



Photograph: courtesy of Confederation Log Homes

Confederation Log Homes produces pre-manufactured square-log and timber frame homes that are custom designed for the client.

# HOME PACKAGES HAVE A LOT TO OFFER

By Allan Cook

Almost 60 years ago, Viceroy introduced the pre-fabricated panelized cottage kit to Canadians, and companies ever since have been providing buyers with high quality, flexible home and cottage packages that run the range from pre-engineered framing to fully-finished modular construction.

The same techniques and philosophies behind mainstays of the conventional construction industry, such as pre-manufactured roof trusses, are being applied by home manufacturers to produce precision-engineered prod-

ucts in a factory using the highest quality materials and producing a minimum of waste.

"It just makes sense," Bob Stuart of Barrie Build and Design says about choosing a manufactured home. "There's so many things it takes advantage of."

Barrie Build and Design has been providing Guildcrest manufactured modular homes for clients for almost a quarter century.

"They build the home right in their factory, where they have control of the environment as opposed to building

outdoors where it's raining or snowing," he says.

A modular home is built in sections that are transported to the job site fully finished and ready to attach together.

"Everything from carpet and vinyl flooring right through to kitchen cabinets and bathrooms; it's all totally finished right in the factory," Stuart explains.

Barrie Build and Design prepares the client's lot by excavating and pouring a basement foundation, and lifts the modules off the transporters by crane to secure them in place.

"An average house might use two or three modules. Two storey houses are frequently four, and it can go up from there. It all depends on the size of home the client wants," Stuart says.

Because the client orders everything right down to fixtures, flooring and finishing through Barrie Build and Design, Stuart can price a project with no surprises. Plumbing and wiring are pre-built in the module, and assembly on-site includes connecting them to municipal services, hanging doors, and capping the roofline.

"From the time they place the order to the time they're actually ready to move into the house is about eight to 10 weeks," he says.

Many manufactured home providers take care of engineering, drafting and permit issues, further reducing the homeowner time and complications.

"Speed is certainly one of the advantages in the business," says Rick Kinsman of Confederation Log Homes, which is based in Bobcaygeon. Confederation has been in the business for 30 years and produces pre-manufactured square-log and timber frame homes.

"Our typical log package would go up in a couple of days time with no crane required," Kinsman says.



Photograph: courtesy of Viceroy

This Viceroy Revelstoke model was built by Algonquin Projects Limited and is a barrier-free home.

Every Confederation Log Home is custom designed for each client. "Tell us your wish list, and let us know your budget, and we'll work right with you to design what you want," Kinsman says.

A co-owner who has been with the company "since pretty much day one," Kinsman has seen the benefits that advances in computer imaging have brought to the industry.

"With today's 3-D software we can walk you through the house before we even cut the first piece of wood so that you know exactly what you're getting," he explains. "People need to be able to visualize what they're getting, because it's a custom built home. We can show them right where their piano or heirloom hutch will fit in."

Computer technology has also provided advances in the precision and speed with which materials are manufactured. Rob Wrightman, CEO of True North Log Homes in Bracebridge, is proud of the state-of-the-art computer cutting systems used in the company's Gravenhurst factory.

"We have only four guys on the line that manufacture the house part," he reveals. "Our record time to cut one model is only eight hours. So I can cut the house faster than we can draw it!"

The Wrightman family has long been innovators in the manufactured-log home field, with 14 log home patents owned by Rob and his father Ron, with five more on the go.

"We have the highest warranty in the business from an air-infiltration perspective. When a client comes to us, they're looking for as maintenance-free log house as they can get," Wrightman says.

The company has also been recognized for its extensive collection of designs, and recently won top plan book from the National Association of Home Builders in the United States. True North produces what is called a



Photograph: courtesy of Discovery Dream Homes

Discovery Dream Homes works with customers to make the most of the open space of their designs.

weathertight shell package, which includes all logs, windows, exterior doors, and roof system. As with many manufactured home companies, their houses and cottages have been shipped all over the world.

"Our customers have been dreaming about this for maybe 10 or 15 years," Wrightman says. "There's a real mystique about owning a log house. Everybody has this dream about owning a log house on a lake somewhere."

Manufactured home companies excel at helping people reach the goal of building a custom home they can retire to.

"That's what we're all about; that's where we get our name from," says Ray King, President of Discovery Dream Homes in Peterborough. "Service is number one with us."

Specializing in timber frame home

packages, Discovery Dream Homes designers will work with customers to help them make the most of the openness and warmth that timber frame can provide. Once a customer is happy with a design that has been drawn up, King's fabrication team sets to work.

"We manufacture all the large timbers for that building inside a factory. We cut all the pieces to size, make all the notches, drill any electrical holes that have to be put in there for wiring, cut the windows and doors out; and do all the heavy work that cannot be done on the job site," King explains.

"Then we put it together here in our plant in what we call a 'dry fitting' to make sure that everything fits. We number it all then we pack it all, wrap it in our wrap, then ship it to the job site."

King recommends clients do their

homework to help develop their ideas and needs into a wish list of features. He advises talking to manufacturers and builders to determine what's right for you.

"At trade shows you get a lot of advice, a lot of information," King says. "Going to a trade show is one of the best avenues for someone who is thinking of building in the future."

While most companies have catalogues of existing plans, they typically are used as a springboard for custom designs as the client's wishes and the physical needs of the lot dictate.

"We use the catalogue more as a guide," explains Louise Newton of Algonquin Projects, a Viceroy dealer in Dwight and Minden. "My job is to help people select a model that fits their lot, and meets all the town or township bylaw requirements. I work

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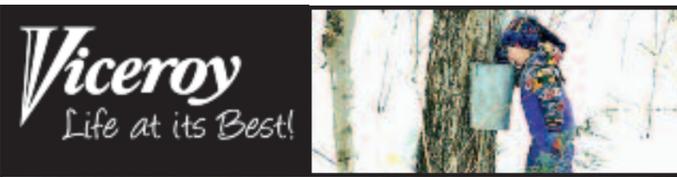
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The Citadel III model by True North Log Homes boasts four bedrooms, three baths and a studio apartment with walk-out balcony.

with them to help them decide what type of foundation to put in, which direction the building needs to face and make sure everything is set in motion so the package can be delivered on time.

Algonquin Projects can also help the homebuyer select a contractor to do the construction and finishing of their new home package. Newton advises her clients that it can take three months from the order date until delivery to their lot. She finds that most of her customers take almost a year in the planning and design stages

before that point.

As a dealer for Viceroy, Algonquin offers a weatherproof package utilizing high quality materials that are certified to not contain hazardous by-products or harmful chemicals that off-gas.

"Viceroy is a long-standing company; we were really the first of this kind of home provider," Newton says. "In fact, Viceroy is the only housing company to have its own real estate category."

Though many people are building their retirement dream home, resale value is always a consideration when

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This Guildcrest manufactured modular home by Barrie Build and Design is practical with its walk-out basement design.

deciding what company is right for you. As buyers have become more informed of the benefits of manufactured homes, real estate agents typically now include the information in their listings if a home is modular or built from an engineered package.

"One of the primary advantages of pre-fab homes is the quality of construction," says Pieter Venema, presi-

dent of Royal Homes. "It's a home or cottage that's going to last for generations."

Royal Homes is a modular home manufacturer whose pre-engineered components go through rigorous quality testing in their factory before being assembled on your lot.

In business for 40 years, Royal Homes has found that as advances in

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The Citadel by Royal Homes is a luxurious 2,600 sq. ft. home and features amenities that make it perfect for entertaining.

technology has made the design and customization process easier and faster, their customers take full advantage of Royal's speed and efficiency in other areas as well.

"What appeals to a lot of clients is that it's one-stop shopping," Venema says of Royal's complete service. "Couples today are very, very busy, and not necessarily interested or able to deal with permits and a number of building trades." "It's a turnkey project."

In Muskoka, Royal Homes has a new design centre on Highway 11 just south of Gravenhurst.

"Clients usually have files of documents and have been looking at homes

for years; and they have some idea of what they want," he says. "Come on out, just have a chat and if nothing else, you'll see something that will give you some new ideas, and hopefully we can build you your new home."

Whether you wish to do the assembly and finishing yourself, work with a favourite contractor, or have the manufacturer take care of everything for you, finding a solution for your needs is as close as the nearest dealer design centre or show home. Do your research, gather design ideas, make a wish list and drop by one today to take that next step toward the house or cottage of your dreams.

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