

# From The Ground Up

*Gib-San Pools Ltd., creates a cliff-side family retreat*

by Jason Cramp

Overlooking the rocky shoreline of Lake Ontario in Mississauga, just west of Toronto, is one of Gib-San Pools' latest award-winning installations – a combination swimming pool, waterfall and spa. The idea behind the design, which was literally built from the ground up, was to give the swimming pool and spa area a natural 'Muskoka' feel and look.

"The overall concept was to create a spectacular, multi-functional swimming pool and spa that could be used for relaxing, entertaining and exercising in an outdoor living space," says Ed Gibbs Jr., president and CEO of the Toronto, Ontario-based company, which has won over 30 national awards, including this design, which was a 2002 'Gold' winner in the outdoor/concrete category of the NSPI of Canada's 'Awards Of Excellence' competition. "The existing property – a rocky promontory that affords a view of downtown Toronto and the CN Tower – was almost useless for any other purpose. The concept was therefore based on terracing the land to create a free-flowing, multi-



*Above: Built on a higher elevation, the spa resembles a natural hot spring when the perimeter jets are on. It is accented by a water feature at one end of the surrounding deck that sends a clear sheet of water into the spa from a bowl carved out of a square-shaped rock pedestal.*



*Left: Separate suction and return lines feed the waterfall, which sends water cascading down the rock facing and under a wood and cast-iron railing bridge, where it then forks into two separate streams and spills into the pool.*



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purpose area within the confines of restricted outdoor space.”

First Gib-San Pools had to construct the swimming pool and spa on an empty lot even before the main home was built. The pool and spa were to be the ‘benchmarks’ for the entire project, which took two years to complete and required the co-operation of the homebuilder and the landscaper, Juergen Partridge Ltd., of Terra Cotta, Ontario.

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“We had to get the pool position and elevation bang on so that all pieces of the design would fit together over time, while the proper water hydraulics were imperative for the entire project to succeed,” he explained. “Basically water had to be filtered, chemically treated, heated and returned to the pool and spa as the first priority.”

The next task was attending to the special features of the project. This required the installation of separate suction and return lines to feed the waterfall, which sends water cascading down the rock facing and under a wood and cast-iron railing bridge, where it then forks into two separate streams and spills into the swimming pool.

Built on a higher elevation overlooking the pool is the spa, which resembles a natural hot spring when the perimeter jets are on. It is accented by a water feature at one end of the surrounding deck that sends a clear sheet of water into the spa from a bowl carved out of a

square-shaped rock pedestal.

Planted at various locations around the pool and spa are bushes and shrubs indigenous to the rocky, irregular terrain found along the north shore of Lake Ontario. These accent the pool and spa, creating a more realistic appearance.

“It is just breathtaking to see the sudden drop in elevation from the house to the shoreline,” exclaims Gibbs, who estimates the cost of the project to be in the millions. “Watching the morning sun glistening off of the lake water simply melts away all of your stress. This is a private, intimate palace to live in, where you can entertain, workout or just relax – and is a dream come true for the owner.” □