

At Home with QMA

SUMMER 2008

Photo: By James F. Wilson/Tradewinds Show Home



INSIDE *Out*

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www.QMAdesignbuild.com

TELEPHONE: 609-822-4949

FAX: 609-822-4429

Designing for Vacation and Year-Round Homes

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QMA has a long history of designing, remodeling, and building award-winning vacation homes and homes for year-round residents. There are important differences in the way people use vacation homes and year-round homes that we take into consideration during the project's design. Here are a few differences:

Year-Round Residences

When designing a home to be used year-round, planning for ample personal space is very important. Most family members desire quiet private spaces for studying, reading, hobbies, relaxing, and enjoying some solitude. Of course, common areas in year-round homes are also important for entertaining family and friends but, for most year-round homes, the importance of personal space is high. Despite

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QMA is the winner of numerous regional and national awards including:



INSIDE *Out*

Since the majority of us spend our days indoors, we long to relax outside in the evenings and on weekends. There is something at once soothing and rejuvenating in the aroma of fresh air and in the expansiveness that lies beyond our four walls.

Creating outdoor living spaces is one of today's hottest building trends. Outdoor living rooms are becoming more elaborate, with flat panel TVs, fire pits and sophisticated water features. Outdoor kitchens are moving from being a luxury concept to mainstream reality, as people are placing refrigerators and sinks alongside the ubiquitous grill.

The trend is rapidly evolving into a quest to completely blur the distinction between indoors and outdoors. The outdoors truly is becoming an extension of the home.

This approach is dramatically displayed by the Tradewinds Show Home from the 2008 International Builders Show. The pool courtyard, nestled within a U-shaped floor plan, is flanked on both sides by 30-foot retractable glass walls. When the two spans are folded back entirely, boundaries seem to vanish—giving the home an amazing transparency. Flooded with natural light, the main kitchen and dining area melds with the courtyard to become a refreshing family oasis or the perfect party zone.

The party continues a couple of steps down at the far end of the courtyard. An outdoor kitchen, complete with grill and rotisserie, is neatly tucked into the space. The fireplace, the rotating flat



Photo: By James F. Wilson/Tradewinds Show Home

panel TV installed above, and the comfortable seating are an open invitation to linger. This room is protected from severe weather by a roof overhead and an extensive wall of cypress shutters that can be closed off to the outside. Opening the shutters provides delightful lake views and gentle breezes that flow through the area and into the central courtyard beyond.

The master suite accesses the pool courtyard through the other set of retractable glass walls. As water softly ripples over the coral stone spa backdrop and the fire pots infuse the night with a warm glow, the pool serves as a calming influence in the evening—promoting relaxation and sleep. This is a home that finds a way to be visually and physically connected to the outside at every turn and at all times of the day.



Photo: By James F. Wilson/Tradewinds Show Home

Going **UP**

Not too long ago, a home elevator was a rarity purchased primarily by homeowners with mobility challenges. That is rapidly changing, concurrent with the increasing shift toward denser-packed, multi-level dwellings. Young affluent professionals appreciate the status and convenience that a private elevator provides. Baby boomers, with a look to the future, additionally view an elevator as insurance that they will be able to remain in their homes for the next few decades. The surge in demand has brought installation costs down to an amount similar to that of an average kitchen remodel.

Vanity of Vanities



Photos: Courtesy of Deco Lav, Inc. (www.decolav.com)

(far right) A cherry-finished classic wood vanity with two storage drawers and one faux drawer.

An Asian-inspired wood vessel stand in an espresso finish with a black granite top.

The decorative furniture look is big in bathrooms today. It gives you an opportunity to break away from the humdrum and make a lively personal statement. Various issues may arise, however, when your Great-grandmother's sideboard is retrofitted into a double-sink vanity. The vanity looks fabulous to begin with, but the wood finish may eventually be destroyed by moisture. The antique sideboard was not originally created for bathroom use.

The exciting news is that furniture manufacturers are now designing elegant furniture-style vanities specifically for bathrooms. The wood is properly sealed, the pieces are designed with ventilation, and they are sized to fit standard US plumbing configurations. Some units even may be purchased

without tops so you can choose your own granite or solid-surface.

The styling and wood tones of decorative bath vanities closely follow the trends in furniture casegoods. The emphasis currently is on a sleek profile with an interesting shape and minimal decorative elements. If you are craving an antique look, however, traditional styling is always available.

Vanity hardware can also be negatively affected by moisture, so again it is important to select hardware specifically manufactured for bathroom use. Elegant glass hardware or powder-coated metal finishes are popular right now and can lend your vanity a casegoods look.

Stone is still the bestseller for vanity tops, but glass, concrete, wood and faux finishes are coming on strong. And gleaming stainless steel is finally moving out of the kitchen and creating a contemporary look in the bathroom.

Protect the high quality finish of your bathroom vanity from exposure to strong sunlight or heat outlets. Be sure to wipe spilled liquids from the surface along the grain pattern of the wood. Frequent dusting will remove abrasive dust build-up. Following these simple guidelines will keep your furniture-style vanity looking fantastic for years to come.

Retrofitting an elevator, as opposed to new home construction, has often been complicated by the fact that the space required for installation may not be easily located within an existing home's footprint. If the surrounding property provides space for an addition, the simplest option could be to attach the elevator shaft to the side of the house.

If that isn't possible, the necessary space may be found by creatively rearranging the existing interior layout. Keep in mind that due to fire regulations, it is not permissible to remove a stairway and replace it with an elevator if the stairway is the only escape route. A more feasible option would be to utilize a second-floor closet (or another small room) that is stacked directly above a closet on the first floor.

ThyssenKrupp offers a home elevator called the Rise, which is specifically designed for a remodel in that it requires neither a separate machine room nor a pit. The drive system in this case is mounted in the elevator shaft, which may result in a less quiet ride, but greatly saves on space.



Photo: Courtesy of ThyssenKrupp Access (www.kataccess.com)

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and Year-Round Homes

Q|M|A

QMA Design+Build, LLC

5000 Boardwalk, Suite 2

Design+Build

Ventnor, NJ 08406

Designed for Living, Built for Life

Inside Out

Vanity of Vanities

Going Up

Architecture, Design+Build Custom Homes and Remodeling

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the recent trend towards more casual living, most of our clients still prefer their year-round homes to have formal dining and living rooms. Also there usually is more of an emphasis on permitting the great room and kitchen spaces to open up onto the back yard.

Vacation Homes

Vacation-home owners in our area enjoy homes where their families and friends can come to spend time with each other. Personal spaces in these homes, such as bedrooms, are often smaller and more numerous to allow for more guests than most year-round homes. Communal areas such as great rooms are made larger to better accommodate more people and more socializing than in typical primary residences. Kitchens are designed with the knowledge that, in vacation homes, these



rooms are as much about socializing as they are about cooking. For outside spaces, instead of larger yards, there is often more of an emphasis on having large and sometimes multiple decks to provide outdoor areas to enjoy the weather.



Maintenance

While most homeowners want their home to be low-maintenance, it is often a higher priority in vacation homes. Vacation homes often go for long periods without occupants and nobody wants to spend his or her limited time at the shore dealing with home maintenance.

