

PHOTOGRAPHS: JUDITH WATTS. ARCHITECT: DUO DICKINSON. INTERIOR DESIGN: JOSEPH BOEHM. REGIONAL CONTRIBUTOR: BETSY HARRIS



by Steven Mumford
and Joseph Boehm

Small Wonder

A little house that lives large

For some, trophy homes and mini mansions are all the rage, but, old-fashioned as it may sound, we still believe that good things come in small packages. C'mon in. We'll show you the biggest small house you've ever seen.

Built in cooperation with Shamrock Builders, Indianapolis, Indiana, and the Portland Cement Association.



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Measuring just 1,830 square feet, this custom-built bundle of wonders proves that "more" isn't just the product of length times width. Size up the design with a careful eye and you'll see the techniques we used to make a smaller space live big.

First, we pumped up the volume with 17-foot-high vaulted ceilings to ease the squeeze. Then, we stretched the space horizontally by keeping all of the main living areas connected and open to one another. Finally, we added large, private patios in back for extra living space outdoors.

These aren't just tricks to fool the eye. By using the space economically we managed to fit in all of the basics—a full-service kitchen, a formal dining room, and a generous great-room—plus some unexpected surprises like a mud room and a sunny breakfast nook.



Hidden surprises abound. Underfloor is radiant-floor heating system will keep your toes toasty on cool days. And the exterior walls were built with an advanced insulated concrete wall system. (See page 144 for further details.)

Large windows keep the house attuned to its natural wooded surroundings. Transoms take advantage of the vertical space (left) while banks of French doors off the living room and master suite (below) offer access to large private patios. To order plans, see page 96.



ILLUSTRATION: CAROLYN COE



Sunlight spills into the kitchen from the window above the sink, while light maple cabinetry and the gray hues of the ceramic floor tiles help make the room feel warm and cozy. There's room for two to cook together, and maintenance is a cinch with convenient features such as solid-surface countertops, a full-height backsplash, and an integral counter sink.

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Eliminating rooms is the easiest way to reallocate space in smaller houses, and the formal dining room is often the first to go. But this plan makes no such sacrifice—serving up areas for both formal and informal dining.

To create an elegant and formal dining room in the middle of this open floor plan, architect Duo Dickinson designed an overhead structure to set the room's boundaries without walling it in. Step under the arched structure and you know you've entered a special space. A change in floor surfaces, from stained concrete to wool carpet, aids the transition.

Half-walls also help set the dining room apart from the living room and kitchen. Between the dining room and kitchen, the wall steps up to form a tall counter that can be used to shuttle food back and forth between the rooms. On the kitchen side (top), it features built-in appliance garages that provide extra counterop storage.



Adjoining the kitchen is a cozy nook that takes up little floor area but is designed to comfortably seat six. The egg-shaped table is clad with solid-surface material that matches the countertops, and a curved bank of tall casement windows ushers in daylight.



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Open living areas aside, this house isn't without private retreats. The master bedroom, for example, is practically a house within a house. Here, as in the main living spaces, tall windows with transoms, high ceilings, and easy access to the outdoors maximize the room's spacious feel.

Swing open the French doors and you'll find yourself on the master suite's private patio. It's a perfect place to jump-start the morning with a bath of summer-fresh air, or to wrap up the day as the sun and temperatures begin to fall.

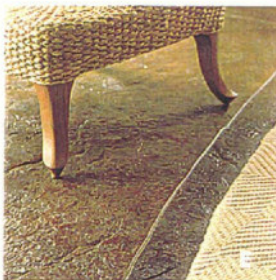
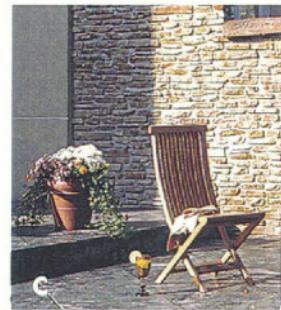
Since few people make whirlpool baths a part of their daily routine, we wasted convention down the drain and built a luxurious shower instead of a tub. The shower features a seat, a conventional massaging shower head, a personal hand-held sprayer, and four body jets that shoot soothing water from the sides. (There's a tub in the second bath for die-hard soakers.)



Using built-in furniture is another way to save space. In the guest bedroom (above) we chose a modular system that includes a fold-down wall bed. The room can be quickly converted into a home office.

Vanities in the master bath are set at 36 inches instead of the standard 30-inch height so you'll never have to stoop over the sink. We also chose under-mount sinks for their good looks and easy maintenance.

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A) If you could see through the maintenance-free synthetic stucco, you'd discover an advanced concrete wall system. Steel-reinforced polystyrene blocks were stacked to form the walls, then filled with concrete. The foam forms stay in place, adding insulating value and superior sound dampening qualities, while the concrete inside makes the structure exceptionally sturdy.

B) We used precast concrete architectural details, such as this exterior molding, to add custom touches to the home's classical architecture both inside and out.

C) Concrete was also used to mimic natural materials such as slate patio floors and the stone retaining walls. The floors were poured in place, then stamped with a pattern. After they dried, a penetrating chemical tint was added to match the color of the roof.


D) The thick wall system makes for 10-inch-deep window sills that can be used as shelves or plant ledges.

E) Inside, the entry floors are stained concrete. Underneath, a radiant-floor heating system chases off the chill.

Project contributors:

Cabinetry: UltraCraft.
Windows: Andersen Windows.
Furniture: Century. **Solid-Surface Material:** Avonite. **Appliances:** Whirlpool. **Tile:** TileCera. **Plumbing Supplies:** American Standard. **Radiant-Floor Heating:** HeatWay. **Entry Doors:** Peachtree. **Lighting:** Progress Lighting. **Carpet:** Karastan. **Built-In Furniture:** Techline. **Paint:** Sherwin-Williams. **Columns:** Stromberg's Architectural Products. **Roof:** Elk Corp. **Exterior Finish System:** Finestone.

Concrete product contributors:

Concrete: Indiana Ready Mixed Association/Portland Cement Association. **Precast Architectural Details:** Stone Legends. **Modular Masonry Fireplace:** Isokern. **Decorative Concrete Walls and Floors:** Increte Systems, Inc. 

Buying information, page 96