

Empty Nest Home Designs Are Not One Size Fits All

Rick McAlexander August 01, 2017



The Heartfall home plan.

Find home design plans perfect for empty nesters wanting to downsize or expand their space. Find single-story plans, craftsman style plans and more.

([Newswire.net](#) -- August 1, 2017) Eugene, Oregon -- If no two snowflakes are alike, then no two homeowners are alike – and that goes double for older homebuyers. The children are out of the house. You don't need all that space and all of those rooms. Maybe you want to downsize to a smaller living style. Or maybe you're the opposite and want to at least retain some of the family gathering spaces. Maybe you want to expand a bit, so when the kids visit with grandkids in town, you've got a guestroom available and space to play.

You see? Not all older homebuyers are alike. And therefore, not all empty nest home designs are alike.

“When the cat's away, the mice will play,” said Rick McAlexander, CEO of [Associated Designs](#). “When the kids are away and out on their own, the parents now have the option of changing things up at home. But the worry is that they will only have that one type of empty nest home to consider – small, simple and not exciting. That's not the case at all.”

So what's an empty nester to do? As older homebuyers transition to needing less for their family and more for themselves, there is still a desire to create a comfortable living space for family to gather. These aging-in-place home designs also feature a not-so-empty-nest mentality. Design features such as easy-to-access, ground-floor master bedrooms, walk-in showers and minimal hallways mix well with great rooms for family gatherings, extra bedrooms for visitors and outdoor living areas. You can have it all, and not have to be confined to one particular size or style.



When Less is More

A single-story home with lots of appeal, the [Lostine house plan 30-942](#) is ranch-style living on a smaller scale of just 1,611 square feet. But don't let the square footage fool you: There is more here than meets the eye. With no stairs and minimal hallways, it's perfect for an empty nest that wants to take things down a notch but retain some of the room.

The great room's vaulted ceiling flows into the dining and kitchen area for the perfect gathering space when friends and

family come calling. Nearby, a covered patio extends the space when good weather allows it. Because who doesn't enjoy an evening glass of wine with friends out on the patio? The owners' suite also connects to the patio and includes a walk-in closet and large shower in the master bath.

"Everything is in reach in this home design," said McAlexander. "It's small but spacious and lets the owner age in place, as it were, in a comfortable setting."

Just off the entryway is the second bedroom with nearby full bath for when the kids come to visit for the weekend. The bedroom also has a large closet as well as hall closets for additional storage and a built-in coat rack and foot bench near the garage door.

The Middle Range

At the heart of this [Craftsman-style home plan](#) is a richly glassed vaulted great room with a wood-burning fireplace and beverage bar. Sounds enticing, doesn't it? For the not-so-empty-nest, this 2,518-square-foot home rests on a single floor and boasts three bedrooms and 2.5 baths. It's a medium-sized home that gives older homebuyers the option of hosting, gathering and living peacefully with style.

"The great thing about the Heartfall is that it acts like a family home on one hand, but on the other, it has all the amenities and comforts of an aging-in-place design," said McAlexander.

A vaulted covered patio wraps around one side of the house, connecting with the vaulted great room and corner kitchen. With all the windows, there is no end to natural light when entertaining in the great room. The owners' suite is down a short hallway off the kitchen, complete with a huge walk-in closet. The master bath boasts a spa tub, dual vanity and walk-in shower. Secondary bedrooms share a bathroom down another short hallway, just off the entry. A large utility room gives you room for crafts, storage and other needs as time goes on.

The secret to the [Heartfall design 10-620](#), however, is that it has a bonus room. Up a short flight of stairs is an unfinished extra space. Whether a craft room, guestroom, an office or a playroom for the grandkids, the bonus room can serve whatever purpose you desire. The Heartfall, in a sense, is comfortable, flexible living without overwhelming size.



The Grand Lodge

But let's say you want to upsize, not downsize. Let's say the nest is empty, but you are ready for space, room, openness and grandeur. You don't need a lot of bedrooms, but you have a part-time business you want to keep running. You want to entertain, but you don't want to be cramped.

The [Springwater house plan 30-661](#) is grandeur with an empty-nester flair. At more than 3,000 square feet, the Craftsman-style, one-story lodge is rustically elegant with an abundance of indoor and outdoor living areas. It's well suited for entertaining on a large or lavish scale. You enter the home via a lofty porte-cochere and vaulted entry porch. The foyer opens to the dining room and vaulted great room, both of which are connected to covered porches and patios for additional entertaining. An eating/conversation bar that fronts the great room rims the L-shaped kitchen. A huge walk-in pantry can store all the fixings for those parties and visitors.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Down a wide hallway lie two home offices and a guest room. But those home offices can easily be converted into bedrooms should the need arise. The vaulted master suite is the true prize, possessing both privacy and spaciousness. A covered and vaulted patio adds private living space outside the owners' suite, but there's also an exercise nook, two large walk-in closets and a private bathroom with walk-in shower and dual vanity.

The Springwater is a [luxury house plan](#) on a grand scale, and the perfect home for those who have an empty nest that's not so empty after all.

Aging-in-place homes are not one size fits all, and empty nesters aren't all cut from the same cloth. To have a bit of freedom, a choice of size, style and space, means an empty nest home design can be quite fun.

About Associated Designs

Associated Designs is located in Eugene, Oregon and designs custom house plans for developers, builders and homeowners. Plans are created by talented designers with more than 65 years of combined home design experience. Weekly columns featuring Associated Designs house plans are published in newspapers around the country. Since the company was founded in 1990, it has sold more than 60,000 home plans

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