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## COVER FEATURE



### 20 **AT HOME** **Do the Math**

Builder Brent Wimpee, of Southern Kentucky Building & Remodeling, combined 25 years of experience, the expertise of a team of subs, and his ability to deliver for the client in this custom home in the Ivan Downs Subdivision. The home is the best of the builder and the owner who says he spent almost four decades separating what he wanted from what he didn't want.

## DEPARTMENTS

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## Are We There Yet? Are We There Yet?

BY BETTY SPARKS



Somewhere around 1970, Barbie, tired of glamming at home, decided to take her glam show mobile. Outfitted in the original orange-and-yellow camper, she hit the beaches of Malibu.

With plenty of room for her sisters and their friends (each sold separately), this was one glam ride. The cab transformed into a pool, perfect for a pool party on the go! The camper featured everything a doll could need for first-class glamping. The kitchen had a lemonade dispenser, and the grill flipped over to become a table for indoor or outdoor dining.

Sounds good, right? But let's be honest. Even as the years rolled by and Barbie saw countless upgrades like Jacuzzi tubs and jet skis, life hasn't been all rainbows and butterflies. Barbie has been through some difficult times.

Despite her determined smile and cheerful tune, the old doll has grown up in an era of significant change. From scrubbing bubbles to bath salts, she may not be a member of the greatest generation, but the fact that she's still holding on at all speaks volumes.

Perhaps part of what has saved her sanity was her commitment

*continued on page 8 >*



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> continued from page 6

to that beach buggy. Perhaps that iconic orange-and-yellow traveling bungalow helped her keep her tan and her man and her sunny disposition.

As busy as she's been, this blonde icon of womanhood has evidently carved out regular "me time" to spend traveling the open road. She's been to Hollywood. She's been to Redwood. But again, ladies, the point is, you haven't.

So isn't it time that you lived better than the dolls of your childhood? Don't you deserve that lovely combination—that intersection between adventure and luxury? Shouldn't you and your Barbie friends spend some time beneath the stars this summer without sacrificing a single moment of luxury?

This "glamour camping" craze may have been popularized by Barbie, but she wasn't its only convert.

In fact, there are swarms of glampers up and down the coasts as we speak. They have websites. They have destinations awaiting their leisurely lunches and sun-dappled naps. They have tennis courts and movie theaters. Basically, these hedonistic travelers saw Barbie and raised her.

Still, years after Barbie showed us the way, there are still too many people living vicariously and reading this from the comfort of a cubicle in the shade of a palm tree screen saver.

So what exactly is glamping? And where does one sign up?

According to Glamping.com, glamping is a new kind of travel where there's no tent to pitch or sleeping bag to unroll. There might be a yurt, an Airstream or even a tree house overlooking a lake, but there won't be rows of nondescript rooms or a swimming pool full of strangers or an infinite number of people waiting in line for rides.

So before the summer disappears like a first kiss, take a cue from a 50-something doll who doesn't look a day over 36-24-36. Call some friends and book a few days with Mother Nature. Let's face it—the Fountain of Youth might just be that vintage Barbie lemonade dispenser, and the key to enlightenment might be an actual key. ✱



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# In Defense of the Fifth Wheel

BY **MARIKA KUTCHINS**



Standing in the kitchen of this custom home, surrounded by upscale amenities, it is easy to get lost in luxury. Rain glass cabinets and wood-paneled appliances, including an oven, a microwave and a full-sized refrigerator, overlook pit seating in a great room that features a push-button fireplace and pop-up 60-inch television.

But look a little closer. The plush carpeting is cut into sections so the bay windows can collapse with the flip of a switch, transforming the living space

into streamlined efficiency. Cup holders on the perimeter of the countertops are another clue that this custom home is actually a fifth wheel and those amenities are built not only for comfort but also for speed.

Well-appointed motor coaches have redefined "roughing it," and these high-end models are at the top of the food chain of recreational vehicles that started with the iconic Airstream and seem to be picking up steam.

One in eight households owns a recreational vehicle, says Mark Woltjen, general manager of Dunlap RV Centers in Bowling Green, where some of the vehicles top out near the six-figure mark.

Despite the price tag, Woltjen says the appeal isn't about owning an expensive "piece of metal." Instead, he says it's about the lifestyle. These high-end vehicles offer the ultimate in relaxation. And the converts who congregate around the patio pad to enjoy the beauty of the great outdoors become neighbors who then become friends.

According to Woltjen, there are two types of RV campers. There are those who love to camp but want to go "first class," and there are the snowbirds who migrate south to spend six months a year in warmer climates.

And as it turns out, their route often leads right through Bowling Green.

"Within a hundred miles of here is some of the prime camping in the United States," says Woltjen. He lists Mammoth Cave, Nolin Lake, Lake Cumberland and the Land Between the Lakes as popular destinations for the glamour camping crowd.

While Woltjen uses words like "addictive" and "cult" to describe the RV lifestyle, he admits that maneuvering the camper can take some getting used to. So for those without a pickup truck or the desire to master the logistics of taking these mobile homes on the open road, the Dunlap RV crew will transport a camper to a campsite on Barren River Lake, ready the pad, hook up the utilities and then

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come back at the end of the stay, close the campsite, and drive it home. Despite the luxury, the price tag is only about \$600 for the weekend.

Further south in Gulf Shores, Alabama, is a resort called Bella Terra that Woltjen says represents the direction the trend is headed. At Bella Terra, "residents" actually lease their patio pads and can also sublease them when not in use. The property is billed as a "Luxury Class A Motor Coach Community." From the championship caliber golf courses to the fully stocked fishing lake and private bathhouses, this resort is not your granddaddy's campsite.

"Glam" daddy, maybe—but not granddaddy.

Of course, RVs are ultimately the launching point to go exploring the great outdoors. But leaving the luxury of base camp means being prepared, and no self-respecting s'more slinger can just head out in casual shoes and cutoffs.

For personal gear that complements the glamper's lifestyle, Vanessa Dobring, hardgood buyer at Nat's Outdoor Sports



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in Bowling Green, recommends starting from the ground up.

Socks can make or break a hiking trip, says Dobring. Nat's sells several brands, including Smartwool, which is made in the U.S. of breathable merino wool to keep body temperatures consistent and skin dry.

From there, the Salewa Alp Flow hiking boot is designed with a layer of GoreTex to make it waterproof and breathable.

She says that at Nat's, they're less about "glamour camping" than the type of camping that results in muddy feet. "I can tell you a few things that we consider 'high-end' camping." Take a backpack and a sleeping pad and spend a weekend at a nearby destination like the Red River Gorge, the Great Smoky Mountains or the Fiery Gizzard Trail, she says.

And while fiery gizzards may seem a little out of place in glamour camping, a quick Google search proves otherwise. The 12.5-mile point-to-point trail in South Cumberland State Park near Tracy City, Tennessee, features beautiful ridgetop views and wild waterfalls, but it boasts a five-star ranking from the campers who've traversed it. \*

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## Working For Dough

*How One Bowling Green Artist Forged a Sweet Deal*

BY MARY NESTOR



↑ Honey, not molasses is the sweetener for these traditional cookies.

Tunde Dugantsi will never be a starving artist. How could she be?

Her studio is her kitchen, and her kitchen is always filled with stacks of delicious cookies in various stages of becoming intricate works of art.

Eventually, each one will be carefully detailed and decorated, and these “honey cakes” will become her contribution to and interpretation of an ages-old artistic expression from her native country of Hungary.

But delicious as they are in their unfrosted incarnation, Dugantsi doesn’t recommend eating the finished artwork. She points out that royal icing, despite its rather fancy-sounding name, is nothing more than egg white and confectioners’



↑ An intricate lace cookie heart could be a token of affection and the romance would be either on or off according to where the cookie was placed in the house.

sugar formed into what she jokingly refers to as “mortar.”

By carefully mixing and wielding this “mortar” Dugantsi builds delicate patterns of color and contrast. She draws on classic designs and uses baker’s-grade food dye to achieve the saturated colors that mark the Eastern European decorative palette.

And while her mother and grandmother certainly knew their way around the kitchen, Dugantsi says she didn’t grow up decorating cookies. Instead, she, like many Hungarians for hundreds of years, encountered these lovely ornamental pieces at county fairs and during special celebrations like Christmas and Easter.


Dugantsi says they even have the ability to predict successful unions. When a gentleman wanted to call upon a young woman, he could deliver a heart-shaped “cookie.” If it was prominently displayed, his advances were considered appropriate. If it was put away, he moved along, explains the artist.

Dugantsi makes her honey cookies in a variety of shapes and sizes, from Easter eggs to holiday ornaments, animal cookies to three-dimensional hollow molds. She makes napkin rings, candleholders, advent trees and picture frames.


Just please don’t mistake it for gingerbread.

Honey, not molasses, is the sweet ingredient, and Dugantsi says she doesn’t believe there is a comparison. “I don’t even like the smell of molasses,” she admits. Besides, honey is a very beneficial ingredient because it preserves these miniature works of art for decades. The only thing that can ruin a cookie is

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humidity, she says.

After reviving her own interest in this delicious form of artistic expression, she also decided to share her experience with others. Even while juggling the responsibility of caring for her three young children, Dugantsi researched and wrote a series of books with recipes and tips on how to decorate.

She also reached out to other cookie artists to expand her collection of recipes, cookie cutters and molds. Sometimes, she even had to design the prototype for custom-made shapes.

Her Russian nesting dolls (as shown above), for example, were commissioned as decorations for a tea party that was hosted by the Department of Modern Languages at WKU, and the kettlebell napkin rings with their silver fondant and the wedding date etched in royal icing were at the request of an athletic bride who wanted something personal and memorable as keepsakes for her guests.

But as much as Dugantsi enjoys baking and decorating, her real passion is for teaching others. In addition to the books, she has a website that hosts short instructive videos. She sells her cookies and decorative templates on Etsy, and she teaches monthly classes locally in Bowling Green and weekend seminars in Nashville. She also teaches small groups in private settings and has traveled as far as New Jersey and Texas to share her skill.

A couple of years ago, all she wanted was something to share with her children. And of course, they couldn't be happier. As Dugantsi points out, it's a win/win situation. "It either ends up in the gallery or it ends up in their tummy." \*



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# Food for Thought



## Planning ideas for the heart of the home



**Q:** *Tim, we are planning a new kitchen and would like your advice on some of the latest trends.*

**A:** One of the most beautiful and enjoyable features of a new home or remodel project is the kitchen. The modern kitchen is the heart of the home. It's where we gather to cook, to eat, to enjoy meals with friends or sometimes just to catch up over a warm cup of coffee. So whether you're dreaming of turning that old, outdated kitchen into a beautiful and enjoyable centerpiece or planning a new-construction kitchen, here are a few things to consider when contemplating your next kitchen project.

### Style

According to NKBA designers surveyed, many expect to do more transitional-style kitchens in 2015. Transitional kitchen designs have

increased in popularity by more than 15 percent in just four years. Versatile Shaker styling has become a popular interpretation of transitional, and almost 40 percent of NKBA survey respondents said they will do more Shaker-style kitchens in 2015

Not to fear though—traditional-style kitchens have not fallen out of favor. While traditional kitchens have experienced a slight decrease in popularity, it remains a dominant kitchen style, with 63 percent of the market in 2014.

### Color

Kitchens with multiple color schemes are gaining in popularity. White-painted kitchen perimeters with espresso-stained or painted islands and dark-stained kitchen perimeters with light-colored painted islands can add warmth and appeal to a kitchen project. While white is still the most common color scheme for kitchens, gray is steadily gaining in popularity.

### Function

Is there ever enough storage space? No matter how you try, there seems to never be enough room, especially in the kitchen.

Some things to remember about storage: It should be accessible to people of all ages who will use the kitchen; it should accommodate changing work needs and storage preferences.

The kitchen can create quite a bit of garbage and refuse. Be sure not to overlook this important area, from trash compactors to garbage cans to recycling bins.

Solutions to make life easier in the kitchen abound. Pullouts and rollouts for kitchen cabinets were specified by more than 90 percent of survey respondents in 2014, and about 40 percent expect to see pullouts and rollouts increase in popularity in 2015.

### Countertop space

Ask most homeowners, and they'll tell you that there's not enough counter space

in the kitchen, no matter how much or how little they have.

Whether you need a second work station, a space from which to serve an informal buffet, or just a place to toss the day's mail, kitchen islands and raised bars are a popular solution to the lack of kitchen space.

Does my family eat in the kitchen? If so, countertop seating at an island or raised bar might be handy.

**Whom to choose?**

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With the right professional by your side, you and your family will enjoy your beautiful new kitchen for many years to come. \*



Tim Graham has been building homes in South Central, KY for over 25 years. He is a Master Builder, a Registered Builder and a Certified Green Professional.

Tim Graham  
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Throughout the home, custom wood trim was the result of a close collaboration between homeowner and carpenter. Ten inch high baseboard with square rather than beveled edges were just one of the "must-haves."



← A southern exposure keeps the interiors bright and sunny. Eleven-foot high ceilings, eight-foot tall doors, and windows placed above the furniture height help compliment the home's open circulation.



→ A picture from Southern Living inspired the home's façade, complete with its inviting front porch, its forward facing roofline, and its dormer style windows.



↓ The homeowner wanted to eliminate interior walls. Grade 2 white oak hardwood floors were set across the room rather than the length of the space. This slows down the eye and allows the beauty of the grain to shine.



## The New Math of Building a *Custom Home*

WRITTEN BY MARY NESTOR  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE IMEL  
LAYOUT BY M. SCHOFDING

**T**here are different ways to measure the time it takes to build a house.

Even before drafting a blueprint, the designer daydreams and contemplates exactly what the finished home will look like. And given the myriad considerations and important decisions, the time it really takes to build is not necessarily the days and weeks between breaking ground and moving in.

Using that “new math,” this 2,750-square-foot custom home in the Ivan Downs Subdivision actually took about 39 years to build.

In more conventional terms, builder Brent Wimpee started work in September 2013, and, following one of the coldest winters on record, the new owners moved in the following August.

Wimpee's clients—a couple who choose to remain anonymous and let their home speak for itself—spent many years honing and refining the various elements of their wish list and then lingered another seven years between buying the lot and awarding the project.

“I assume Brent decided we were never gonna build,” they joke.

As a registered builder and owner of

Southern Kentucky Building & Remodeling, Wimpee knows that building a custom home takes plenty of patience and the ability to work at the client's pace.

In this case, his clients moved from a home they describe as “dark” due to its closed circulation and old-fashioned finishes. When they became empty nesters, they intended to downsize, but as their wish list became a punch list, they ended up with a bigger home.

They traded those dark environs for a well-lit, well-proportioned custom home, which infuses the architectural elements of universal design for aging in place with a decidedly contemporary polish.

For example, the “drive in” shower in the master suite can easily accommodate a wheel chair if and when the need arises. Meanwhile, the grotto-style space with its custom tile work, a rain showerhead and heated floors would be right at home in any contemporary loft.

In the kitchen, a trio of extended-height windows and dormers that form a T-shape across one wall and a generously proportioned working island were must-haves for the homeowners and design challenges for Wimpee and his crew.





↑ A teakettle sits on the stovetop of the center island.

→ The kitchen cabinets are Dover white paint with a glazed finish and the hardware was deliberately chosen for its mitered edge design. Wide pots drawers were another must-have.

← Plenty of room around the kitchen island for Parson's chairs upholstered in creamy white with Nantucket grey wood.

↙ The window design required some creative ventilation methods that work without the benefit of an easy access wall. But more importantly, the paneled design lends the kitchen a beautiful shine.

↓ A formal dining room was an important component. Its location at the front of the house is the traditional design placement and gives it a good view of the front porch.



To accommodate the window design, the plumbers used a “Mexican Loop” ventilation system to get the proper water pressure, and to meet another design challenge, the electricians employed a downdraft on the center island.

Throughout the home, 11-foot ceilings and an open circulation help showcase the luster of the hardwood floors.

Ultimately, the homeowners selected a number two-grade white oak for the floors because the imperfections of tone make it more visually appealing. Their first choice was actually hickory, but hickory’s dense grain and waves of color could easily have overwhelmed the clean lines of the home’s

architectural detail.

The foundation looks like brick but is actually a poured concrete structure that will stabilize the home for decades to come. More importantly, as Wimpee points out, improvements in sealing the building envelope make the conditioned crawl space an integral part of the home’s overall energy efficiency.

“Older houses weren’t air tight like they’re built now,” explains the builder, who speaks from around 25 years of experience. Given the modern efficiencies in the thermal envelope, the home doesn’t breathe like it used to breathe.

To maximize those improvements, “you’re better doing a conditioned crawlspace with spray-on foam insulation and heavy plastic ground-cover seal,” says Wimpee.

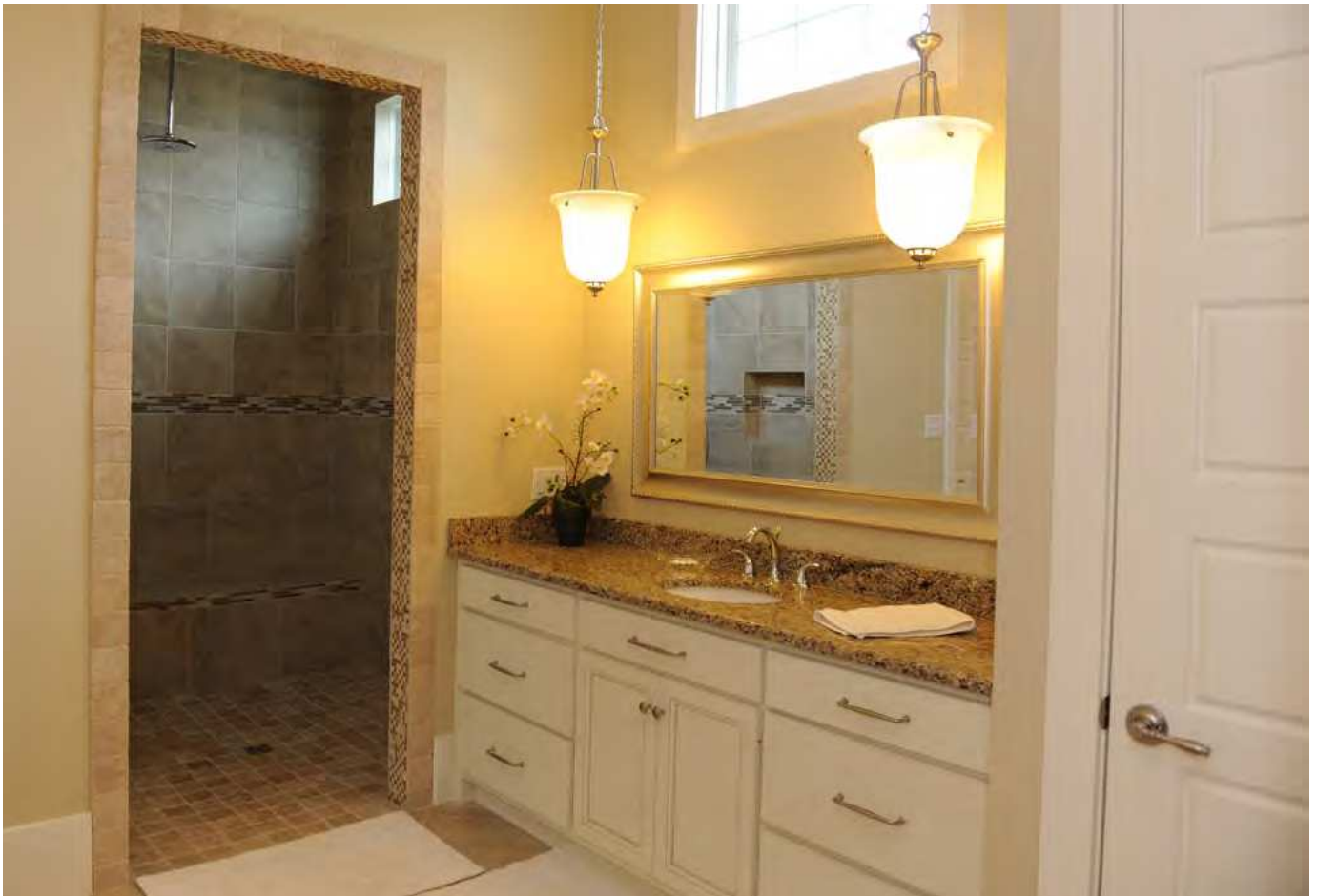
He incorporates the necessary ventilation, but generally, he says, “the floors are a lot warmer in different types of weather. And the best part—the crawl space is not musty, damp and cold.”

He also recommends building into the blueprint separate heating and cooling units for more efficiency. As Wimpee points out, “It costs the same amount of money to do two heating and cooling units; the size just happens to be split in half. So if you need a 5-ton unit, just use two 2.5-ton units instead.”

By establishing those heating and cooling zones, the homeowners can save money on their fuel bills but also create specific temperatures in specific places.

“Think about this: We like to have the house cool at night when we go to bed,” explains the builder. But by utilizing separate HVAC zones,





↑ In the master bath, everything is "heightened." The ceilings are tall, the counter tops are tall, the windows are set above the mirror, and the doorjamb is eight feet tall.



↑ A pair of showerheads includes a wall mounted unit and a rain unit that the homeowner is really glad to have included in the design.



↑ A rain shower style of faucet is a trend that shows no sign of stopping.



↑ Ribbons of metallic tile lend their sparkle to the finished space.



↑ His and her vanities are on opposite sides of the master bath.





↑ ↓ The back-story on this lovely bedroom set comes from the homeowner's mother-in-law. Years ago, she was driving down a country road and noticed furniture about to become firewood. For less than the price of a night out, she bought the set. The homeowner jokes that several years later, the cost of fixing one of the bedposts was more than the original purchase price.

↑ Bedding in ivory tones compliments the wall color and the floor color in the master bedroom.



↑ A functional mudroom is just inside the back door of the rear entry garage.

keeping one area cool at night doesn't have to mean waking to a cold kitchen. He says it's a common practice in commercial building, but a relatively new concept in residential.

In fact, this custom home actually includes three heating and cooling zones. Upstairs above the garage, a 500-square-foot bonus room features a "mini-split" system that Wimpee says has gained popularity in Europe and is making its way to homes in the U.S. It is basically a wall-mounted unit that is less expensive to install because it utilizes wiring instead of ductwork.

Installing the stove in the kitchen island

can be challenging in any home, but in this case, Wimpee needed to plan for a high-capacity downdraft to balance the impact of 11-foot ceilings.

From the solid concrete and insulated crawl space to its ductless heating system in the bonus room and everything in between, the home features the best of both builder and clients, and despite the fact that the homeowners choose to remain anonymous, at least one of them takes full responsibility for the elements of the design.

When asked how he managed to take on the project of building for two, he explains,

"I told her to trust me. If it's good, it's my design. If it's bad, it's my design. I told her that after it was finished, if she didn't like it and she didn't want to live here, we could just sell it and build another one."

At the moment, they couldn't be happier with their 39-year homebuilding project! ✨



1



2



3



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5



6

1. Clean and fresh, white beams on a painted wood ceiling create a striking look. 2. It's all about the details! An exquisite chandelier with a decorative ceiling medallion is simply classic. (Photography by Zainah Haider.) 3. Arched black beams against a white arched ceiling show a stunning example of contrasting design. 4. This vaulted clear pine ceiling offers a perfect spot for displaying dramatic lighting.

5. A textured ceiling that is painted adds both drama and accenting interest. 6. A tray ceiling with arches and recessed space for built-ins beautifully frames a room.

*All photos courtesy Kochmann Brothers Homes, Inc. (except where noted).*

# Captivating Ceilings

*The beauty, art and magnificence of today's architectural ceilings*

BY **WANDA PERKINS**

Since ancient times, extraordinary and magnificent ceiling architecture has created mesmerizing beauty. Famous ceilings such as Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, the Great Hall in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., Buckingham Palace in London, and Grand Central Terminal in New York City capture attention with their interlocking patterns, impressive arches and columns, spectacular lighting and artistic paintings. Likewise, today's homes are displaying captivating ceiling designs as well, reminding us that artistic beauty can transform any room into a stunning masterpiece.

Ceilings offer height, complementing design and interest while providing the crowning touch to the room. They are among the first things homeowners and guests notice when entering a home. Our eyes naturally gravitate overhead to height and architecturally interesting details. Gone are the days when popcorn ceilings were standard. Instead, striking, artistic ceiling designs are making grand impressions.

Interior designer, Audrey Newman, explains that the ceiling is like the fifth wall to a room. "When your eye moves around a well-designed room, it should be captivated by every view," she notes. "This is equally important when considering the details of the ceiling as it is to the walls, flooring and furnishings."

"Designing a ceiling completes a space



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while bringing depth and adding interest,” Newman adds. “This is accomplished by adding moldings; using paint hues or metallic colors; choosing wallpaper with unique colors, textures or patterns; incorporating beams or other wood details and using both functional and decorative lighting.”

A well-executed ceiling can create a design focal point within a room. Whether your style preference is modern, traditional, rustic or urban industrial, there's a ceiling design to complement your taste and a variety of materials to select from.

“Some of the most popular ceiling designs utilize vaulted or raised ceilings, dropped soffits, coffered ceilings, tray or painted ceilings, wood beams, or warm tongue-and-groove woods such as cedar, knotty or clear pine,” notes builder Darrick Guthmiller. “Ceiling heights add dimension and create a more expansive and inviting space. A higher or vaulted ceiling makes a small space seem much more expansive and gives you the ability to use larger windows within your floor plan.” Prior to deciding your preferred ceiling design,

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~ Audrey Newman, owner and principal designer at JW Kitchens



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← A magnificent octagon-shaped gazebo ceiling features Douglas fir glulam beams and tongue-and-groove woodwork. (Photography by Paul Christianson.)

it is important to think ahead about any additional structural preparations that might need to be incorporated to avoid future complications in your home's floor plan. “Whether your ceiling design includes fastening beams, wood or other intricate details, it's crucial to plan ahead for structural considerations and specific details that may require framing adjustments,” Guthmiller explains. “Your plan may need framing modifications to accommodate your ceiling. Also, be sure to include lighting that complements your ceiling. Accent lighting can make a dramatic appearance, especially in the evening. And simple details such as crown molding or the addition of a light medallion will also make an impressive statement.”

Ceiling designs shouldn't be an afterthought. Why not make your home's ceiling fascinating? Stunning? Even sensational? The interest your ceilings create will give your home a spectacular, architecturally captivating appearance and make a lasting impression you'll enjoy for a lifetime. \*

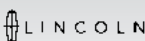
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DECOR

Generously sized, the formal dining space is filled with natural light, and an intricate shell lighting fixture above the table adds beautiful ambiance.



## Reminiscent Character Meets Modern-Day Style

*Sensational homes combine quality architecturally designed spaces and with character and elegance.*

BY WANDA PERKINS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANN ARBOR MILLER & ZAINAH HAIDER



↑ Luxurious baths with quartz countertops, contemporary hardware and lighting, double sinks and framed mirrors are standard features in most homes

When thinking about homebuilding, it all begins with space: space for a home to be built, space for each room and design feature and space to live, relax, work and grow. Holly Rieger, president of Holly & Company Classic Homes in Fargo, North Dakota, has a gift for envisioning space. As a woman working in a traditionally male-dominated profession, she attributes her success to her architectural, design and project management background while offering homebuyers new choices, unique concepts and one-of-a-kind character designs.

Having grown up in historic St. Paul, Minnesota, Rieger believes her homebuilding design expertise was greatly influenced by the detailed historic homes in her neighborhood. Instilling character and elegance into each home she designs, Rieger avoids what she describes as a “characterless box.”

“Homeowners are becoming more educated when it comes to putting thoughtful designs and products within their homes,” Rieger notes. “We install quality products like energy-efficient windows, appliances and heating/cooling equipment to reduce energy use. Our construction techniques reduce



↑ Intentional spaces and thoughtful design elements are incorporated in each home. Dual built-ins frame a gas fireplace, allowing additional space for furniture placement.

outside air infiltration to keep energy loss to a minimum.”

Although budgetary concerns remain a predominant factor in homebuilding, character and curb appeal are increasingly influencing homebuyers. “Instead of going for massive square footage, today’s buyers are opting for stylish spaces and interesting design elements,” Rieger adds. By de-emphasizing garage space, Rieger typically highlights an appealing front porch as the dominant exterior feature of her homes. Multipaned windows with wide trim work and a beautiful front door create a welcoming appearance.

Interior spaces incorporate similar quality details. Trayed and beamed ceilings, crown moldings, exquisite trim work, walk-in pantries, gorgeous lighting, classic cabinetry and hardware and exceptional attention to every space are standard in Rieger’s home designs.

With a goal to “provide new homebuyers with homes that are architecturally designed and built with quality,” Rieger and her team strive to build homes that combine reflections of historic design with modern-day style and elements that exhibit a comfortable, homey charm.

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↑ Perfectly positioned in the center of the great room, the gas fireplace can be viewed and enjoyed from the kitchen and dining areas. Quality finishes are present in every detail, including the intricate bracket-weave design in the marble tile.

“Intentionally designing well-thought-out, practical spaces is always our objective,” Rieger explains. “I am very conscious about how spaces flow and try to avoid wasting space. I imagine myself living in each home and ask myself how it will be used from day to day.”

She admits that one of the biggest wasted spaces in a home design is the hallway. Keeping floor plans open while thoughtfully positioning design elements within a home avoids wasted space.

“We are a small team, so we build strong bonds with our clients,” Rieger says. Selections Manager Kirsten Waverek assists clients in selecting each detail that will be

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↑ New homeowners will enjoy large islands with ample seating and storage space, a handy sink and crystal clear-glass pendant lights.

utilized in their new home. From flooring and light fixtures to paint colors, hardware, plumbing and appliances, Waverek takes the stress out of shopping for all the details associated with homebuilding and keeps initial budgets on track. Project Manager Elliot Steinbrink meets with clients before construction is underway and oversees the entire homebuilding process from start to completion.

Rieger's best advice for potential homebuyers is to honestly communicate with each other as well as with their builder. "Decide upon an accurate budget, discuss your wants and needs and keep alternatives and best solutions in mind for your family," she advises.

Rieger realizes from personal experience that building a home is both a personal and emotional process. "It's so gratifying to have past clients proudly invite you back to see their furnished home," she concludes. "It is always exciting to see a homeowner's vision become a reality and know you've been a part of creating that dream. In the process, the reward comes when relationships are formed and friendships are developed." ❁

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## INGREDIENTS



# Butter Beauty

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN FERRAGUT

Without butter, there would be no croissants, no tenderness of piecrust or the melt-on-your-tongue sensation of a simple butter cookie. Butter renders tough meat succulent, and most humbly, a smear on toast will comfort your soul. Butter has had a colored history, from peasant food to its coveted demand in 19th-century France. Put simply, butter is pure and good. It is not only an ingredient but also a tool used to elevate food and flavor. Julia Child said, "Everything in moderation, including moderation." My mother taught me the same thing, and as a result, my butter dish is always accessible.

The earliest form of butter came from sheep or goat milk. Archaeologists have evidence of milk fat in containers dated from the Stone Age, about 6500 B.C. It wasn't until 2500 B.C. that cows'

milk made a presence in Sumerian tablets in Mesopotamia. Because it spoiled too quickly in the warm heat of the Mediterranean, the Greeks and Romans considered butter to be food of the barbarians, and those who ate it were deemed "butter-eaters." Pliny the Elder wrote, "The most delicate of food among barbarous nations," illustrating the peasant nature of an ingredient of luxurious potential. The cooler climate of northern Europe allowed for the storage and success of butter as a staple. Scandinavia has the oldest tradition of butter trade and export dating back to the 12th century. A Dutch proverb states, "Eat butter first, eat butter last, and live till a hundred years be passed." Still thought of as a peasant food, butter was very common during the Middle Ages. It wasn't

until the 16th century that butter was accepted by the upper class in greater Europe. This was largely due to the acceptance of butter consumption by the Roman Catholic Church during Lent. This was the catalyst for the creation of the blasphemous margarine. In France, known for its butter during the 19th century in Normandy and Brittany, butter was in such demand that Napoleon III offered prize money to a scientist who could create a substitute. And so was the birth of margarine by Swedish engineer Carl Gustaf Patrik de Laval, yet it could never replace the irreplaceable.

I tried my hand at making homemade butter, an experience and process worthy of both flavor and self-satisfaction. The process itself was simple, despite my not knowing what to expect. After minutes of beating with little noticeable change, I walked away from my stand mixer for a moment, and suddenly I heard a sloshy-liquid sound. In short, the beating was breaking down the emulsifying membrane, and the solids were beginning to form. And there it was—homemade butter in a pool of pure buttermilk. As a result, making homemade butter creates this additional bonus. The milk proteins break down during the churning, and what is left is the pleasant acidity of buttermilk. Do not waste this. I used the tangy leftovers to make buttermilk scones with orange and currants. You can use the aftermath of buttermilk for pancakes, biscuits or the classic buttermilk chicken.

Butter is known as a luxury, but to use it in moderation for daily cooking and baking is a kitchen imperative. A staple for flavor, texture and a bit of indulgence, butter holds its place in both history and the culinary worlds. It spreads from pedestrian beginnings to smooth pats of luxury. James Beard, American chef and namesake of the James Beard Award, wrote, "Good bread is the most fundamentally satisfying of all foods, and good bread with fresh butter, the greatest of feasts." At the end of the day, simply enjoying bread and fresh, natural butter satisfies us all.

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**BUTTER**

Yield: 2 cups butter and 4 cups buttermilk

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 6 cups fresh heavy cream
- 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt

**DIRECTIONS:**

Transfer cream to bowl of 5-quart electric stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment. Tightly cover top of bowl and mixer with plastic wrap. Beat cream at moderately high speed until it holds soft peaks, 10 to 12 minutes. Increase speed to high and beat until mixture separates into thick, pale-yellow butter and thin, liquid buttermilk, about 5 minutes more.

Strain mixture through colander into large bowl. Using hands, vigorously knead butter in colander, squeezing out remaining buttermilk, until dense and creamy, about 5 minutes.

Transfer butter to large bowl, reserving buttermilk. Using hands, knead salt into butter. Roll into logs and wrap in plastic wrap or transfer to airtight container and refrigerate. Butter will keep up to 1 week refrigerated or 1 month frozen. Strain buttermilk through fine-mesh sieve; then cover and refrigerate up to 1 week. \*

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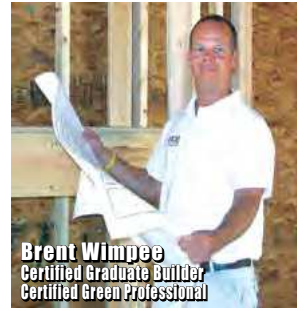
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