

1. Kitty Lattice-in-Luxury



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2014

TYPE: Enclosure for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Redwood fencing and lattice, clear poly ceiling, composite deck and lighting

APPROXIMATE COST: \$1,200

FEATURES: Double deck cat benches, feeding station, live tree for scratching, clear fiberglass ceiling for natural light, and space for kitty boxes, chairs and a table for humans, lockable door and toys hanging from rafters

DESIGNER: Owner Michelle Reynolds

Michelle wanted to create a cozy safe catio where the cats could get sunshine and fresh air in their own catio living room. This catio is beautifully designed to be spacious so that her “fur babies,” grey tabby Larry, black cat Hasani and tuxedo kitty Jeter could have room to play and she could join the party. The cats’ favorite feature is hanging out on the high top bench. Her catio is a stand-alone structure just off the house under the redwoods so it is cool in the summer. Michelle feels strongly that people should build a catio for the cat’s safety and their peace of mind. There are just too many risks and wild predators to let cats fend for themselves in the redwood forests of Santa Cruz County.

2. Cats' Corner



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2013

TYPE: Enclosure for cats only

MATERIALS: Dimensional Redwood lumber and hardware cloth

APPROXIMATE COST: \$600

FEATURES: Accessible in case of cat emergencies; cats have access 24/7; south facing with overhang to provide shade in the summer.

DESIGNER & BUILDER: Barbara Diamond & Mark Hanford

After adopting two active rescue cats, Barbara and Mark realized they couldn't let them outside on their busy street. They chose instead to build a two-wing catio that fits snugly into an inside corner of the house.

The unique design provides the cats with many levels, angles and perches from which to watch the backyard action. The larger wing is 6' wide, 8' high, and 3' deep. The smaller wing is 6' wide, 30" high, and 18" deep. After designing the catio, Barbara and Mark found the construction was "easier than either of us thought it would be."

Jasper Jazzcat and Leonardo da Kitty enter their catio 24/7 through a cat door in the garage. Each wing of the catio has an opening that gives Barbara and Mark access in an emergency. With the food bowls and litter boxes located indoors, very little maintenance is needed.

Barbara and Mark love their catio. To others, they say, "Do it! Cats love it...it keeps our boys safe."

3. Chillin Catos



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2014

TYPE: Enclosures for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Douglas fir lumber, wire screening, plastic corrugated roofing and hardware

APPROXIMATE COST: Donated

FEATURES: Three large attached catios with perches, space to play with toys and chairs for humans



Three years ago Google donated a multi-room, stand-alone catio structure to the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter. It was installed on the back patio behind the shelter's meeting room. The shelter has volunteers that bring the adoptable cats out to play in small, inside greeting rooms daily. But on pleasant sunny days specially trained volunteers bring selected cats out into the larger, screened porch areas of our catios to enjoy an outdoor experience that eases the stress of their stay at the shelter.

Our catios have also been used as a classroom for clicker and positive association training, to help make cats more adoptable. It is a great outlet for high energy cats that don't particularly care for small spaces and enjoy the smells, sounds and closer interaction in a semi-natural setting. Cats that enjoy the catio are usually restless in their kennel, but when they return from a day outside in the sun they are relaxed and ready for a nap.



4. Kitty Comfort in the Garden



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2014

TYPE: Free standing enclosure with a tunnel connecting to the house

MATERIALS: Wood 2'x2' covered with wire

APPROXIMATE COST: \$600

FEATURES: Platforms to nap on with scratching posts and catnip planter

BUILDER: Handyman



"I was inspired to build my catio because I had young cats and was determined to keep them safe indoors. The neighborhood butts up against wild lands so coyotes and wildlife are common to see."

Anita's large garden of flowers and fruit trees has many interesting elements. The stand-alone catio fits in nicely to give the cats a safe comfortable place to view the garden activity of hummers flying in and out while keeping everyone safe.

Siblings Tashi and Suki love their catio. They go out first thing in the morning and have to be lured back in at night with treats. The tunnel goes from the master bedroom (top photo at left) to the freestanding catio.

Access to the garden is on the left side of the house. Walk back through the gate and around to the right to find the catio.



5. On Top of the World



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2015

TYPE: Fenced enclosure attached to the house for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Fence brackets purchased from Affordable Cat Fence in San Antonio, TX. Ties and netting from Home Depot.

APPROXIMATE COST: \$250

FEATURES: Breezeway with chairs to lounge on and an outdoor garden area with shrubs and fruit trees. The area is large enough for humans and cats to spend time together in a safe outdoor environment.

DESIGNERS: Owners

BUILDERS: Owners

Lilli lives at the top of a hill overlooking Soquel where open space comes right up to her home, and wildlife is all around. Lilli was concerned about the safety of her cats Catia, Fiona, Enzo and Annika because of the coyotes. Also, the street they live on is at the top of a hill so people do speed.

The catio is a large fenced off area of her backyard. She and her partner attached fencing to the top of the standard fence; this prevents the cats from getting out but allows them to enjoy exploring the garden. In the beginning Enzo figured out that it was possible to climb a tree to escape, so it took a bit more wire around the tree to prevent this from happening. The cats love finding hiding places in the garden, and Lilli loves having the peace of mind knowing they are safe which is priceless.

6. Nature's Way



Photos by Lisa Jan Rose

At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2010

TYPE: Cat fence for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Cat-Proof[™] mesh and bracing on top of new fence

APPROXIMATE COST: \$3,000

FEATURES: Includes two fruit trees, a raised planting bed, a worm composting bin, many places for cats to lounge, and two sandboxes

DESIGNER: Charlea Massion

BUILDER: Abel Rodas, local builder & landscaper

After a beloved cat abruptly disappeared, Charlea Massion decided to provide her three cats with safe access to the outdoors while protecting birds and other small animals from her feline family. She designed a 20' by 25' area adjacent to her house that includes fruit trees, a raised planting bed, a worm bin, a clothes line, and many spots where her cats can lounge. The entrance is through a cat door in the laundry room.

Local builder and landscaper Abel Rodas built a fence and installed the Purrfect Fence Cat-Proof[™]. Because the enclosure doesn't have a roof, Charlea installed reflective ribbon to deter birds from entering. Tawny, Benjamin and Chano favor the sunny lounge areas and the two sand boxes they use as litter boxes.

Charlea is a vocal advocate for catios. "Be a responsible cat guardian! Cats are very destructive to wildlife and very vulnerable to cars, coyotes, dogs and other cats with diseases. My cats love their catio, and I love them loving it."

7. Cats' Garden Jewel



Photos by Thomas Burke

At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2017

TYPE: Enclosure for cats and humans attached to the house

MATERIALS: Redwood and galvanized wire mesh with exterior door

APPROXIMATE COST: \$3,200

FEATURES: Unobstructed views of the backyard garden and all its action with ramps and cozy sleeping areas. There are lights for evening enjoyment with room for chairs for humans and toys and furniture for cats.

DESIGNER: Jeffery and Andrew Talmadge along with the owner

BUILDER: Talmadge Construction

Sandie witnessed a pack of four coyotes jump her backyard fence to hunt and then jump over the fence into her neighbor's yard. Up until that point she had been letting her cats out during the day. After that they instantly became indoor cats. Now her cats Missy, Max and Chessie get to enjoy the garden in the lap of luxury in their own beautiful catio.

Sandie's catio is a small room-size area off one of her bedrooms that looks out to her beautiful large landscaped garden. The kitties enjoy bird and squirrel watching. They take sunbathing very seriously, moving from spot to spot as the sun moves throughout the day. And Missy especially loves being out in the catio in the rain.

"If you have cats and you want to protect them from the dangers of being outdoors, you need a catio. You will have peace of mind, and they will have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors safely."

8. Corralitos Casual



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2013

TYPE: Wire and wood small enclosure attached to the house measures 5'x5'. The front yard catio has security fencing around the front garden that measures about 20'x50'.

MATERIALS: "Purrfect Cat Fencing" added to the top of a 4-foot-high metal fence. The small catio is framed with 2"x4" lumber covered in wire mesh.

APPROXIMATE COST: \$1,400

DESIGNER/BUILDER: Handyman

FEATURES: The large catio encompasses the entire front of the house. The small catio is attached to the side of the garage and has shelves for basking in the sun.

When Nancy lost one of her cats to a coyote, she decided she had had enough. She lives in a beautiful rural area with views of the bay. She wanted to create a safe area where her cats Bootsie, Mittsie and Tina could enjoy being outdoors safely. They love rolling in the dirt and sleeping under the bushes when they aren't playing "hide and seek."

Nancy said, "I don't have to worry about predators. I can relax knowing my cats are safe and that I'm giving them a healthy, stimulating environment.

It is important when creating a garden environment for cats that the bushes be trimmed up to limit the hiding spots where cats could ambush birds. We want to keep all the animals and birds safe.

9. Catio Lounge & Tea Room



AFTER



BEFORE



Photos by John Pianavilla



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2014

TYPE: Enclosure for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Metal garden gazebo frame, fir lumber, 4" fence wire, plastic wall panels, corrugated roofing

APPROXIMATE COST: \$2,500 for materials

FEATURES: Padded cat walkway and access shelves, five hidden kitty litter boxes, two chairs for human cuddling, view of the Japanese garden

DESIGNER: Owner Elizabeth Munroz and contractor John Pianavilla

BUILDER: John Pianavilla, owner of Purr "D" cat condos

After Elizabeth's beloved 20-year-old cat was killed by a dog, she felt that for her own sanity she had to create a safe environment for her other cats that overlooks the garden. Each of the cats enjoys the catio in a unique way. Buffy the calico prefers the little heated cat house while Sunny Boy loves to get attention from whoever is visiting. Georgie and Pinky have become best friends and play on the carpeted floor. Bambi prefers one of the lower access shelves while Timmy moves around the catio with the sun. Comfy chairs and tables allow human visitors to sit and enjoy a cup of hot tea while all enjoy the views of the Japanese garden and Bonsai collection. "The cats love it. They come and go as they please day and night and I know they are safe."

10. Catzebo Playland



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: Completed in 2014

TYPE: Two enclosures for cats, one for cats and humans and one tunnel connecting from house to gazebo.

MATERIALS: Fir lumber, wire fencing, portable kennel components, plastic fencing, hardware.

APPROXIMATE COST: \$1500

FEATURES: An enclosed gazebo with a door for people and a hole in the ceiling for cats to access it from the tunnel that runs over the deck to inside the house. A large run along the left side of the house and a stand alone closet-sized catio for afternoon sunning.

DESIGNER & BUILDER: Owner Rob Watson

Rob Watson and his wife Nona take kitty comfort to a new level. For some time now they have been taking advantage of their house's layout to create a number of spaces for their three cats to enjoy. Rob has created climbing elements, a space they can race around, and a tunnel to explore that ends up in a "Catzebo" for bird watching where he can sit with them. There is even an area in the backyard where Brodie the Main Coon loves to roll in the grass and nibble the catnip. Baxter the grey shorthair hangs out on the "catwalk" that connects the house to the "Catzebo" and Binky likes the enclosure on the back deck for sunning. Rob says, "Do it for your cat's safety, health, happiness and your own peace of mind. Just a basic window box is not difficult or expensive." Check out Rob's blog catcluez.org.

11. Purr “D” Cat Condo



Photos by John Pianavilla

At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2014

TYPE: Enclosure for cats only, window box

MATERIALS: Fir lumber, cedar wood, galvanized wire, large insulated cat doors, LED multi-colored lighting, Lexan clear roof panels.

APPROXIMATE COST: \$1600

FEATURES: Multi levels of shelves and a tunnel connecting into the home with perches and ramps.

DESIGNER & BUILDER: Owner John Pianavilla, licensed contractor and owner of Purr “D” Cat Condos

Homeowner and catio designer/contractor John Pianavilla designed this cat condo to utilize wasted space surrounding his side entrance. Her sibling, Mako, was bullying his cat Puma so John created this cozy safe outdoor enclosure just for her. She enjoys spending the days lounging safely rain or shine under clear corrugated roof panels which let in the natural light. The catio faces north so it stays comfortable on hot days. Puma’s condo has an entrance at floor level and one higher up to access the multi-level cedar shelves with perches and ramps with custom made rubbing brushes. John has also constructed a window box condo for all the cats off his kitchen. He has six cats in all and feels very strongly it is up to us to keep them safe and enrich their environment so they can have the best life ever. He enjoys the creative aspect of designing environments for the cat’s safety and enjoyment. Each enclosure he builds is designed with the individual personalities of the cats in mind.

12. Garden of Delights



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2014

TYPE: Cat fence for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Cat-ProofTM mesh and bracing on top of existing fence

APPROXIMATE COST: Materials \$329; labor \$400

FEATURES: Entire back yard is enclosed; dead branch for scratching post; layer of wood chips for kitty litter; catnip growing in container.

DESIGNER: Tai Moses

BUILDER: Wes Koenig, Rent a Husband Handyman Services

What's the first thing a cat lover does when she moves across from a nature preserve that is home to mountain lions? And what if that cat lover also loves wildlife? She builds a safe sanctuary for her cats, of course. Puck and Sherman, once homeless, now enjoy middle age in the verdant 16' by 25' enclosed back yard where they have a branch to scratch, catnip to sniff, and lots of nature to roll in.

Local handyman Wes Koenig installed the Purrfect Fence Cat-ProofTM on top of the existing wooden fence, keeping the cats in and the predators out. It also protects abundant wild bird life from Puck and Sherman. The cats enter the enclosure through a sliding glass door off the kitchen.

Tai is thrilled with the enclosure. "It's wonderful to know our cats are safe and protected and not harming birds and native wildlife. And in nice weather, the whole family – feline, canine, and human – enjoys the catio together."

13. The Catatrail



Photos by Thomas Burke

At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2013

TYPE: Window box with tunnels

MATERIALS: Redwood, 16 gauge wire mesh with staples

APPROXIMATE COST: \$300

FEATURES: Two entrances, bay window area and two tunnels

DESIGNERS & BUILDERS: Owner Patty Walters with her friends and brother

Patty loves watching her cats enjoy sunning themselves in their custom made "Catatrail" overlooking her backyard garden. She can sit with friends on her back deck and watch the cats. Peaches especially loves basking in the sun wherever she finds it. Mimi races from one opening to the next and chirps at the birds when she is in her "feisty cat" mode, and Hugh enjoys lazing under the jasmine that engulfs one end of a tunnel. Patty feels it is so important to give the cats a safe outdoor place to enjoy the sunshine. She says "Just do it. It doesn't take a lot of space or money". The cats are safe and so are the birds.



14. Fenced for Fun



Photos by Thomas Burke

At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2013

TYPE: Enclosure for cats and humans

MATERIALS: Pressure treated lumber, cross supports, joist hangers, and deer wire fencing. Screws, staples and miscellaneous hardware.

APPROXIMATE COST: \$500

FEATURES: Fully enclosed back and side yards with ample plants and dirt; easy indoor-outdoor access at will.

DESIGNERS: Valerie & Scott St.Denis

BUILDERS: Scott & John St.Denis

To give their two feral cats a full 24/7 outdoor experience, Valerie and Scott completely fenced in their small side and back yards; cats and humans on the inside and other wildlife on the outside. Buck and Jason are able to enter the enclosure any time of day through a cat door in the living room.

Buck and Jason enjoy many aspects of the enclosure: bushes for hiding, hot tub lid for sleeping, lemon tree for hanging out, oak trees for bird watching, and rain for getting wet.

When it came time to build, Scott and his father John built upon existing fencing to raise the height of the enclosure. They installed extra bracing to strengthen the wire in order to support raccoon traffic. For Valerie and Scott, who believe that allowing cats to roam the neighborhood is dangerous for cats and birds, creating a fulfilling environment for their cats was a dream come true. Their advice to others: "Do it! I love that the cats can still be outside and protected. I love that they can't hunt wildlife."

15. Kitty Condo



At a Glance

YEAR BUILT: 2015

TYPE: Window box

MATERIALS: Wood, wire, and lattice

APPROXIMATE COST: \$500

FEATURES: Two levels; side door for cleaning; window can be closed to keep cat inside house.

DESIGNER & BUILDER: Peter Boscacci, Construction and Handyman Service

This efficiently designed two level enclosure offers Shane a grand view of backyard activity and room to stretch while protecting him from neighborhood coyotes and mountain lions. The upper level of the catio abuts the kitchen window, and the cat door from the kitchen to the catio can be entered when the kitchen window is open. This suits Vicki and Randy who like to be able to keep Shane indoors during inclement weather.

The catio is about 4' wide, 7' high, and 2' deep. Shane enters onto a platform where he likes to lie in the sun. He then hops down to the lower level where he does his stretches.

On one side of the catio, there's a low door through which Vicki and Randy can enter. But because Shane's food bowl and litter box are indoors, very little maintenance is needed.

The Delucchis are very pleased with this catio. "It was a great investment, and we feel it was the right thing to do to protect our cat. Shane loves it, and we love that he is so happy."

