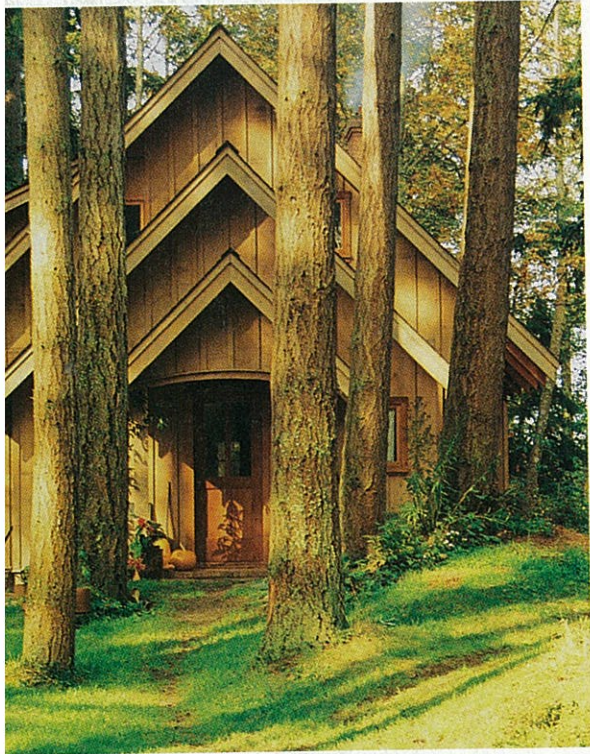




Architect Russell Versaci made his reputation with traditional, custom-designed farmhouses. This one was built (the Sawyer) purchased on his Website. **BELOW:** The House is one of a handful of modestly sized but richly detailed houses that Ross Chapin offers online.



WHERE TO FIND THEM

For a look at the work of some of the architects and designers mentioned in this article, check out these Websites.

Gregory La Vardera

www.lamidesign.com/plans

The Bungalow Company

www.bungalowcompany.com

Ross Chapin

www.rosschapin.com

Healthy Home Designs

www.healthyhomedesigns.com

plans they saw, some costing as little as a few hundred dollars, fit the bill.

That's when they turned to the Bungalow Company. Its designs cost a bit more, and there were only a handful to choose from, but one was exactly what they were looking for: a 2,500-square-foot Arts and Crafts model that combines a period aesthetic with a modern, three-bedroom layout. What impressed the Heirendts was the deep porch, tradi-

tional details, and extensive woodwork—hallmarks of Craftsman houses rarely seen in the dozens of plans they had looked at. Better still, the Bungalow Company, like most stock plan producers, would customize it to the couple's wishes. At their request, designer Christian Gladu altered the floor plan to make space for an additional bedroom and bathroom upstairs, enlarged the kitchen, moved and expanded the pantry, and added a half-bath under the stairs. The changes took about a month to draw up and cost an extra \$2,100 on top of the \$1,600 for the basic plan—not cheap, but far less than an architect would have charged to design the Heirendts' dream house from the ground up.

The result is so convincing, Kathy Heirendt says, that the place blends seamlessly into its neighborhood of older homes. "People ask if we remodeled," she says. "It's all new, but you wouldn't know it."

HELP FROM THE INTERNET

The drive to develop and market a better class of stock plans may be a recent phenomenon, but the idea of ready-made designs has strong historical roots. "Pattern books" were a staple of 19th-century building, and in the early 20th century Gustav Stickley sold plans for Craftsman-style homes to generate demand for his furniture. The American Plywood Association had a similar idea in the 1950s and '60s when it published plan books for vacation homes to be built using its products. More recently *Life* magazine commissioned "Dream House" designs from architectural heavyweights including Robert A.M. Stern and Michael Graves.

The Internet has made it easier than ever for individual architects and entrepreneurs to carve out a niche in the \$72-million-a-year plan marketplace. Architect Ross Chapin, based on Washington state's Whidbey Island, is best known for his custom residential and clustered-home

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—ARCHITECT RUSSELL VERSACI

