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Latest trends in custom homes

By: Ryan Peterson

Every year, around this time, builders from all over New York State strut their stuff. From Buffalo to Syracuse, to Rochester and the Capital Region, the Parade of Homes event presents extraordinary new homes featuring the latest trends in residential construction by each of the area's leading homebuilders.

"Before we start to do plans and design a home for a customer, we look at the way they live, the types of spaces that they need," said Christine Vasiliou, with Vasiliou Homes.

"I believe that people want better quality features, workmanship and better flow of traffic patterns in the home," said David Del Zotto, of Del Zotto & Sons Builders.

"We need to know their price range. That's a very important issue. We do custom plans. Every house we do is a little bit different," said Lee DeGraff with DeGraff Bloom Custom Builders.

A noticeable trend in recent years has been an increase in the baby-boomer market. Recent retirees who are looking for a scaled-back home better suited for just two people.

"A huge market within the baby-boomer, that empty-nester segment of the market. People looking for single story, open flowing floor plans, while still maintaining some private spaces," Vasilou said.

Vasiliou continued to say that it's not just the "empty-nesters" who are looking for less square footage. New homes have started trending smaller in general and builders are often seeing the elimination of some traditional home elements.

"They don't want to heat large spaces and they don't want to maintain large spaces. We've seen the elimination of the formal living room over the past few years and a lot of people don't even want a formal dining room," said Vasilou.

And because people are scaling back on square footage, they now have more money for higher end amenities. Builders are starting to see a bigger demand for stainless steel appliances, quality hardwood flooring, granite countertops and tile.

"People just want a better home. A smaller home with more amenities. We're doing that right now. Our houses are quality built homes. High energy efficient homes," Del Zotto said.

Obviously, you can't be in a rush when your home is being custom built for you. Our builders said, on average, it'll be six months from the design stage to a finished house.

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