



Luxurious master suites are on the rise, featuring custom additions such as this spa tub and pass-through fireplace in a home by Rogers Krajnak Architects.

Luxurious master suites

Darryl Rogers, principal at Rogers Krajnak Architects, observes that consumers increasingly are turning master bedrooms in older homes into owners' suites with separate sitting and sleeping areas, walk-in closets and large baths. "It's a major trend, and there's a new focus on it," Rogers says. "A lot of people are staying in the homes they are in and improving on what they've got, and a lot of homes lack that true master suite."

Many suites are even being secluded

on their own floor for added privacy. The room can be given dramatic appeal through eye-catching ceilings, such as tray ceilings, which are expected to show up more and more in master bedrooms. People are requesting indirect cove lighting to give them even more interest.

Homeowners also are opting for top amenities in their masters. "We see our clients doing very custom upgrades, including things like dramatic ceiling design, custom built-ins and a master bath with heated floors," says Rogers. Other popular options include towel warmers,

fireplaces and closet features such as a clothes-hanging system that can easily be adjusted for height.

"We're adding in audiovisual systems with TVs and integrated sound throughout the master suite, including the bath," adds Rogers.

Another master suite trend: custom furnishings. "Nightstands and even beds are being custom designed to be visually integrated with each other," says Rogers. "It's not just going out and buying furniture—you're designing it exactly as you want it."

LONG-TERM TRENDS

We know what's hot in 2012, but what can we look forward to five years down the road? Experts say some of the more enduring trends of today will continue gaining traction in the coming years.

Less is more

"The trend is that design has been simplified, and less is more," says Zenios Michael Zenios of 3 Pillar Homes. People want design that is elegant, functional and makes sense for their families. "I'm seeing people honing in and saying, 'What's the best value that I can get?'" Zenios says.

Darryl Rogers of Rogers Krajnak Architects agrees there's a movement toward less space and more quality. "We see most of our clients focusing on making sure every cubic inch of the project is thought through," he says. "This results in no wasted space and refinements down to the smallest detail. This has been very prevalent in kitchen and bath designs."

Going green

Whether it's a sustainable material for their flooring or a recycled material for their countertops, many people already are choosing products that are environmentally friendly. Kitchen cabinets crafted from reclaimed wood and tile made from shards of old glass are just two examples of how the green trend has grown. This eco-awareness will continue to impact the choices homeowners make in the coming years.

Energy efficiency

"Energy efficiency—that is probably the biggest thing I see," says Dave Smith of OS Homes. "People want to make sure the envelope of the house is tight and well insulated."

Along with necessities such as high-efficiency heating and cooling systems and windows and doors that meet or exceed Energy Star standards, consumers are looking for ways to increase their home's energy efficiency without breaking the bank. Smith says his company now wraps wood-framed homes in two inches of styrofoam. "That gives you benefits of building with ICFs [insulated concrete forms], but the cost is less."

Outdoor living spaces

The climate in Central Ohio may not be the most outdoor-friendly year-round, but the trend of extending our living space outdoors is a sure thing for the future.

"Outdoor rooms and spaces are really big," says Rogers. "Sometimes that means totally outside, or other times it means partially outside." People are adding screened porches, balconies, terraces, porches, patios, decks and outdoor kitchens—spaces where you're basically building an outdoor room.

Rogers says screened porches are becoming particular favorites because they give you the best of both worlds—you're connected to the outside, but you stay protected from insects and rain. Another plus: Rogers notes that an outdoor space typically costs less per square foot than new indoor space.