

YOUR UP-TO-DATE HOME

**SHAKESPEARE HOMES
DELIVERS CRAFTSMANSHIP IN
THEIR RENOVATIONS THAT ARE
IN STEP WITH YOUR LIFE NEEDS**

Life changes, and so should your home.

Whether you're welcoming a newborn or saying goodbye to your kids as they move away for university, what you need out of your home reflects the events in your life. That's where Shakespeare Homes and its president, Mark Cooper, come in — offering their services to select clients looking to build and renovate their homes since the 1990s. As they say, "To build or renovate, that is the question."

"We had looked at several potential companies to do this project, and at the end of the day, when we checked out Mark's work that he'd done in other places, we were very impressed," says John Smith, who hired Shakespeare Homes to renovate the main floor of his lavish home and wishes to remain anonymous. "The renovation created an open floor plan, which is well suited for entertaining family and guests for my sports-minded family. It has created a functional, spacious and comfortable atmosphere with maximum advantage of the water and downtown Vancouver view lines overlooking a putting green in the backyard."

According to Smith, the finished project exceeded his expectations. "Their staff, specialty trades and craftsmanship are of very high quality. They're extremely conscientious, professional, diligent and efficient," he says.

Q&A: MARK COOPER

The president of Shakespeare Homes talks home renovation trends, the various stages in a project and more.

What are some of the trends in design or installments in homes at the moment?

In terms of outdoor renovation: Incorporating large covered patios with skylights to bring in natural light to the area so you can still enjoy it even if it rains or it's too hot. Interior space: Bringing the family rooms closer to the kitchen, so your kids are closer and you're enjoying more family time. An open floor plan, taking down walls and creating more space is likely the most popular element.

What type of client is the best to work with?

Having a realistic budget is critical. Having an idea as to what their needs are and what the future holds for them. I always explain to clients, we design with a five-, 10- and 20-year plan.

Could you take me through the process and various stages from the first day when a client meets with you through to the finished project?

Initially, we go to the site to view the current plan, assessing the client's needs and wish list and getting a sense of what they already know. Some have it all figured out, some have no idea. Next, they meet our staff and specialty trades, and we see if they need assistance with the design team at our office. We review some past projects and, if the client is interested, also view several projects that are underway and at different stages, so they can get a sense of the type of work we're doing.

Renovating or rebuilding your home is a big investment. How do you think renovating can benefit a homeowner?

Quite often it comes down to location: Somebody really enjoys where they live, but isn't happy with their home. Our clients are often in two stages of their lives. Either their family dynamic is changing and they want to add space to accommodate an expanding family, or we have a lot of empty nesters, in which their kids are in university now and they're looking to renovate their home, which might have gone through harder times when they were raising their two or three kids. The other area of our expertise is in the high-end condominium market — the minimalistic lifestyle that's catching on, where people want to simplify their lives.

Shakespeare Home's website will be relaunching in the early fall.

For more information, call 604-988-2280 or visit » shakespearehomes.com

