition to his "Green Garage," an A.O. Smith high efficiency Vertex water heater. Leno is joined by actor and environmentalist Ed Begley Jr. (center), a spokesperson for A. O. Smith's high efficiency products, and David Chisolm, A.O. Smith's vice president of Marketing.



Tankless water heater



INSIDE

OUTSIDE

Style Charm

Outdoor living has become more popular than ever in the 21st century.

By Cindy Baldhoff

When North Americans began moving to the suburbs after World War II, they created many new customs and traditions that still exist today. First and foremost among them may be our love of the backyard.

Before the flight to the suburbs, most outdoor grilling happened at campsites and picnics, or simply took place out of necessity. By the 1950s, it had become all the rage.

"We have been grilling for decades," confirms Sue Crosby of the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association. "Food cooked on a grill tastes great, and cooking outdoors provides a great social experience. It's not just cooking, it can be an event."

Originally, backyard grills were flat, open-styled models, which meant that the food often was "spiced" with a bit of ash or dirt blown onto the food. That all changed when a man named George Stephen, who worked as a welder for Weber Brothers Metal Works, decided to improve upon the concept. The Weber company was a metal fabrication shop that created buoys out of steel spheres, and Stephen took the lower half of the buoy, welded three steel legs onto it, and then created a smaller dome to use as a lid. And thus, the precursor to the modern grill was born.

If there's anything that people love more than fire, it's finding new ways to produce and play with fire. Thus, it didn't take long for the arrival of outdoor gas grills. First introduced in 1954, the LazyMan grill became the first to use a propane cylinder. Natural gas grills joined the lineup just four years later in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, when natural gas sales engineer Phillip Arnold was challenged by his boss to develop a product for the home that could burn natural gas. Arnold took the challenge and, using an oil drum, lava rock, and a log lighter borrowed from his fireplace, created the very first natural gas-burning grill.

"Gas came along [and] allowed people to grill outdoors quickly and conveniently," says Crosby. Today, two-thirds of grill owners own a gas grill. They like the convenience it provides."

OUTSIDE BY DESIGN

As more and more people began exploring "leisure time" (and, unfortunately, leisure suits), builders responded by changing the style of homes available. The ranch-style home became extremely popular, as did patio homes that were designed to let homeowners make the most of their living space and spend less time maintaining their property.

Many of the current outdoor living trends were hatched during this era, although they have changed considerably in the past few decades. While the accoutrements and décor of that era have evolved, the desire for a prominent outdoor living space remains a priority. In fact, the National Association of Home Builders cites outdoor living spaces as one of the top five trends in new homes, and today, they typically include features such as fireplaces and outdoor kitchens.

BRAND NEW LOOK

With the growth of grilling and the backyard's burgeoning popularity, an entire new industry was spawned: outdoor furniture. From metal shell-back furniture and metal gliders to relaxing cloth and rope hammocks, the well-appointed backyard of yesteryear was, indeed, very different from the one we see today.

Today's backyards are actually outdoor rooms, and they often rival – or mimic – their indoor counterparts. The outdoor industry has remained healthy and steady over the past four decades.

While the economic downturn of 2008 spelled disaster for many industries, it actually gave a boost to the outdoor living industry, since many people were hesitant to spend money on extravagant getaways or even modest family vacations. Instead, they decided to invest that money into their backyards and found that outdoor rooms provided everything they needed.

Today's outdoor rooms have gone well beyond those early days of a wooden picnic table, grill and some folding chairs.

Perhaps the most significant change is in the grill, which has evolved from a free-standing, charcoal-filled dome to an eye-catching stainless steel, chef-quality appliance. Whether it's a basic console model or a built-in beast with all the bells and whistles – such as a rotisserie and warming space – there's one to fit just about every individual's wants and needs.

"New, high-end grills on the market can be larger models with side burners and built-in cabinets," says Crosby. "Now, outdoor grilling has become a year-round activity. Sixty percent of grill owners use their grills year-round, including on holidays like Thanksgiving."

However, the Fourth of July in the United States and the First of July in Canada remain the most popular grilling holidays.

(continued on page 12)





(continued from page 11)

PLAYING WITH FIRE

One reason consumers are able to grill throughout the year is that outdoor rooms provide luxuries to fight off the elements, such as natural gas patio heaters that can extend the season. They can be permanently mounted or portable, and today's models allow something for every space – free-standing, wall-mounted or ceiling mounted.

Outdoor fireplaces also have been added to the mix, and can provide a walled-off area that not only serves as a wind block, but also as a heat source. The fireplace facades can be designed to match or complement the exterior of your home, with materials like stone, granite and tile.

Although smaller than gas-powered outdoor fireplaces, natural gas fire pits can also be an effective way to add heat to the outdoor room, and they also create a nice focal design point for the space.

To further add to the ambiance of the outdoor room, many people use landscaping and landscape lighting to create a pleasant effect around the home. Natural gas tiki torches or natural gas lights, which come in

a wide range of designs and can be mounted on walls and posts or hung from the outdoor ceiling, are a wonderful way to add simple touches that create a dramatic effect.

“Today’s outdoor cooking, living products and accessories make outdoor entertaining stress-free, so the host will always be at ease,” Crosby says.

For example, she says, today’s outdoor options allow fire pits to be turned into a dining table or coffee table, automatically transforming any outdoor event into an elegant affair.

Crosby adds that cabinets that can be sized to easily fit into outdoor kitchens create the extra space needed to store accessories and tableware. This streamlines the serving process when the food is done and eliminates those kitchen-to-patio runs that have so long been the hallmark of backyard gatherings. What’s best, she says, is that these options are available in a variety of styles and are created to provide solutions at a variety of price points.

“These add-ons are perfect, from small backyard barbecues to large birthday gatherings,” she says. “Outdoor living continues to be the big trend, with increased interest in the grilling area, in general.” ■

WHAT DOES YOUR OUTDOOR ROOM NEED?



With outdoor rooms today providing so many options, finding what’s right for you and your specific outdoor space can seem overwhelming. Color, style and design options not only have to complement one another, but also have to work within the outdoor living space that you’re working with.

One way to decide what you need is through the use of online planning tools and resources, such as the Energy Solutions Center’s site, Outdoor Room Design (www.outdoor-roomdesign.com). The site provides information about various aspects of outdoor room design, from how to make it stylish and comfortable to buying the right gas grill for your needs to elements like adding ambiance with outdoor lighting, staying warm with patio heaters, fire pits and outdoor fireplaces, and even tips on how to get started.

Scallop, Pineapple and Bacon Skewers with Jalapeno Vinaigrette

INGREDIENTS

4 slices of bacon
16 sea scallops
16 cubes (1 ½) fresh pineapple
2 fresh jalapenos
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp fresh lime juice
1 Tbsp honey
½ cup chopped cilantro
½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 large scallion greens, chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
8 oz rice noodles
1 lime, cut into four wedges

DIRECTIONS

1 Cook bacon in medium skillet over medium heat, turning, until

cooked but not crisp, about 3 minutes. Cut crosswise into 1 ½ inch pieces.

2 Prepare lightly oiled grill for medium heat. Alternately thread pineapple, scallops and bacon onto 8 metal or (soaked) bamboo skewers (8 to 10 inches).

3 Grill jalapenos, turning until charred and tender, about 3 minutes. Remove seeds and stems and coarsely chop. Transfer to blender with oil, lime juice, honey, cilantro, parsley, scallion greens, and garlic. Pulse until just combined for vinaigrette. (Makes about ¾ cup).

4 Coat skewers with cooking spray and grill, turning, until golden and scallops are cooked through, 5 minutes.

5 Prepare noodles per package directions while skewers cook.

6 Drain noodles and immediately toss with ¼ cup of the vinaigrette. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide among four serving plates and top with skewers. Drizzle with some of the remaining vinaigrette and serve with lime wedges.



Turkey Cheeseburger Meatloaf

(From the book "Big Vegan" by Robin Asbell)

INGREDIENTS

1 teaspoon vegetable oil
7 slices turkey bacon, or more to taste
1 pound extra lean ground Turkey
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 egg
½ small onion, diced
1 slice French bread, crumbled
2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce, or more to taste
2 teaspoons garlic powder
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ cup ketchup

2 Tbsp prepared yellow mustard
1-1/2 Tbsp brown sugar

DIRECTIONS

1 Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).

2 Heat vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium heat and cook turkey bacon until browned and crisp, about 5 minutes per side. Drain bacon on paper towels; crumble when cool.

3 Mix cooked bacon with ground turkey, Cheddar cheese, egg, onion, crumbled French bread, Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, and black pepper; turn the turkey meatloaf mixture into a 9x13-inch baking dish and form into a loaf shape in the middle of the dish.

4 Mix ketchup, yellow mustard, and brown sugar together in a bowl, stirring to dissolve brown sugar. Spread the mixture over the turkey loaf.

5 Bake the turkey loaf in the preheated oven until the juices run clear, loaf is no longer pink in the middle, and an instant-read meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the loaf reads at least 160 degrees F (70 degrees F), 45 minutes to 1 hour.

SOURCE: ALLRECIPES.COM

allrecipes.com



Driven by Change

From crank starts to gas guzzlers to NGVs, cars have come a long way.

By Paula Felps

At their core, all cars serve the same basic function – to get us comfortably from Point A to Point B. But if getting there is truly half the fun, cars serve as a constant reminder that there are many ways to make the trip.

It's no stretch to say that the automobile has taken a rather adventurous journey over the years. Today, it's almost impossible to imagine that, when Ransom E. Olds sold his first Oldsmobile in 1902, the only way that cars could be started was by hand-cranking them – a feat requiring so much strength that people sometimes broke their arms in the process. After Charles Kettering introduced an electric starter on Cadillacs in 1911, other manufacturers leaped at the idea, and in doing so, finally opened up driving to more than just the lucky well-muscled few.

It took another 10 years for many of the precursors to today's standard features to be added to cars; although an inventor named Mary Anderson invented the first windshield wiper in 1902, her version was a manual model operated by turning a handle inside the car. But it wasn't until 1923 that cars received their first powered windshield wipers, and that same year, radios were offered as an option in the car for the first time. Turn signals didn't come along until 1938, when they were introduced by Buick.

By the 1940s, automobiles had become a true symbol of success and, in some cases, excess. Tailfins first showed up on General Motors (GM) models in 1948, and for more than a decade, Chrysler and GM battled each other to see who could produce the cars with the biggest tailfins. But the appearance of the Ford Mustang in 1964 ushered in a new era of

automotive fascination, and attention quickly turned to cars that were more sporty and muscular – leaving super-sized sedans in their dust.

By then, interstates and highways covered North America, making it easy and pleasurable to take to the open road. There was little concern about MPGs or gas prices, and the road trip became not just a popular form of vacationing, but the foundation for many a buddy movie as well. Back then, we liked our cars and engines big, and by 1971, the standard engine in a Chevrolet Caprice was a 6.5-liter V8. The similarly-sized 1972 Chevrolet Impala chugged along at a now-unfathomable 15 miles a gallon, but with gas prices costing less than two quarters a gallon, no one was complaining. Station wagons and full-size sedans were commonly seen land cruisers that allowed us to comfortably indulge our passion for driving while taking command of the open road.

THE '70S SETBACK

That all came screeching to a halt in October 1973 when an oil crisis forever changed North America's relationship with gasoline – and the cars that relied upon it. The retail price of a gallon of gasoline in the United States rose from an average 38.5 cents in May 1973 to an unprecedented 55.1 cents in June 1974, forcing the government to take action. The fuel economy stickers found on today's new cars grew out of the hasty effort to preserve oil; at the time, the speed limit was dropped to 55 miles an hour (88.5 kilometers an hour in Canada) to reduce oil consumption. Gas station owners did their part to help preserve oil, including selling no more than 10 gallons of gasoline at one time to a



single customer, refusing to sell to anyone who wasn't a "regular", and closing on Saturdays.

But the biggest change was seen in the kinds of cars that were selling. Bigger was no longer better, and consumers turned to smaller, more fuel-efficient, four-cylinder models. Detroit halted the production of the super-size gas guzzlers that had dominated the market, and in their place, American cars like the Chevy Vega and Ford Pinto became hot sellers.

By the 1990s, however, consumers no longer seemed satisfied with the small, fuel-efficient autos, and with gasoline prices once again lowered, they turned to sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Huge fuel consumers like the Hummer and the International CXT (for Commercial Extreme Truck) cared more about image than economy, and even smaller SUVs – which were similar to a truck or minivan in fuel efficiency – became extremely popular.

FUELED FOR CHANGE

The uncertainty of oil prices in the 2000s have brought about many fluctuations in the automotive market, with SUVs waning in popularity, then recovering. At the same time, hybrids, electric vehicles (EVs) and compressed natural gas (CNGs), or natural gas vehicles (NGVs), are showing more promise than ever before. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that more than 17 million vehicles on the road today use alternative fuels or advanced fuel-saving technologies, and the growing options also include ethanol, propane and biodiesel.

Although much attention has been paid to electric models like the Tesla and the Fisker Karma, NGVs have quietly been enjoying growth. While more commonly used in the commercial market, now NGVs are moving into consumer territory. The low cost of natural gas has increased interest in NGVs in many regions, and now Ford, Dodge, Chevrolet and Honda all offer consumer vehicles, with more options on the horizon. Today, the United States has about 250,000 NGVs, which is less than .1 percent, of vehicles on the road, according to GE.

However, many experts say that NGVs offer more benefits than other alternative fuel vehicles. Home refueling stations can be purchased and installed for about \$6,000, and GE is even experimenting with at-home refueling stations that would cost as little as \$500. For most buyers, the largest consideration is the availability of fueling stations, but Navigant Research reports that the number of NGV refueling stations will grow to 30,000 worldwide by 2020, with North America installing about 40 percent of those between now and the end of 2015.

Offering lower operating costs but the same performance as gasoline-fueled vehicles, experts from America's Natural Gas Alliance predict that more NGVs will be hitting the road as early as this year – and once again changing our evolving love affair with the automobile. ■

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