

Survey tracks design trends

By Associated Designs

When it comes to what people want in their dream homes, some preferences remain remarkably constant, while others shift incrementally over time.

That pattern emerged as clearly as ever when the staff at Associated Designs tallied results of the 2003 Homes from the Heart Survey. Readers nationwide participated by noting their preferences on survey forms published early this year in newspapers like this one, and sending them in to be counted.

A whopping 90 percent or more wanted a fireplace, pantry, and master suite walk-in closet, plus garage storage space. Almost as many asked for a main floor master suite, and deck/patio. Close to 80 percent requested that the laundry room be near the kitchen.

The 2000-3000 square foot home was most desired this year, with 1500-2000 square foot a close second. (Many percentages don't add up to 100 percent, because some people mark two or more.) Sixty percent asked for a single story home, and nearly half wanted a basement.

As for exterior styles, contemporary and country homes each won about 30 percent of the votes, while Craftsman came in a very close third. The Craftsman style has slowly edged up over recent years.

About 70 percent wanted the master suite isolated from other bedrooms, and a breakfast nook in the kitchen. More than half wanted a kitchen open to the family room, adjacent to the garage and outfitted with an eating bar.

Many readers included sketches and comments along with their survey forms. Our favorite was the woman from Maine who said, "We love your designs. This is my favorite newspaper day of the week."

We hope you feel the same!

HOMES *from the* HEART 2003 SURVEY RESULTS

Type of Home

Size of Home:
(in square feet)
12% less than 1500
34% 1500-2000
39% 2000-3000
19% 3000 and up

Number of Floors:
60% 1 story
42% 2 stories
49% Basement
12% Wheelchair Accessible

Budget: \$282,000

Exterior Style:
32% Contemporary
30% Country
20% Ranch
1% Mediterranean
2% Colonial
1% Victorian
4% Tudor
27% Craftsman
11% Other

Exterior Material:
44% Wood
47% Brick/Stone
8% Stucco
18% Vinyl/Aluminum
4% Other

Master Suite

Best Location:
70% Isolated from Other Bedrooms
27% Adjacent to Other Bedrooms
88% Main Floor
10% Upper Floor

Suite Features:
54% Outside Access
40% Sitting Room
98% Walk-in Closet
4% Other

Kitchen

General Features:
56% Adjacent to Garage
56% Open to Family Room
69% Breakfast Nook
6% Other

Special Features:
44% Island
54% Eating Bar
34% Appliance Center
22% Garden Window
43% Desk
94% Pantry
45% Double Oven
40% Vegetable Sink
19% Trash Compactor
13% Other

Living Areas

In addition to the kitchen I would like the following rooms in my home:
Number of Bedrooms: 3.1
Number of Baths: 2.2
48% Formal Entry
41% Formal Living
49% Formal Dining
68% Great Room (Open Living/Dining/Kitchen)
38% Family Room
19% Media Room
26% Recreation Room
18% Guest Suite
36% Office
38% Den/Library
18% Sunroom
10% Other

Garage

Number of Cars: 2.2
32% RV Parking
47% Shop
93% Storage

Utility

78% Adjacent to Kitchen/Garage
22% Adjacent to Bedrooms
2% In Garage or Basement

Extras

Exterior:
46% Front Porch
88% Deck/Patio
41% Screened Porch
18% Courtyard
12% Other

Interior:
92% Fireplace
12% Woodstove
59% Vaulted Ceilings
46% Skylights
44% Computer Center
23% Wet/Service Bar
17% Swimming Pool
15% Other

Respondents' Households

Number of People: 3.7
Average Age: 41

Homebuilding Plans

Do you plan to build a home?
Yes: **81%** No: 19%

"Visitability" means making a home wheelchair accessible for visitors. Would you be willing to make minor design compromises to achieve visitability?
Yes: **70%** No: 11%