



CATIO SPACES®
Designing Spaces for Safe, Healthy & Happy Cats

FOR INFORMATION/High-Res Photos:
Cynthia Chomos..... (206) 919-0107
.....info@CatioSpaces.com
catiospaces.com (see Media tab)

Indoor/outdoor cat dilemma solved while safeguarding cats, birds, and wildlife

Catio Spaces® unveils new DIY options to keep cats safe outdoors and protect birds

SEATTLE, Washington (May 22, 2017) – Cats, whether living mostly indoors or outside, enjoy the stimulation of being outdoors, but responsible owners know danger lurks. Seattle cat-lover Cynthia Chomos has built a business to help cat guardians balance their pet’s natural curiosity and craving for outdoor stimulation with concerns for animal safety.

“Indoor-only cats like fresh air and the stimulation of nature, just like their outdoor counterparts,” Chomos said citing early rising, sun worshipping, and nocturnal scampering around the house as some of the telltale signs of this desire. “Once outside, cats pursue squirrels, birds or a mate and there are many hazards outdoor cats can encounter, including vehicles, predators, parasites and poisons,” she explained. In a quest to protect Serena, her own beloved tabby, she built a catio (cat patio).

Soon thereafter, Chomos realized she could combine her passions and skills as a designer, feng shui professional and general contractor to launch [Catio Spaces](http://CatioSpaces.com). Her company designs spaces for safe, healthy and happy cats, offering both custom catios and several downloadable “DIY” plans for those who want to build their own catio (or hire a carpenter to build the plan).

“I understand the importance of creating environments for wellbeing, so it seemed like a natural extension of my design services to create visually appealing catio havens for both feline and human enjoyment,” she said, adding, “It’s a joy to be involved every day with cat safety and enrichment while also protecting birds and wildlife.” (She donates a portion of each catio plan purchase to support animal and wildlife organizations.)

Chomos cites many [benefits of catios](#) and it turns out some of the biggest fans of them are bird-watchers who want to keep their feathered friends safe from their natural predators. (Housecats that venture outdoors and feral cats are blamed for killing between 1.3 billion and 4 billion birds annually, according to a recent analysis by Peter Marra of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute.)

Initially focused on designing and building custom catios in the Seattle metro area, Catio Spaces® also offers [Do It Yourself](#) (DIY) catio plans in a variety of designs and sizes for patios, decks, gardens or yards.

Current DIY plans include the compact Window Box™ or Haven™ and two larger options, the Sanctuary™ and Oasis™ that Chomos describes as “purrfect choices” for guardians who want space for human seating and enjoyment.

Along with easy-to-follow instructions and illustrations to eliminate guesswork, each set of DIY plans is designed for ease of assembly (or removal if relocating) and to complement a home’s design and aesthetics.



Bonus information includes guidelines for acclimating a cat to a cat door and the new space, plus tips for cat-safe plants, décor, and accessories to promote cavorting, exercise and enrichment.

Straightforward assembly was an early goal of Chomos' DIY concepts. "You don't need to be an expert carpenter," she emphasized. "Even novices will find the plans easy to follow and rewarding to build."

Prices for the DIY catio plans range from \$39.95 to \$69.95; gift certificates are also available. Catio Spaces donates 10 percent from the sale of each DIY plan to an animal welfare or wildlife organization.

Since launching Catio Spaces, Chomos has built and installed numerous custom catios around Western Washington, including ones with clever themes and décor, and even catwalks and tunnels! Projects have included:

- a Seahawks-themed catio for a fan of Seattle's NFL team and his game day lap cats;
- a haven for an highly active and "determined door dasher;"
- a window box veranda for a sun-loving "wildlife window watcher;"
- a spacious patio makeover for a pair of felines who love scaling fences to watch wildlife.

(Note to editors: Please see the *"Catimonials"* section on the Catio Spaces website for details on each example, including a description of the project scope and before & after photos.)



Last year, just in time for the [Seattle Catio Tour](#), Chomos designed a catnap catio, complete with a daybed so she and Serena (her tabby) can relax and test the widely-touted benefits of catnapping. This year's showcase tour, which Catio Spaces co-sponsors with PAWS and the Humane Society of the United States, will be on June 24 from noon-4 p.m.

Chomos has also become a go-to "CATalyst" and resource for feline owners. (Website visitors can request her [free tips](#) for considering and planning a catio.) "On a daily basis, I work with cat guardians, locally and globally on a variety of issues," she stated. Recent calls and email queries have ranged from questions on protecting cats who were attacked by coyotes to creating a retreat for cats that were living in an upstairs bedroom fearful of a newly adopted dog. Additionally, bird organizations and wildlife rehabilitators seek her advice on educating their communities on the benefits of catios.

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10 BENEFITS OF CATIOS:

1. Protection from vehicles, predators, poisons, diseases or getting lost or stuck in a tree.
2. Reduce vet bills from cat fights or injuries.
3. Protect birds and wildlife.
4. Help reduce the roaming cat populations in local communities.
5. Provide a healthy outdoor lifestyle with fresh air, exercise, bird watching and sunbathing.
6. Reduce indoor multi-cat issues by adding more territory.
7. Enjoy feline and human interaction surrounded by nature and fresh air.
8. Help reduce indoor odors with an additional outdoor litter box.
9. Good neighbor relations (keep your cat out of their gardens and yards).
10. Peace of mind knowing your cat is in a safe and protected place.

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Quotes & Comments about Catio

“Providing cats with outdoor access in enclosures ensures we are good cat owners and good neighbors. It means being responsible for wildlife, responsible for community space, and responsible for the safety of our cats,”

~ Jennifer Hillman, Western Region Director for The Humane Society of the United States.

“It's no surprise that the enclosures are catching on across the country. In the United States, 42.9 million households have a cat, according to the American Pet Products Association's 2015-2016 [National Pet Owners Survey](#), and Americans spend more than [\\$1,100 a year](#) on average on veterinary care, food, boarding, toys and other expenses combined for their feline family members.”

Source: http://www.nola.com/homegarden/index.ssf/2016/11/catio_cat_patio.html

“Don't call it a cage. It's a catio . . . for owners long shamed by vets and public service announcements urging that felines be kept inside, catios are a safe option for those desperately pining for the outdoors. And for bird lovers — cats' greatest critics — they're a way to protect nature's feathered creatures.”

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2016/08/31/dont-call-it-a-cage-its-a-catio/?utm_term=.5d73f07a7be1

“People For the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is a big proponent of catios, saying in a [blog post](#) that if your cat could talk, they'd ask you for one.”

Source: <http://www.today.com/home/catio-pet-trend-t102477>

Even domesticated animals need to get some fresh air, but cat owners find themselves confronting a dilemma: No self-respecting cat will submit to going for a walk on a leash, but when allowed to roam free, they're likely to get in a fight, pick up fleas or ticks, or bring back the lovely gift of a half-dead rodent.

Source: <http://www.realtor.com/news/trends/what-is-a-catio/>

“Many people complain about their neighbor's outdoor cats roaming in their yards — pooping in their gardens and sprawling across their cars. Still others feel guilty that indoor felines aren't getting enough fresh air and so they feel a need to let them outside, unsupervised. . . While cats face many dangers outside that could shorten their lifespans, like people, cars, and other animals, there are creative ways to keep cats safe in your yard that will also keep neighbors happy. . . If you have any bit of outdoor space, the new craze is “Catio” — a safe and structured cat patio that keeps cats safe in your yard and allows them to enjoy the great outdoors too.

Source: <http://blog.mysanantonio.com/animals/2013/08/creative-catio-enclosures-keep-cats-safe-in-their-yards/#photo-300729>

“Even if they spend all of their time indoors, some cats could really benefit from, and get a kick out of, being outside for a bit. But letting your pet outside to roam can be very dangerous, as there are so many hazards that could lead to serious harm or even death. . . The ideal solution is an enclosed outdoor space for your cat to explore, which is playfully referred to as a catio.”

Source: Lisa Selvaggio, <http://www.petguide.com/blog/cat/5-cat-ravagant-perks-of-an-outdoor-catio>

Tags: *catios, cat enclosures, cat enrichment, cat behavior, DIY, build a catio, catio plans, animal welfare, pet shelters, cat patio*