

home design guide

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best design value

Planning a custom home or remodel? Are you getting the best possible design value for your design budget?

Good design goes far beyond plan design and great design is achieved when you get the best value for every dollar you spend on a new home or remodel. A good home designer isn't just someone with the ability to draw a floor plan and elevation or someone capable of compiling a set of plans. Be sure you are getting the most benefit from the talent and experience of your carefully-chosen design professional.

You pay a designer for an end product - a custom design and set of plans - but realize that you are also paying for a service, one that includes experience, creativity, professional opinion and knowledge. Get the process started right with a comprehensive pre-design meeting with your design professional. He or she should initiate an interactive design discussion to understand your needs, and possibly spark consideration of things that you may not have even thought about. The results of this session will equip your designer with the tools they need to efficiently design to your needs and budget.

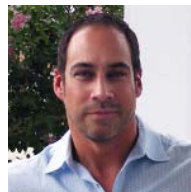
Match Game: Design Equals Budget

You may be working with a limited budget for a new home or remodel. Don't be trapped into thinking that all of it goes into construction labor and materials. Will specialty items, such as your desire for green materials, a pool or home automation, have an impact on your overall construction budget? Will you insist on a higher level of finishes or will there be any specialty construction? These things need to be factored into the cost, which ultimately affects the size of your plan and doing so will ensure a "right-sized" plan. Discuss these items with your designer early in the process during the initial meeting before the first draft is sketched. Leap into the design process with these considerations factored in; it is

better to know all of the components up front rather than discovering them later (which could lead to a potentially costly and time-consuming redesign).

Build a Qualified Team

A good designer will know when to share with you what is outside of his or her expertise and when to bring in the expertise of other professionals such as an interior designer, structural engineer or even lighting specialists. These professionals can review preliminary plans and make suggestions that may have an impact on your plan design. Your designer should schedule additional professional participation early enough in the design phase to incorporate their review comments before the plans go into the construction document phase.



Years of research in custom home design, remodeling and home building has led Tony Weremeichik, Principal of Canin Associates' Architectural Design Studio, to be a strong advocate for home buyers and home owners to get the best

design and construction value for their money. He leads clients and builders through a well-orchestrated design process that provides his clients with the utmost attention and creative design solutions. Tony can be reached at tweremeichik@canin.com or visit his company's website at www.canin.com.