



Natural Pool
Press Release 03/2007

Designer Pools

Kissed by the Frog King

One of the highlights of the annual meeting of partner companies in the Biotop Natural Pool Group is the award ceremony for the most beautiful natural pool of the year – the so-called Frog King for Design. Not only garden owners are proud of their newly built natural pools, but also the companies responsible for building the pools are delighted to present their projects, which incorporate both technical know-how and creativity. The Frog King for Design has been awarded for the past ten years. Here are some examples of prize-winning Biotop Natural Pools.

The various wishes of the customers and the requirements of the terrain regularly present new challenges for landscapers and pool builders. Almost every dream can be realised, almost any technical problem solved. In the past years a variety of solutions were found, which were all highly successful.

The qualities and advantages of the individual pools have to be presented to the panel of experts in just five minutes. In 2004, the German company Daldrup from Nordrhein-Westfalen was most successful by presenting a before and after comparison. In a run-down former backyard parking area, 16 garages had recently been torn down revealing more than one meter of earth – containing war rubble and mining debris – that had to be disposed of. Within a few weeks a stunning garden landscape with a large natural pool of 1300 square feet was built for the Günther family in Bochum. During the restoration of the terrain all the beautiful old plants were saved, temporarily transplanted and then replanted in combination with a wide variety of bamboo. In choosing the pool liner special attention was paid to the colour, so that the beautiful colour of the water would harmonise with the fresh green colour of the bamboo, thus setting off the entire garden.

In 2003 the site manager for natural pools, Norbert Mielke of the Hamburg-based company Bahl, decided not to go on holiday with his family, but instead to build the family a natural pool. Mr Mielke had been enthusiastic about the natural pool system since the beginning of Bahl's partnership with Biotop and built the pool completely on his own. The panel was particularly impressed with the harmonious design of his pool focusing on the theme of round shapes. The natural pool of 1300 square feet and a depth of 1.90 meters in concrete wall construction is equipped with a brook and includes technical equipment such as a pump house, an animal-friendly skimmer, a carbonator and a plant filter. This particular pool demonstrates the broad use of natural pools: the pool has even been used as a baptismal font. After the ceremony the parson supposedly did not want to get out of the water...

After repeated top results, the German company "Fuchs baut Gärten GmbH" was awarded first place in 2005 with a natural pool built for the Falk-Rüther family. Both the plain but elegant design of the basin, built into difficult steep terrain with clearly-defined zones for plant life and the integration of the pool into the entire garden landscape – designed by landscape architect Michael Eberl –

succeeded in convincing the jury. The terrace overlooking the 650 square feet natural pool has direct access to the pool and not only connects the house and garden, but also the living and the water area. A small sundeck directly at the water's edge complements the setting, the regeneration zones are arranged at the inaccessible sides of the pool. The technical equipment has largely been concealed under the deck.

In 2006, the Munich-based company "Schleitzer baut Gärten GmbH creativ & innovativ" impressed the panel with a fast and furious photo sequence of the Forst family natural pool, which complements the medieval setting of family estate in the South Tyrol. The beautiful landscape is reflected in the 8000 square feet natural pool, which combined with a 150 feet brook and the smooth transition from the pool to the lawn, earned this stunning project first place. A wedding took place on the shore shortly after completion.

As the parent company, Biotop Landschaftsgestaltung GmbH does not take part in this competition, although several of its projects would be contenders. Outside of the competition, Biotop presented the natural pool project at Hotel Marini near Meran in the South Tyrol. This natural pool was built in extremely steep terrain in just four weeks in 2005, after an unusually long planning phase of two years. The Marini family had exact ideas as to the design of their pool – after all, the natural pool was to be integrated into the plain but elegant concept of their new wellness hotel. Having coordinated the plans with Biotop boss Peter Petrich, work began on the implementation of the 173 square meter large area. Yet time was short: the hotel was due to open in April 2005. Peter Petrich: "We managed to build the natural pool within a month, because the 81 square meter swimming zone and the 92 square meter regeneration zone were straightforward." Of course, landscaping is an ongoing story: depending on the season, there are various possibilities to change the garden's atmosphere with its plant life. In the meantime the natural pool, which is particularly impressive at night with its underwater lighting, has become the hotel's trademark. Or, as Isabel Marini comments on the hotel's new attraction: "The natural pool is our pride and joy."

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Winner 2003: Fa. Bahl



Winner 2004: Firma Daldrup



Winner 2005: Fuchs baut Gärten GmbH



Winner 2006: Schleitzer baut Gärten GmbH



Hotel Marini: Biotop Landschaftsgestaltung GmbH