

Elegant and Efficient

Less is more as homeowners seek higher quality in smaller spaces.

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SPECIAL TO THE CONNECTION

Today's homeowners are much more informed and educated about what they want in a home. Travel, home shows, the internet and a greater focus on the importance of transforming a house into a home, have led homeowners to be very particular about what renovations they do and how they go about them.

No longer are people limited to cookie-cutter plans from a builder selecting little more than the color of the tile or carpets. Instead today's homeowners have embraced the idea of actively participating in determining customized solutions that will best suit their family's needs, wants and lifestyle.

Here are remodeling trends that BOWA Builders predicts for 2011.



This Great Falls renovation reconfigured existing space to provide a family and entertainment friendly space in the family room and kitchen.

the existing homes in our area were not designed for the way we live today. Small, compartmented rooms, a kitchen that is meant to be occupied by two or three people at most and formal rooms that separate the family from each other are no longer the types of spaces families' desire. As a result today's home remodeling projects often focus on reconfiguring, opening up and otherwise improving existing spaces to better suit the way today's families live, play and entertain. Because many BOWA clients lead hectic schedules outside of the home, they continue to trend toward remodeling projects that create highly usable, comfortable living spaces in their home. Families want practical and appropriate spaces in their home retreats because they treasure their time there.

KITCHENS - TRANSFORMATION BY DESIGN Kitchens are the social center of our homes and need to accommodate a myriad of uses. While sometimes the solution is adding square footage, particularly in homes built 30 or more years ago, frequently the solution lies in rethinking the layout and improving the connection to surrounding spaces, both interior and exterior. In



A sophisticated media room renovation in McLean allows for much more than viewing movies.

one BOWA project, the wall separating the formal dining room from the kitchen was removed completely, creating a spacious casual kitchen. The new expanded eating area was a much improved use of the families existing space, and is now consistent with their lifestyle and priorities.

THEATERS - AS LIVING SPACES Media rooms have become more and more prevalent as families look for ways to incorporate the latest technology into their homes and lives. While these rooms began as home theaters they are evolving to fit many more aspects of family life. No longer is their sole purpose to showcase a movie while the audience sits quietly in the dark in rows of comfortable seating. Incorporating theater seating with lounge seating and counter space provides an opportunity to socialize with friends during the game or gather the family on a weekday evening. After a recent BOWA renovation, the theater is now used each evening as the family relaxes together with their own focus or project.

REPEAT REMODELERS Require

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Josh Baker, president of BOWA Builders.

2011 Trends

PROJECTS - SMALLER AND BETTER The trend to smaller, higher quality spaces continues as many local residents discover that what they need is not more space, but better space. Often when talking with clients about possible projects we find that making a home larger is not the answer to their concerns. The problem is the bulk of

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ments for homes change as the family grows and matures. Often what worked wonderfully when a couple is starting out with small children is no longer the best option as everyone gets older and schedules, hobbies and family dynamics evolve. Many families find that they decide to complete multiple projects during the life of the home. In other cases it just makes sense to phase projects to minimize interruption or spread the costs over time. Year after year, a number of BOWA clients return to us ready to take on the next phase of their home remodeling projects. For one local family, BOWA recently completed its fifth project including a family room expansion, a master suite addition and garage, a guest suite renovation, kids' bath renovations, and an exterior make-over.

HIGH PERFORMANCE HOMES For some homeowners the desire to be "green" and minimize

their impact on the environment will drive them to investigate new available options, such as high-efficiency windows. For others it is the desire to reduce the costs of maintaining a home. For still others it is to reduce the contaminants that may exist in our homes. Today's answers to these issues can be flaunted in the design of a renovation or seamlessly incorporated into a home without compromising the integrity of the design. Whatever the goal, we recommend to all BOWA clients that they consider having an energy audit completed on their home before undergoing any renovations. The resulting report will pinpoint many small changes that can drastically improve a home's performance. Often these items can be incorporated into the planned renovation without driving substantial cost increases. These can include adding insulation in unseen gaps in the home envelope, changing the means of heating water or updating out-moded appliances and equipment.

For more, see www.bowa.com.