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I'm not quite sure where to begin when I speak about my experience with Steve Sylvestro and his company **Crystal Pools and Spas**. As a backdrop to my story: I had a pool that was half in ground/half above ground. Time and poor construction had taken its toll to the point where the pool had become a safety hazard for me and my neighbors. Owning a pool had become drudgery, the very sight of my lopsided, leaking mess of a pool would throw me into an instant depression. My pool would cause my family and me to stay indoors on the nicest summer day. It rendered our entire backyard unusable; Enter Crystal Pools and Spas.

Steve showed up on a frigid Saturday in January dressed as if he were going on a polar expedition; coffee in one hand tape measurer in the other and we immediately hit it off. Within 20 minutes Steve had taken measurements and devised a plan regarding the complete dismantling of the existing eyesore and the creation of my island oasis. The connection I made with Steve during that first visit made the rest of the project, which was rife with unexpected challenges, flow smoothly. The comfort level and trust factor I had with Steve allowed me to completely unburden myself of stress involved with a project of this magnitude. I basically handed the project off to Steve with my only instruction being to "do it as if it were your own backyard" the results were, in a word: "Stunning".

To say that Steve installed my in ground pool ahead of schedule and at the exact agreed upon financial terms, tells only a fraction of my story. While we did have written contracts, all the work that Steve did for my family and I was agreed upon with a smile and a handshake. I can not emphasize enough the level of trust that multiplied during the course of the project. Anyone that has ever done major reconstruction on their home knows that this is to say the least, unusual. Steve became more than just the "guy who was doing my pool", he became my "go-to" guy on all phases of the project and over the course of time, a real friend. Theoretically speaking, Steve's portion of the project was complete in about 10 days. He could have collected his money, never to be seen again, and I would have been thrilled with his service and happy with his company but the value of Crystal Pools is that he is not just a "pool guy". Steve remained on sight through every phase of the job until the very day my family happily enjoyed our first refreshing swim. Installing the pool was only half the job, a retaining wall and landscaping was needed to complete my backyard and make it usable. Enter **LaRocca Landscaping**:

Before meeting Frank LaRocca I knew nothing about structural walls, the difference between shot rock and pudding stone or the beauty of a thundercloud plum tree. Because Frank came recommended by Steve I trusted him immediately; that trust proved to be well placed.

If you never thought a stone wall could be beautiful you've never seen Frank LaRocca's work. One by one the neighbors have stopped me on the street to compliment the beautiful boulder wall Frank constructed. Many even thanked me for beautifying the neighborhood! Frank spent the time to choose exactly the perfect trees and plantings to create the tropical look that my property called out for. What Frank offers that other landscape designers that I spoke to did not, can be summed up in one word: "vision". Where other companies looked at my job and saw only problems and challenges, Frank surveyed my property and instantly saw the potential my terraced property offered. Frank LaRocca unlocked the hidden potential of my property and was able to create the feeling and "vibe" of a hidden island grotto in the heart of West Paterson New Jersey. Like Steve, Frank was on the job every day and stayed until I was completely satisfied with the completion of his "vision". Frank's attention to detail, knowledge of plant and tree specimens and "can do" attitude made dealing with LaRocca Landscaping a real pleasure.

It would be remissive of me not to mention another fine company: **Annas Pool Deck**. Another reference of Steve's, Annas Pool Deck installed the "cool decking" that surrounds my pool. Paul, the owner of APD showed up on an overcast day when the thunderclouds were threatening to break open at any moment. Of course Steve was present to reassure me that all would go well as Paul's team started to prepare the job. They were starting to pour the first layer of the cool decking when it happened: Thunderstorm! With a reassuring nod, Paul firmly gave instructions to his crew and within seconds, a literal army of workers fanned out and instantly constructed what can only be described as huge circus like tent above my pool so that they continue their work. Like a well oiled machine, Annas Pool Deck completed the job, which was sensational, for, are you sitting down; less than the quoted price. This was due to the fact that there was less square footage than originally quoted. Paul could have held to the original price that I agreed to but obviously he is a gentleman and he passed on the savings to me.

I think it goes without saying; I hardily endorse these three companies. Do yourself a favor and turn your project over to these professionals. You won't be sorry.

Ken Watkins
West Paterson, New Jersey