



This East Vancouver laneway house, which features a functional rain garden, is one of the homes on the Modern Home Tour, Sept. 17.

MODERN HOME DESIGN DISPLAYED ON TOUR

Houses reflect current trends in residential architecture

REBECCA KEILLOR

For those curious about modern architecture and design, the newly named Modern Architecture + Design Society brings its Modern Home Tour to Vancouver for a fourth year on Sept. 17.

Part of Western Living Magazine's Design Week (which runs Sept. 15 to 25), the self-guided tour features five homes, which will be open to participants from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with many of the architects, designers and homeowners on site to answer any questions.

Befitting the contemporary spirit of this tour, these homes reflect current trends in architecture, design and residential living.

A 760-square-foot laneway house in east Vancouver, designed by Lanefab Design, is included on the tour and speaks to a movement toward shared family dwellings.

"A lot of the work we're doing is for extended families," says Lanefab co-owner and designer Bryn Davidson. "That's where the affordability benefits of laneway houses really accrue the most, when you're building for families."

Davidson says they design and build laneway houses that people "actually want to live in."

"A lot of the laneway houses out there are pretty awful little spaces, frankly," he says. "Some of that just has to do with how the city's rules are written and some of it is just that they're cheap rental units, but we try to make it that you have a sense of brightness and openness."

The one-bedroom, one-bathroom Lanefab house on the tour



The master bathroom in the Gottschalks' British Properties residence on the Modern Design Tour features a custom stone tub with built-in storage, an LED-framed mirror and floating vanities. KRISTEN MCGAUGHEY

has a clean, modern and funky esthetic, which Davidson says reflects the style of the graphic designer they built it for, who was after a live/work space.

"The design of the building really kind of unfolded from creating this office space with this open loft experience, which is quite a bit different than if we were just parceling it up into a bunch of different bedrooms," he says.

Bright and airy, with large windows and skylights, the ultra-

modern esthetic of this home is warmed up by a feature wall, made from colourfully painted reclaimed cladding, which ties the loft, main and bottom floor together.

"On the outside she was open to doing something a bit more funky and industrial, so we have the steel cladding and the gabion baskets with the rocks in the yard," says Davidson.

The property also features a clever rain garden design that reflects sustainable thinking and modern

style. "This version is similar to something I'd seen in Portland," says Davidson.

"Where they were requiring that houses run their water into these rain gardens, we set it up that all of the water from the roof of the building runs underneath the patio and then goes out a little waterfall into this rain garden and so that rain garden also functions as a rainwater storage tank."

Functionality seems to be a key element in modern architecture

and design and is reflected in another property on the Modern Home Tour, this one in West Vancouver's British Properties and designed by the owners, architect Michael Gottschalk and interior designer wife Jennifer Gottschalk, of Gottschalk Design (owners of Vancouver's Blu Bathworks).

The master bathroom features a solid stone (Blu Bathworks) bathtub with built-in shelving and floating vanities, with glorious wooden facades that appear to hang light as air but contain serious storage.

"The interior is all done in wood and there's organizers," says Michael. "(They're) without a doubt the most practical and efficient vanities in terms of space and usage on the market."

Modern mirrors (also by Blu Bathworks) run along the bathroom walls, framed by dimmable LED strips and are part of their new 45-degree series.

"There's a little dot in the mirror that's the on-off switch, and if you hold it down it becomes the dimming feature of the mirror as well," says Michael.

"We wanted to have big windows, which is a trademark of Michael's design, and I think is particularly important in Vancouver, where it rains a lot. So a lot of glass, high ceilings and bigger rooms, a feeling of space and openness and flow through the house," says Jennifer.

"One of the defining features is a 34-foot-high concrete wall that vertically connects all three floors; it's the central spine of the building, and the stairwell wraps around that," says Michael.

For tickets to view these homes and four others dotted around Vancouver, from West Vancouver to UBC, visit mads.media/mads-vancouver2016. Tickets are \$35 in advance or \$40 on the day.



A feature wall in reclaimed cladding warms up the ultra-modern esthetic in this funky east Vancouver laneway house by Lanefab Design.

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Windows and skylights make this one-bedroom laneway house in east Vancouver bright and airy. It was designed as a live/work space.