

THE HOME FRONT



EMA PETER PHOTOGRAPHY

Bright, fun colours are used in the interior of the Galadriel residence, included on the White Rock Modern Home Tour. The home was designed by Iredale Group Architecture.

Looking inside modern homes

This year's residential architecture tours take in both Vancouver and White Rock

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SPECIAL TO THE SUN

Architectural tours are a great way to learn about a city you're visiting as well as the one you live in. For those with an interest in modern design, the Vancouver Modern Home Tour is happening Sept. 19, as part of Western Living Magazine's Design Week. This will be its third year and as it proved so popular last year, organizers have added an additional White Rock Modern Home Tour the following day, with five homes on each tour.

"It was one of the best tours of the year," says organizer Ken Shallcross. "We had over 500 visitors. On our first tour we had about 250, so we had double the attendance. The participants were lovely and the homes were amazing."

Modern Tours LLC was founded by James Leasure, in Austin, Texas in 2010, to introduce people to modern architecture in cities across the U.S. and Canada, with architects and designers who created the homes on site to chat to tour-goers.

In Vancouver, the five modern creations on the bill range from a "Cliffhanger" in North Vancouver to a 1,000-square-foot condo in the West End — the first time a condo has been included in the lineup.

"It's for a young couple just starting a family and facing the questions a lot of people are facing in Vancouver, which is, do we move outside of Vancouver to have the ... upbringing we grew up with or do we make it work in a condo in Vancouver?" says architect Allison Holden-Pope, principal at One SEED Architecture + Interior who designed the space.

"It was about trying to create a home in 1,000 square feet, which by European standards is not small, but by North American standards 1,000 square feet to raise a family is a bit tight."

Making the space functional and flexible to change was key for Holden-Pope and her builder (Vertical Grain Projects). Design details include a closet that moves in the baby's nursery to allow room for a bunk bed, and though the overall look is clean and polished, there is storage at every turn.

Learning to live in smaller spaces seems to be a theme on

this year's tour, with the North Vancouver "Cliffhanger" residence, designed by architect Kevin Valley, of Kevin Valley Design, situated on a tiny, awkward site.

"The site is effectively a cliff," says Valley. "It's 25 feet wide, 100 feet long and in that 100 feet it drops 60 feet. It's like a double tennis court tilted at 45 degrees and perched on Indian Arm."

Valley is all in favour of using better design to turn sites that seem unusable into incredible places to live.

"Frankly," he says, "as we move forward in Vancouver, with the densification reality we're going to be facing in years to come, we have to start thinking that way: what can we do with less, design-wise. The age of the hummer home or McMansions is gone in my mind."

The White Rock Modern Tour was added this year to expose people to some of the great architecture and construction going on outside Vancouver, says Shawna Kliewer, of KBC Developments, who helped curate the White Rock lineup.

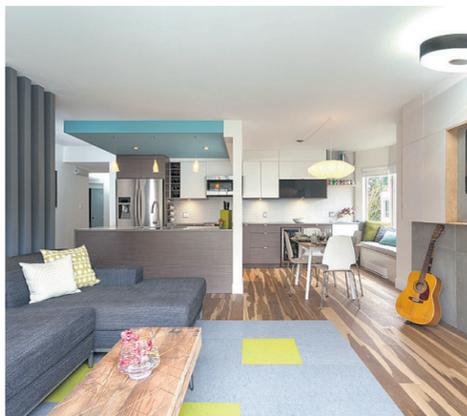
"I think it's a good representation of the creativity out there and exposes people to a lifestyle just outside of Vancouver that's equally as good," says Kliewer.

What's interesting about Crescent Beach and White Rock, Kliewer says, is it was initially full of little cottages that Vancouverites used as their holiday homes. The custom homes the Kliewer Developments and others like them are building are on the sites of these original cottages.

"In 1912, if you purchased an annual subscription to B.C. Magazine they gave you a free 33 x 122 lot in White Rock," says Kliewer. "They pitched it that



NATURAL BALANCE HOME BUILDERS



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Top: New home designed by Frits de Vries in the Little Australia section of UBC's endowment lands. Bottom left: 1,000 square foot condo in Vancouver's West End designed by One SEED Architecture + Interior. Bottom right: Galadriel residence designed by Peter Hildebrand and Stefan Walsh of Iredale Group Architecture.

you could get there in 60 minutes on the Great Northern Railway. They made all these tiny little lots and built houses on them."

These cottages seem a far cry from the resplendent "Galadriel" home built by Kliewer Developments that's included in the tour and overlooks Semiahmoo Bay in White Rock. Designed by Peter Hildebrand and Stefan Walsh of Iredale Group Architecture, it

has a clear storey window that wraps around the top floor, above the roof, to allow light to flood in, without the heat that accompanies it.

Another White Rock home featured on the tour is the "OShaun" house designed and built by Owen and Shauna Poppy of Surf-side Construction as their personal residence and was inspired by the canneries Owen grew up admiring.

"He spent every summer there (in White Rock)," says Shauna. "And he'd look across the water and loved the canneries across at Semiahmoo Bay."

The Vancouver Modern Home tour runs Saturday, Sept. 19, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The White Rock Modern Home Tour is Sunday, Sept. 20, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For details go to modernhome-tours.com.