



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FEARMAN

TRADITIONAL

or contemporary

Architect-designed windows offer excellence in two styles

If you want ideas on design, you can ask an architect. But what sort of thoughts do you get if you ask 1,500 architects?

It turns out that you get an incredible number of suggestions, a great many of them focused on highly specific details.

The 1,500 architects were the survey group used a number

of years ago by Pella, one of the leading manufacturers of windows and doors in North America. “They asked all these architects ‘what would you like to see in a modern window with traditional details?’” says Ken Patterson, owner of Lakeland Windows and Doors. “Then they asked them the same thing about contemporary design: what are the details they’d like to see?”

The results were incorporated in the Architect Series windows and doors, which is available in Traditional or Contemporary.

The Architect Series forms a large part of the display at Lakeland Windows’ extensive showroom in Bala – the largest showroom of its kind in Canada, a place where customers can see full-size versions of various windows.

“If you’re looking at a small window sample, you might not think that an eighth of an inch in the sash or the grills makes a big difference,” says Ken. “But as soon as you see the full-size window, you can see exactly how big a difference it makes.”

Traditional look
That eighth of an inch difference is just one of the things the architects pointed to. When surveyed about traditional windows, they told Pella they wanted historical accuracy and consistency in a window that performed with modern efficiency.

The craftsmen who made old-fashioned windows, Ken explains, used the same trim profiles on all parts of the

window interior. If the grills (the wood separating individual panes of glass) were ¾ of an inch deep, then so were the casements (the wood that surrounds each window.) And if there were glass doors, then they, too, would have the same profile.

The result was a pleasing symmetry and consistency across the entire home. “When every window has the same detailing, it’s pleasing to the eye,” he says. “You may not be able to identify why, but even an untrained eye can detect it.”

It’s a bit like listening to music: even if you’re not a trained musician, you can tell when an instrument is out of tune or the timing is off. You might not know how to fix the problem, but your ear knows that something is wrong.

Of course, there’s more to the Architect Series than consistent dimensions. One of the real achievements of the design is incorporating modern function with a traditional look.

“Old cottages and homes didn’t have casement windows that cranked open,” says Ken. It’s a very functional design, but the cranks themselves can look out of place on a traditional home. So Pella designed cranks that are nearly invisible.

Modern double hung windows have highly efficient counterweighting systems, so that they open and close easily. They also have latches that allow them to fold open inward, giving easy access for cleaning. Pella managed to conceal all of

those mechanical details, so that only the decorative wood finish is visible. And they finished them off with classical “spoon” latches, replicating those that were used a century ago.

Contemporary style
A similar attention to detail is seen in the other side of the Architect Series – the Contemporary line.

“A lot of people think if they’re doing a contemporary build, they have to have an all-aluminum window,” says Ken, “because that’s all that’s been presented to them.”

Aluminum is superb on the exterior of a window, but on the interior it can be needlessly cold. Pella’s Contemporary windows are stained wood on the interior,

with an exterior that’s clad in extruded aluminum.

Having wood on the interior allows for an infinite range of colour selection, and makes it possible to change the look over time.

“Aluminum exteriors can be created in a wide range of colours – black is the most popular for the contemporary design look – but the colour is fixed,” Ken explains. With a wooden interior, the wood can be stained or painted any colour, and then repainted in future years when colour trends change.

Since contemporary design typically incorporates a large amount of glass, it’s also vital that the windows be extremely energy efficient. Modern windows can have different

coatings on different sides of the building, allowing passive solar gain on windows that receive the winter sun, for example, while blocking heat transfer in windows that are only hit by the sun in summer.

Windows can now block up to 100 per cent of the UV light, and up to 60 per cent of

the heat loss – an enormous advantage over previous generations of windows.

“The architects who helped design these windows really understood what they needed in a build,” Ken says. “These windows deliver.” **DS**

BY ANDREW WAGNER-CHAZALON



‘They asked architects: what would you like to see in a window?’



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