

THE MAPLE HOUSE SHOW HOME



BUILDING DREAMS

For one family, taking a concept and teaming up with a talented group of experts led to the creation of a stunning show home

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THE MAPLE HOUSE

— Showhome —

IT TAKES VISION – AND A LOT OF courage – to set your sights on a virtually impossible to develop piece of property and attempt to turn it into your dream home. But for David and Julie Bell, it's the challenge that makes a project interesting and ultimately, rewarding.

So when they told their sons, Jeremy and Nigel that they had bought a rather unwieldy piece of land on a giant hill in Hopkins Landing in Gibsons, they weren't the least bit surprised.

"One of the first houses that my family built was in the early 1990s on a rock bluff in Halfmoon Bay," recalls Jeremy, project manager for Vancouver flooring and renovation specialist Renocon. "We ended up tying the house into the bluff using footings and putting it on stilts."

The Bells' latest project involved a property once again situated on steep terrain, albeit with a stunning view of the water and the North Shore mountains. With the help of Jeremy, who served as general contractor, they put their creative juices to work figuring out how to make the impossible possible. "Access in particular was a huge challenge, so we ended up sharing the easement with our neighbour, who had easier accessibility," says Jeremy. "By doing so, we were able to put half of our house's driveway on our neighbours' property and half on ours."

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With the initial hurdle solved, the family set to work on determining the ideal location for the home. What stood in the way, however, were two beautiful maple trees. It was a tough decision to cut the trees down, and the family was determined to repurpose the beautiful wood, so they decided to mill it into tongue-and-groove flooring and as well as some additional accent pieces such as the fireplace mantel.

“This was no easy task,” recalls Jeremy. “I can remember hauling every single piece of it three times before finally bringing it into the house and literally beating each one into place. But it was worth it. You can’t buy that look, with all of the beautiful rippling that naturally occurs in maple. And because I was building this for my parents, I took extra care to position all of the particularly nice pieces in locations where they were shown off to the fullest.”

For the overall structure of the house, the Bells retrofitted a timber frame to the main structure that they had purchased from Linwood Custom Homes. “It is of panellized construction, so all of the walls are pre-framed and panelled with numbers that correspond with the plan,” explains Jeremy. There was another incentive to use this type of pre-packaged construction material. “These types of homes generate a very low per cent of building waste material,” he says.

The infrastructure was no easy task, as they were dealing with a 22 per cent slope and a roughed-in driveway. It took excavators and tow trucks many gruelling hours to haul all of the concrete, building materials

Bravo Floors
1/3s



Julina Tile
1/3s

and landscaping up the steep terrain; Berry Patch used its expertise on the challenging landscape.

The interior of the three-bedroom house, designed by Dara Wyton Design (all furniture is from Kerns Furniture) is open and airy, with enough natural elements (including the gorgeous maple floors and wool carpet from Bravo Floors) to make it charmingly rustic without compromising the modern touches that make it highly livable. A prime example is the kitchen, a warm and inviting space with plenty of unique features. The kitchen bar has a raised-glass counter inspired by a similar design Jeremy had seen in a magazine. "I came up with my own design and the professionals tweaked it to make it work. It's a great feature because guests have someplace to sit while mingling with the person preparing the meals."

The Bells chose cinnamon-stained alder for the European-style flip up cabinetry from Burnaby-based Innova Kitchens and Bath. Other great touches to this particular space include the beautiful Golden Harmony granite countertops, installed by local specialist Kaz Kosiba. "Kaz helped me a lot when it came to making decisions about the kitchen," says Jeremy. Rather than choosing traditional tiling for the backsplash behind the range, Kaz suggested using granite, creating a look that enhances the natural tones of the room. This



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particular area also contains another smart feature – a pot filler tap that extends over the stove so that you can fill your pasta pot without having to carry it from the kitchen sink.

The tile found in the rest of the kitchen is from Julian Tile, quartzite sandstone that Bell loved so much he ended up using on the exterior deck as well. “Each tile, with its individual colours and veining, is a piece of artwork,” he says. The designer series sinks were courtesy of Kindred, and the Taju faucets are from Universal Plumbing. Bell admits opting for high-end Viking appliances took some convincing. “For my mother to spend that much money on appliances was like pulling teeth, but at the end of the day, she was very glad she made that decision.” The natural linen and Nordic grey wall colour, chosen with help of a colour consultant from Benjamin Moore’s Sechelt

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Dara Wyton
1/3 v



PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

“I would never have chosen red with green trim for the exterior – but it works very well.”

store (Paul’s Paint), perfectly complement the natural tones in this room.

“Lynn worked closely with me in choosing all of the colours for the house,” says Bell. He admits that some of the suggestions weren’t exactly what he had in mind, but says they ended up being the perfect choices. “I would never have chosen red with green trim for the exterior – but it works very well.”

The warm earth tones in the kitchen are echoed throughout The Maple House, with customized additions such as the plaster faux finishing by Ashler and Kluer found in the entryway. This adds to its distinctiveness. The bathroom, with Muslin-coloured walls, features a Davenport Tan backdrop for the alder wood cabinets, Tropical Brown granite counter, and striking raised Kohler sinks. “At that time, I had never seen these sinks anywhere, but I have since found them in a number of high-end restaurants in Vancouver,” says Bell. Adding to the luxurious feel of the bathrooms are heated porcelain floors, a Grohe Aquatower 3000 shower system in the main bathroom from Robinson Lighting and Bath Centre, and a granite-topped Maax Living Series soaker tub in the ensuite.

Lighting was a huge consideration for the Bells, who painstakingly chose each piece,

The Barr Patch
1/3 v



PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Linwood 1/3 v



including the Tech Lighting pendants over the breakfast bar. “I loved this lighting because the shades reminded me of crystallized sap,” says Jeremy. Some decisions were easier than others: the great room, for example, with its exposed ceilings, presented more of a challenge. “We ended up having a lighting designer from Robinson Lighting come over and she had some great suggestions about what to use and where to use it,” he says.

The effort has clearly paid off – the lighting is one of the more striking features of the home, from the lighting in the great room to the staircase lighting to the Hubbardton Forge chandelier and “lily” sconce at the top of the stairs. “The lighting at night is especially stunning,” says Jeremy.

With The Maple House now completed, Bell and his family look forward to showing off the results of this somewhat challenging project to other would-be homebuilders who are planning to build their own dream home. “We hope to help people by referring them to the top experts and professionals in each area of building a home,” explains Jeremy. “We want to create one place for people to come to meet all of their home building needs.

The Bells are extremely proud of The Maple House, which Jeremy says was a true team effort. “It does help if you work together towards a common goal,” he says. “Past experience is an asset and it helps when your father is a building official, your brother is a carpenter and

your mother is dedicated to keeping everyone positive and on track during the tough times. It all comes down to team work.”

For more information on The Maple House Show Home, e-mail: info@themaplehouse.ca or visit www.themaplehouse.ca. ■

This promotional feature was prepared for The Maple House by BC Home magazine. Writer: Jodie Warren. For information contact BC Home account manager Robin Carkett at 604-473-0362. E-mail: rcarkett@canadawide.com



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