

# Smaller, Smarter Single-Family Detached Concepts

Leading architects and designers present four creative ideas for right-sizing single-family detached homes.

By Larry W. Garnett, FAIBD, House Review Lead Designer

**W**e know from industry research that the traditional family — husband, wife, and a couple of children — makes up a much smaller percentage of the home-buyer landscape than just a decade ago. While it certainly makes sense to target the new “non-traditional” client base, it’s critical to also factor in the demographics of your local market.

While there does seem to be an overall desire to “re-size” new homes, keep in mind that size is relative. For some clients, re-sizing might mean going from 4,500 to 3,500 square feet. For others, it might mean looking for an efficiently designed, yet charming two-bedroom cottage.

The obvious challenge is to design and build a home that offers value, flexibility, functionality, and excitement. While our clients may not be able to afford the dream home they once envisioned, we must be able to deliver a home that stirs their emotions.

This month, our House Review team offers an assortment of ideas for single-family detached homes, addressing these challenges with plans that offer innovative solutions for smarter and, yes, smaller homes.

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## DESIGNER'S ESSAY

The key elements of functionality, flexibility, and value are all addressed in this design. The first floor offers an open-concept living space with subtle definition of the kitchen, family, and dining areas by the use of columns and ceiling height variations. Views of the courtyard and optional pool area are available from each room on the first level. One of the most functional spaces in the home is the resource center. With a place for a computer, file drawers, desk space, and storage, this area provides plenty of room to manage all the household activities.

Both the formal front entry and the “family entry” from the garage and courtyard open into

a central gallery. With the “drop zone” and stair access to the second floor, this centrally located gallery provides excellent traffic flow along with an attractive, functional area for the homeowner and guests to enter the home.

The optional casita offers a space that can evolve with the homeowner's lifestyle. While it's the ideal location for an elderly parent, it can become a home office, suite for an older child living at home, or a private guest quarters. It could even function as a pool cabana/game area.

The second floor, with two bedrooms and a loft, is essentially an attic area above the garage, resulting in economical construction costs. It becomes an ideal place for children or grandchildren.

## 2011 HOUSE REVIEW THEMES

- SEPTEMBER Duplex/triplex homes
- OCTOBER Green homes
- NOVEMBER Cottage homes
- DECEMBER Live/work homes



PLAN NO. 56576

## DESIGNER

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## PLAN SIZE

House: 2,235 sf  
First floor: 1,680 sf  
Second floor: 555 sf  
Casita: 330 sf  
House width: 47 feet, 6 inches  
House depth: 76 feet, 10 inches  
Casita width: 14 feet  
Casita depth: 25 feet, 2 inches



[SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOUSING]

**COLLINWOOD**

**ARCHITECT**

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**PLAN SIZE**

First floor: 1,992 sf  
Second floor: 1,491 sf  
Garage: 485 sf  
Porches/balcony: 321 sf  
Porte cochère: 322 sf  
Width: 40 feet  
Depth: 91 feet



**ARCHITECT'S ESSAY**

Sometimes homes are designed and built on lots in neighborhoods that have been around for years. One of the goals of designing these homes is to plan them more efficiently while creating an appearance of spaciousness and abundance. A clever way to accomplish this is by designing efficient spaces and combining uses to create a large, open feeling. A common approach involves merging the kitchen, family, and breakfast areas into a single great room.

Another tactic involves introducing elements of outdoor living. For example, we will position a courtyard/motor-court combination so that the family, kitchen, and breakfast areas open up to the outdoor space, offering a great view of a cobblestone courtyard through a series of glass doors.

One such home is Collinwood. The project is designed on an existing lot, 50 feet wide and 125 feet deep. It is comprised of a foyer, dining room, butler's pantry, powder room, kitchen, breakfast area, family room, utility room, master bedroom/bath, two-car garage, three bedrooms, loft, and game room with a porte cochère and motor court — all in a 3,483-square-foot air-conditioned envelope. At first glance, the home appears to be significantly larger than it actually is. However, because of the creative and combined use of spaces, the home is spacious and elegant and very livable for today's family.



**house review**

**TNH-PC09A**

**ARCHITECT**

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**PLAN SIZE**

First floor: 655 sf  
Second floor: 302 sf  
Width: 33 feet  
Depth: 37 feet, 6 inches  
Foundation: crawlspace



**DESIGNER'S ESSAY**

By some estimates, there is a 20-year supply of large, single-family homes available in the marketplace today. If that figure is anywhere close to accurate, it may serve the builder community well to consider alternative markets in which to compete. It's been well documented that family size and makeup has been changing for quite some time, and a growing underserved segment is the one- and two-person household.

Attached units such as apartments, duplexes, and townhouses have long been good alternatives for this household type, but there have been limited options for those seeking detached houses.

Our plan this month, TNH-PC09A, has been designed for this emerging market. It features a single, first-floor bedroom and living space that can extend to the screened porch, as well as outdoor courtyard rooms. Flexible sleep, work, and play space is provided in the loft.



**THE DURWOOD**

**ARCHITECT**

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**PLAN SIZE**

First floor: 1,577 sf  
 Second floor: 1,669 sf  
 Width: 50 feet  
 Depth: 57 feet  
 Height: 36 feet, 4 inches



**ARCHITECT'S ESSAY**

The Durwood plan was created based on an appreciation for space and convenience. With generously proportioned rooms designed into an efficient floor plan, this unique home allows the owners to spread out and enjoy the various amenities it provides. The floor plan is uniquely customizable to meet the evolving lifestyles of today's families.

The first floor features add-on options such as a keeping room, guest suite, and sun room. An outdoor loggia can be added to the back of the home, off the kitchen, with a fireplace and cooking area. The first floor can be modified to include a walk-in pantry or a wine grotto off the kitchen.

The optional second-floor media room provides a comfortable space for family interaction or a getaway room for the kids. The master suite can be upgraded to a grand master, which includes its own keeping room and a deluxe master bath.

