The Modern Side of Things: Three Exterior Home Designs That Are Simply Modern

Rick McAlexander September 05, 2018

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(Newswire.net -- September 5, 2018) Eugene, Oregon -- People often use terms interchangeably when it comes to home design. No more so is this evident than when talking about modern and contemporary architecture.

“It’s the funniest thing, really,” said Rick McAlexander, CEO of Associated Designs, Inc. “In truth, the two terms are related. Parts of modern home design can mix with contemporary style and vice versa. So it’s not that people are wrong when they use those terms. They just don’t quite get the dynamics beneath the words.”

The dynamics come down to two things: defined style and a changing style.

Modern home design has characteristics that are distinctive and unchanging, for the most part. It’s not ornate or full of detail like the more elaborate style of the Victorian era for example. Simple lines, intentional asymmetry, and large open floor plans are characteristic of modern home design. Windows are a must for natural light.

Contemporary home design tends to “borrow” -- for lack of a better word -- from past home design styles, including Craftsman homes and modern homes. Therefore, it can change with the times and the needs of the home buyer or family. It’s free-form, artistic and yet adaptable and simple.

A blend of the two essentially means you get clean modern lines with a few contemporary touches to give it character. The contemporary features might be on the inside for the most part, or they can flirt with the modern angles and lines of the exterior. At Associated Designs, there are three high-end home designs that are great examples of how a modern-contemporary home exterior can work.

The Edgefield

The Edgefield (31-131) is a clear example of a modern exterior -- simple, angular lines with minimal fuss. Large expansive windows on the front coincide with a beautiful array of windows on the rear. Natural light, in other words, is not lacking in this home design.

“When you picture a modern home, you think it’s going to be sterile, but the Edgefield brings in natural light so that the simple becomes grand,” said McAlexander. “Modern homes love windows.”

The biggest feature likely on the front of the house is the slanted roof. The slant is asymmetrical to the left side of the house when looking at it head-on. It’s a key characteristic of modern home design, but the house also features simple materials with minimal ornate additions. A mixture of stucco brick and cedar brings a flair of color to the otherwise simplistic exterior.

The Carbondale

The Carbondale (31-126) showcases the same slanted, asymmetrical roof as seen in the Edgefield, but it’s more pronounced. The result is a home that truly catches the eye. Simple materials and minimal ornaments and flair still give the home a modern look from the start.

“My favorite part of this home might just be the windows,” said McAlexander. “They are large and expansive on the front and rear of the home, but small and square on the sides. It’s the most unique thing to see.”

The two different styles of windows add to the home's beautiful asymmetry but also, again, give it plenty of natural light. Additionally, with the open floor plan of the interior, you get a home design that is stately yet simple.

The Rogue

The Rogue (31-127) is evocative of the modern-contemporary style of home that makes use of a spacious lot. In many ways, the home has a Ranch-style look to it but closer inspection shows that modern elements are still key.

At just over 3,000 square feet of living space, the home design is expansive and filled to the brim with light. Windows grace almost every facade. But it's the clean straight lines of the exterior that are the most obvious feature to the home. Looked at straight on, the roof is a series of strong, horizontal trims that appear to accent the homes otherwise bare lines.

"There are no arches, no frills, but those straight lines are an eye-catcher," said McAlexander. "From a distance, the home looks like any other home, but those heavy straight lines are ornamental in a way."

And that, ultimately, is the point of a modern home design. Yes, there are no frills and limited details. But the homes have a character all their own. Simple lines can be beautiful.

About Associate Designs, Inc.

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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