

## Intelligent home design

by Kurt Faust

It is universal that no matter the size of the kitchen, it must have a good layout. Not only does it want to look good, but it must function well too. A smart kitchen has the refrigerator, sink and stove in a proper triangle. It has the food-prep and the dish-cleaning areas strategically placed. Storage for dishes and food is plentiful and is in convenient locations.

With the cost of land and the cost of materials and energy sky rocketing, less is more when it comes to architectural design. The trend is to design what feels like more space with less actual square footage. This is done with intelligent design.

The program for a large custom home is often a spacious living/dining/kitchen area, some kind of breakfast room or den, the master suite, two guest bedrooms with one or two baths, the powder, the formal entry and the owner's entry near the garage, sometimes an office or other auxiliary room, the laundry, the closets and other storage areas. In the recent past this was taking up 4,000 square feet, but are now fitting this program into a much smaller foot-print.

The mantra is reduce the hallways, reduce the wasted space, reduce dead space and, to a certain extent, reduce opulent space. The trick is to reduce the square footage without reducing the appeal or function. In order to accomplish this you must examine your lifestyle and assess your needs. How much space do you really need? Where in your home do you really live?

One of the keys to providing a smaller home that functions like a larger home is to understand how big each space must be. A bedroom needs certain space for the bed, end tables, dressers and such, but it can be smaller if the dressers are in the closet. A living room must have its seating arrangement, but it can be smaller if it does not also need to accommodate pass-through foot traffic.

Another key is providing for one space to share space with another. For instance, the entry could share space with the living room to make it seem bigger or it could be a connecting hallway between two wings of the house. A family room could double as an office space and also handle guest overflow.

A bar top or kitchen counter could serve as the informal eating space, eliminating the need for a breakfast nook and providing a place for socializing with the cook. Outdoor spaces, when utilized with the right doors and windows, can extend the indoor spaces. A master suite can be more comfortable if it is intimate and cozy rather than cavernous.

Pay special attention to the details. Built-ins, tile trim, wood, stone, niches and other such details give the home character. Try to incorporate a long line of sight to a view of something interesting, a distant window or a skylight at the end of a hall.

With the baby boomers maturing and their children moving out, the market is changing. A house is an extension of the lifestyle of those living in it. Many people are now rethinking their lifestyle. More and more are becoming environmentally conscious and, in the higher end, reconsidering conspicuous consumption. Not to mention it is a great way to save money.

Contact Kurt Faust:

Cell: 505.780.1157

[www.tierraconceptssantafe.com](http://www.tierraconceptssantafe.com)