



What Separates Unique Companies from the rest....

WHY CHOOSE UNIQUE?

For almost 10 years, Unique has been involved in designing & building swimming pools. We started as the subcontractor, working for the pool companies in aspects such as decking, water features, masonry, etc.. It became extremely apparent that the pool builder was completely dependent on the sub-contractor (it's the same way today...) All you had to do was have a cell phone & a truck, and you were a pool builder! Pools would take months to complete, and would sometimes sit for weeks waiting on someone to show up to work. The landscape couldn't start until the pool was finished. The homeowner had to find another contact to build the pergola. The pool builder had very little regard for the overall project, he just wanted to build the pool and that was it. Ultimately, the homeowner was held hostage, and hoped that everything came together on budget! The process just didn't make sense. So, In 2005, we started building our own pools, outdoor structures, and landscapes. As one of the first landscape & pool general contractors in Phoenix, Unique set the precedence for outdoor construction.

Today, with over 250 pools in the ground, we have mastered the integration of the swimming pool with the landscape & outdoor environment. Unique is not set up as a "production" pool builder (the term given to some of the larger pool companies because of their "non-custom" approach to pool construction & their lack of integration for entire project). "There are hundreds of pool companies in Phoenix that would love to come out and build your pool", states Chris Griffin, owner of Unique Companies, "but we are one of the ONLY companies that truly wants to integrate your pool, your patio, and your landscape into one unique outdoor environment. We don't just build pools. We design, plan, and manage outdoor projects – some incredible backyards." Unique is happy to be known as this type of company. We don't strive to build a cheap pool, we strive to design & build a great backyard for our clients. Many times, with this approach, we allow for our clients to see the big picture. It also allows for them to work on phases of the project, without fear of having to re-do something that wasn't planned properly. Each phase is well-designed, and thought out – and one can put together parts of the project, that add up to something incredible.

After being ranked in the TOP 10 landscape & pool companies since 2005 (Ranking Arizona – AZ Business Magazine), Unique finally captured the #1 Ranking for 2010 (Landscape Design/Build Category) and the #3 Ranking (Pool & Spa Builder). Unique also continues to be praised on its nationally accredited website, that continues to be amidst some of the top search engines around for landscaping & pool ideas (Google, Bing, etc..). Here are more specific examples on some of the things we do better:

1. Owner
 - a. BS - Civil Engineering from the University of New Mexico.
 - b. Drafted in 1996 in the 6th round of the NFL Draft by the New England Patriots.
 - c. Graduated Top of Class – High School (3rd in his class of 450 students).
 - d. Involved in ALL projects, staff & crew – oversees quality, craftsmanship & construction.
2. Staff/Customer Service:
 - a. Only employs experienced landscape & pool designers (most have been with Unique for 5+ years)
 - b. Each project is assigned a project superintendent.
 - c. Friendly office staff to assist with scheduling, accounting, and warranty issues; available from 6:30 am to 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday.
 - d. Incredible website with projects, ideas, and company information.
 - e. Easy communication by phone, fax, or e-mail.

- f. Post-Project Relationship – UNIQUE keeps in touch from completion on! Our systems help us to remind you of pool & landscape care, prior to warranty expiration, and ongoing project support.

3. Construction:

- a. Unique Companies hold three contractors licenses: General Contractor, Landscape Contractor, and Pool Contractor.
- b. All aspects of what we build have been meticulously designed, built, and tested over the years. As an engineer, our owner has studied what works and what stands the test of time; and has re-designed the areas that do not. The following are some examples of what we have discovered and how Unique Landscapes constructs all of its projects:

Pavers Patios: Unique Landscapes by Griffin is one the only ICPI (International Concrete and Paver Institute) Company that holds all three Contracting Licenses (General Contractor, Landscape, and Pool). We abide by strict installation practices that require a proper sub-base for all of our patios. The soil preparation beneath all pavers is key to a long lasting, level patio. Unique uses 4" of compacted engineered backfill (ABC) and compacts it to 95% compaction. Afterward, only ½" of sand is used to level each paver with 1/8" tolerance. On driveway applications, we prefer to use Portland cement w/ABC to increase compaction to 100%; where heavy cars and trucks may drive and park.

Flagstone: Flagstone patios are one of the most expensive natural stone patios which our clients invest. We take necessary precautions and use time tested techniques to prevent undesired cracking. All precision cut flagstone patios are cut with a diamond blade with ½" grout joints. They are set with mortar on 3 ½" of concrete sub-base. Prior to setting flagstone, our masons use concrete bond glue to ensure a 100% bond with the stone and mortar. This method creates a patio with fewer cracks—BUILT TO LAST! Unique guarantees its Craftsmen; we have two flagstone crews with 3 members each who can install a 250 sq ft per day; 300 days a year. *Don't let the inexperienced in on your project.*

BBQ's: Unique Landscapes creates the ultimate outdoor kitchen; with the use of footers, 12" re-bar grids and bond beams. Our installation of electric outlets and gas lines are all done by our qualified & licensed installers. Our outdoor kitchens come with many different countertop options, and our tile & granite countertops are professionally installed making our projects look like they belong "in your kitchen"! We handle 100% of our own construction, in house, allowing our work to get done faster. *FACT: Most landscape companies are not licensed to run gas or electric, and in fact, they are not even licensed to sub-contract this work to others (don't put yourself at risk – ASK!)*

Fireplaces: We specialize in the Manor & Traditional-Style Gas Fireplace. We believe our fireplaces are the anchor to all of our projects with solid footers, 8" CMU block, Bond beams, fire brick interiors, and a quick start gas log set. Our fireplaces will be an intrical part of your outdoor oasis for years to come. Our crews have built hundreds of outdoor fireplaces, and Unique continues to keep our dedicated fireplace & masonry crews busy year-round. With hundreds of fireplaces under our belt, we are sure to design & build one that meets or exceeds the most meticulous standards. *FACT: While most landscape companies can build fireplaces, as mentioned above, they are not licensed to run gas to them! Yet, they do anyways, or say "we subcontract to licensed plumbers". This is not legal & puts you at risk. Also, most pool companies subcontract to masonry companies & landscapers to build their fireplaces & bbq's. Guess what? We don't!*

Masonry/Block: Unique Landscapes takes tremendous pride in our all of our masonry work (walls, fireplaces, firepits, bbq's & more). That is why we build all of our projects with extra concrete, extra rebar, and professional standards. It's easy for other companies to hide this quality, but it's quickly noticed in the months & years following completion! Unique uses bond beams in all of our masonry projects. Along with re-bar; a bond beam is a structural element that carries the load in strength and reinforcement, and ties the structure into the footer. This ensures your project is structurally sound and within code requirements for all municipalities. *FACT: Most landscape companies do not use "bond beam" construction, vertical rebar, and a #4 rebar. Since most of these structures do not require city inspections, it's the easiest way to cut corners (and costs). Can you afford to take that risk?*

Stucco: With many years in the business, it's easy to see the differences between the good companies and the bad. In fact, STUCCO is one way to tell a qualified company from one that is not! Most landscape companies are not experienced in stucco, nor qualified, or do not have the expertise to install stucco. This is simply because they just don't do many masonry or hardscape projects. Stucco requires experience, proper mix ratios, and proper application (as well as

adequate cure times) Our stucco applicators have years of experience, and have stuccoed thousands of yards of stucco. We guarantee our stucco to be the same, if not better, than that on your home. That is why Unique Landscapes by Griffin is a certified stucco applicator. *FACT: Most landscape companies have no idea the proper water/cement/lime/sand ratio for stucco application. Also, the texture process can show an amateur very quickly.*

Irrigation: Sprinkler & Irrigation systems are the central supply to all landscape projects. Without water, things would not live. With many years in the business, we have installed many commercial & residential systems – many of which have been professionally designed. Unique has taken the best of what we have learned in commercial systems, combined them with residential needs, and we've come up with a great overall irrigation system. We install Hunter and Rainbird irrigation components; which are top of the line, commercial-grade parts. To be able to improve flow and overall pressure we use 1" schedule 40 PVC for main lines, 1" valves, and ¾" commercial drip tubing (as compared to the typical ½ tubing). Our oversized plumbing & drip tubing allows for more water flow, better pressure, and less chance of problems in the future. The sprinkler heads we use have a ½" swing joint in order to protect them from the cracking and breakage caused by mowers and traffic, which allows our systems to require less overall maintenance over the years to come. *FACT: Many landscape companies buy inferior products from local home improvement stores. Also, they use smaller, cheaper pipe, and pose greater risk on homeowners with future pressure issues.*

Drainage: Proper drainage is one of Unique Landscapes primary concerns. In fact, drainage is one of specialties. We have many projects & references where we have solved the most challenging drainage problems, and it remains one of our strong points. All of our patios and projects are sloped properly to avoid puddling of water when necessary. Unique Landscapes can consult in more complicated drainage issues that may involve deck drains, drainage pipe, and sump pumps. *FACT: Drainage can be one of the most complicated and challenging aspects in landscaping & pool projects. Unique deals with many projects where the landscaper & pool builder do not work together, creating a drainage nightmare for the homeowner. Water can cause settling of soil, expansion & cracking of patios, and lots of damage very quickly. Don't take the risk.*

Tile: Outdoor tile requires many precautionary measures-most indoor tile setters are not familiar with the premium thin set required for a successful outdoor application. New sub-bases are recommending –3000 PSI concrete w/rebar or wire mesh. To prevent possible cracking we use a special "crack guard" tape to help protect the tile from the concrete below. Only experienced tile setters that have been trained with our "Unique" standards are allowed to install our projects. Our BBQ countertops & pool tile installations look incredible. We use the best & most expensive thinset for our tile-setting, and our tile installers stick strictly to what they do best – INSTALL TILE. *FACT: Outdoor tile is becoming less of a standard practice since the introduction of the PAVER patio. These days, pavers come in many different sizes, shapes & materials, allowing our crews to install a virtually "crack-free" patio.*

Electrical/Gas: As General Contractors, we use our pool utility installers license to run outdoor electrical and gas on our jobsites. Landscape companies are not licensed to do electrical or gas work, nor are they licensed to even subcontract to others. This creates a huge liability for homeowners. Our electricians have years of experience in the outdoor industry with pool & landscape integration. Our gaslines are all permitted and up to today's strict CODES! *FACT: It is ILLEGAL (and against the law) for landscape contractors to install (or subcontract to others) gaslines or electrical work. This doesn't stop them though... Check the licensing before hiring – and don't assume that if a contractor has a license number, then he is qualified to do gas & electrical work (for the most part, they simply aren't!) Only qualified contractors can install gas/electric for you!*

Structures (Pergolas, Ramadas & Covered Patios): As a General Contractor, Unique Landscapes holds the licenses required to build outdoor structures (and install electrical and gas). The typical landscape company is not licensed to build or subcontract anything other than plants, trees, and patios, therefore putting their clients at risk of future liability. This doesn't stop most landscape companies, as they will tell you what you need to hear. Check on their license! Unique Companies builds over 100 outdoor structures each year! We have in-house crews that specialize in framing, roofing, lathe/stucco, and everything else involved with our integration of the pool, patio & landscape. We use oversized lumber, which is why our structures look bigger, better, & more durable.

Lighting: Over the past 10 years, we have learned that a lighting system can not only "make" a project; but can also "break" one too. Unique Landscapes has chosen FX Lighting Systems for all of its lighting fixture and transformer

requirements. FX has a 10-year warranty and continually maintains itself as a leader in the lighting industry. All systems are wired with 10/2 & 12/2 low voltage wire and each fixture is tested to maintain proper voltage; this ensures maximum bulb life and luminary output. *FACT: All lighting systems are not equal! We compete against many different companies, and we've seen many different prices for lighting. "You get what you pay for" holds true in professional lighting systems, and we take the time to design & install our systems. Beware, it is easy to have a cheaper price for lighting – there are MANY ways to cut corners, and cut costs. You can't afford the risk, can you?*

Swimming Pools & Spas: Unique Custom Pools does not mass-produce swimming pools. In fact, we focus on about 50 pools per year – all of which have some integration with our landscape & patio projects. With that being said, we have a greater focus on our swimming pool design & engineering than most companies. Here is what we do:

- Overall design input & analysis by owner, Chris Griffin (most pool companies allow the designer this control, not the actual builder)
- Less sub-contractor work – as a landscape contractor with employees, we actually do 50-60% of the work for our pools in-house. Most pool builders rely on sub-contractors – we are the subcontractor. We install all of our tile, patios, waterfeatures, masonry, decking, plumbing, rebar & more!
- In-house plumbing – Unique has our own pool plumber! Normally this wouldn't be anything special, except our owner has spent many years working with & training our plumber to manage some of the best underground pool plumbing in the business. Our over-sized plumbing, valve set-ups, and hydraulic designs allow our pools to clean & operate better than any other swimming pool. Also, we have many other custom features for our ELITE pools that the "production" builder doesn't offer.
- Many pool companies offer these systems, but Unique has perfected it's integration with each (just ask us how):
 - Venturi Skimmers
 - Variable Speed Pumps
 - Wireless & Remote Controls
 - Salt & Ozone Sanitization
 - Automated & Remote Valves
 - TRUE Pool & Spa Cleaning
 - Programming & Automation
 - Color LED Lighting
- Lifetime Shell Warranty – it's required by the AZ Registrar of Contractors to provide a lifetime warranty on the swimming pool shell. Unique goes above & beyond by using more steel, stronger shotcrete, and many other factors that allow our pools to last longer.
- Landscape & Patio Integration – probably our single biggest asset! All of our pools are designed with your complete backyard in mind. Here's a few things we consider:
 - Electrical sizing – making sure there is adequate power to your pool panel allows money savings when expanding & installing landscape lighting, barbecue outlets, pond pumps, ramada & patio lighting, mist systems, jacuzzi spas & more!
 - Drainage – integration & preservation of drainage water away from pool AND house. Keeping water away from foundations & swimming pools will keep warranties intact, and allow for long-lasting projects.
 - Remote Control – imagine being able to control your pool AND your landscape feature with one remote. Pool companies tend to always integrate this, but they don't leave room for all your other features (waterfeatures, mist systems, landscape lighting, patio lighting, & more!)
 - Planning & Permitting – with one contractor under control, you can be sure that all your project is being planned & permitted accordingly. It happens far too often that a pool builder puts the pool in a location where the city will not allow you to add a ramada in the future. With one plan & one company, we make sure these factors are figured out BEFORE you start!
 - Design – last but not least! Planning your entire project before you install a pool is the best way to make sure you have taken everything into consideration. Too many times (way too many!) we deal with projects where the pool builder has installed a pool in the wrong spot! It's a waste of a yard.... Let our designers show you the BIG PICTURE, and help you understand the entire project, before you make the investment of a swimming pool or spa. This way, the pool is in perfect harmony with the rest of the project....