

LUXURY HOMES

2015 HOUSE REVIEW THEMES

- MAY Outdoor Living Spaces
- JUNE Kitchens
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- AUGUST Starter Homes
- SEPTEMBER Revitalizing Old Plans
- OCTOBER Owner's Baths
- NOVEMBER Infill Homes
- DECEMBER Backyard Homes

Increased emphasis on great kitchens and informal gathering areas define top-tier homes

By Larry W. Garnett, FAIBD, House Review Lead Designer

When we think about luxury homes, the derogatory term “McMansion” often comes to mind. While super-sized homes always seem to be in demand regardless of the overall economy, we’re now seeing an increase in large homes that emphasize informal spaces and thoughtful design. The pretentiousness of the McMansion is being replaced with practical and functional floor plans filled with top-of-the-line kitchen appliances, family-friendly entertainment areas, and showcase garages. Our design team has responded this month with a selection of luxurious homes that ranges from a Craftsman-inspired traditional design to a sleek contemporary concept. As always, we welcome your comments.

THE SOMERVELL

DESIGNER

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PLAN SIZE

Living area: 4,075 sf



Although our clients wanted an extremely luxurious home with top-of-the-line products and details, they also requested a functional and sustainable design. Along with fine craftsmanship and materials, there is also an elaborate rainwater collection system, solar panels, and a wind power generator. Adjacent to the magnificent outdoor living area and pool is a vegetable garden and workshop. The three-car garage offers an expansive storage area above.

- A** Secluded owner's suite with sitting area
- B** Study features coffered ceiling, glass display cases, and work area
- C** Arts and crafts studio
- D** Two guest bedrooms with private baths
- E** Greenhouse
- F** Shop with solar panels on roof
- G** Expansive outdoor living area overlooks pool
- H** Rainwater collection and underground cistern
- I** Wind power generator

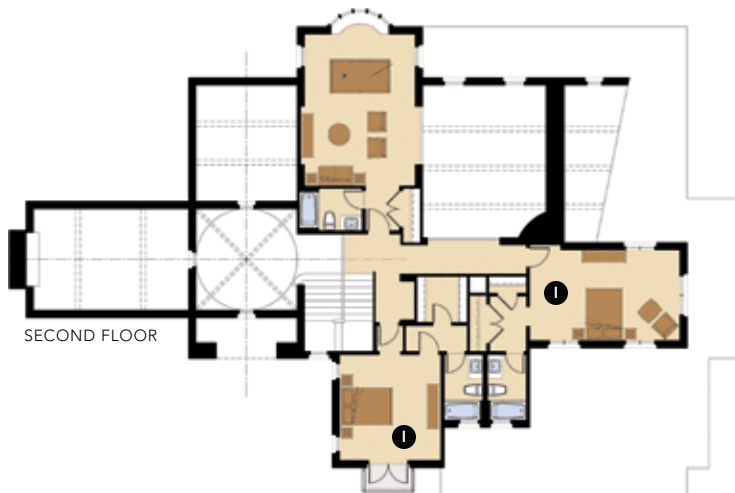
THE MONTERRA

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Living area: 5,200 sf
 Width: 100 ft
 Depth: 65 ft



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

This compact, high-end home appeals to a wide range of buyers, with a ground-floor master bedroom that works for empty nesters (as well as families with older children). Bedroom suites maximize privacy for teenagers, guests, or bounce-back kids. A formal entertaining wing is centered on a foyer tower; formal rooms open out onto a terrace for entertaining when the weather is good. Flex rooms are placed on both levels of the house: On the first floor is a study or home office that could also be used for hobbies, exercise, or as a fifth bedroom, and on the second level is a game room overlooking the family room that could also be a bedroom suite. The house maximizes cross-ventilation and was designed to take advantage of a temperate climate.

- Ⓐ Foyer tower has views in three directions and houses the staircase to the second floor
- Ⓑ Living room is centered by a massive fireplace and has views that open on either side to the yard and terrace
- Ⓒ Terrace ties living and dining areas together
- Ⓓ Double-height dining room features exposed trusses
- Ⓔ A two-island kitchen anchors the family room and dining area
- Ⓕ Master suite is secluded, with access to the veranda
- Ⓖ Master vestibule preserves privacy
- Ⓗ First-floor flex room can have multiple uses
- Ⓘ Each bedroom suite has a private bath

[HOUSE REVIEW]

design

MODERN CUSTOM HOME

ARCHITECT

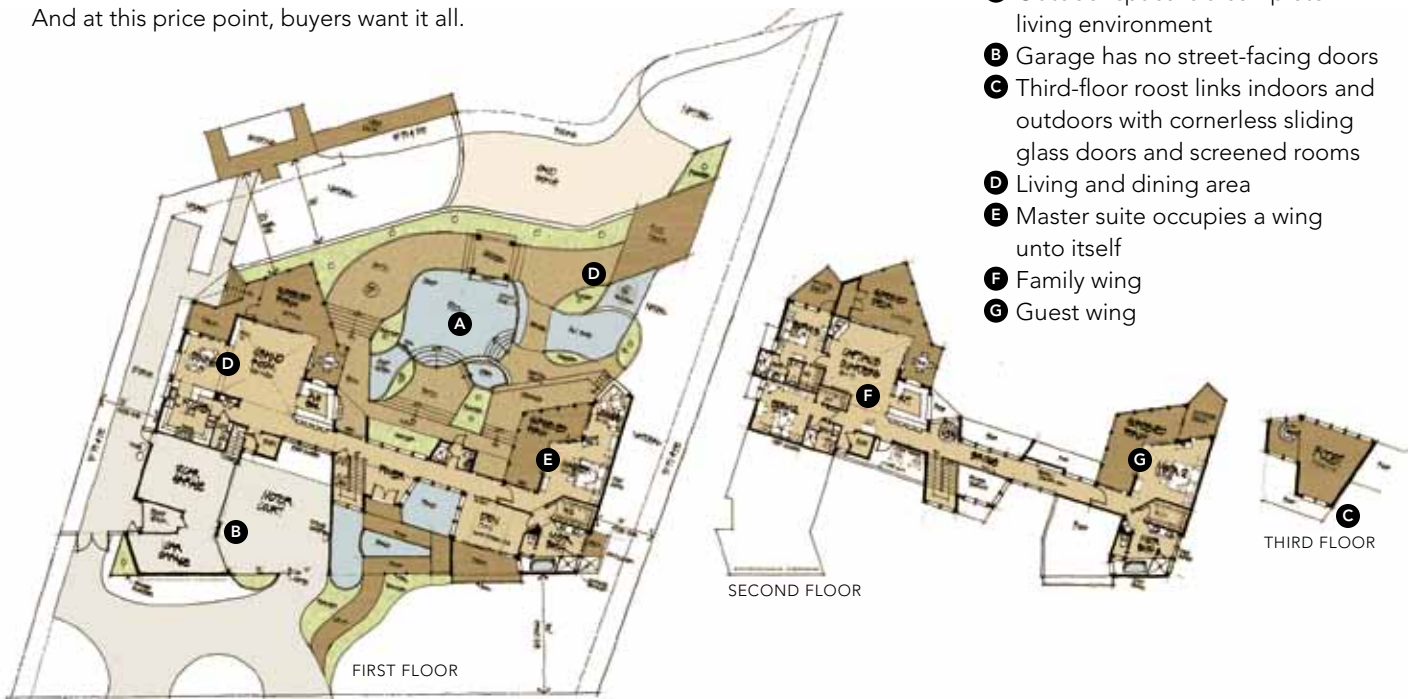
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PLAN SIZE

Living area: 4,867 sf



Today's luxury market is filled with one-of-a-kind custom homes. Tear-down lots in prime locations are highly sought after. This lot boasted a great view and we oriented the house accordingly, with clean, modern lines that have widespread appeal. Some of the must-haves in a Florida luxury home like this one include a resort-like outdoor environment and floor-to-ceiling glass windows that take full advantage of the view. On the first floor, the home is divided between the living wing and the master wing; on the second floor is a family wing and a guest wing. The layout ensures privacy for all. And at this price point, buyers want it all.



TREVI AT ORCHARD HILLS

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Living area: 5,193 sf
 Width: 60 ft
 Depth: 83 ft

- A** Atrium court offers access to detached guest quarters
- B** Ample great room fits a dining table for 10, seating for large gatherings, and transitions to the outdoors
- C** The California room is a flexible, transparent space for sitting or eating
- D** Kitchen has a large island, wine storage, and a pantry
- E** A home room, off the garage, is a drop zone for family use
- F** Modeled as a pantry and wine storage room, the ancillary space off the kitchen can serve several different uses
- G** A generously scaled bonus room allows the family to spend time together
- H** The master suite, with a luxurious bathroom, dressing room, exercise room, and oversize walk-in closet, has a private entry
- I** The detached guest suite includes a sitting area with a TV and kitchenette; the bedroom has a private bath and walk-in closet

Trevi at Orchard Hills is a new 37-unit neighborhood of luxury semi-custom, single-family-detached residences targeting a broad range of buyers within an affluent market. The Plan 2 model caps out at 6,500 square feet (including porch and garage), as did our semi-custom homes that were designed before the recession, yet it differs substantially from those designs. Trevi emphasizes informal rather than formal living areas. It offers significant covered outdoor space, uses large glass walls in place of French doors to create more seamless connections to exterior living, and provides generously sized guest suites. While hand-crafted exterior detailing recalls the homes of southern France with details such as the stucco finish, stacked gabled roof forms, a barrel-tile roof, generous eaves, and segmented arches, the interiors reflect the contemporary or transitional design that's in demand today.



JAYDEN

ARCHITECT

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PLAN SIZE

Living area: 6,068 sf
Width: 114 ft
Depth: 82 ft



- A** Master suite is sequestered in the home's left wing
- B** Living room also serves as a reception area
- C** The great room opens to the kitchen—ideal for entertaining
- D** Lake entrance is a drop zone for towels, with a shower for rinsing off
- E** Family entrance has lockers, cubbies, benches, and storage
- F** A formal dining room is set off the grand hall
- G** Wine cellar provides the perfect temperature for wine storage
- H** The ample secondary bedrooms are not oversized but all have plenty of storage with walk-in closets
- I** The upper family room provides additional space for more casual activities
- J** En suite arrangements in all bedrooms provide luxurious guest quarters



With the popularity of TV shows such as *Downton Abbey*, *Mr. Selfridge*, and other period dramas, the idea of domesticity is shifting toward luxury homes with emphasis on warm, generous spaces and a degree of formal entertaining. But, unlike in those previous periods, today's definition of luxury incorporates more manageably sized and mostly servant-free environments. Galleries, motor courts, and a grand staircase are still part of that luxury, but they're not pretentious. This month's example is a legacy home designed to host family gatherings for generations to come without the enormous expense of maintaining a castle like Highclere (the actual estate where *Downton Abbey* is shot). Designing to live, and not just to impress, is the way forward for luxury homes.