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2007 PARADE OF HOMES

Consider changes, too

Perhaps you want to remodel instead? Then 16 projects will show off the possibilities.

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You would like to see what the nationally renowned Bay Hill golf course looks like from inside a home. Maybe marvel at the updates to a 1920s-era Mediterranean house. Or take in a gently sloping backyard from an Oviedo home redone to recall a French farmhouse.

These diverse projects -- from whole-house renovations to remodeled kitchens -- will be open to the public Saturday and April 22 in the Remodelers' and Design Specialty showcases. The 14 remodeled homes and two design entries in the showcase are part of the 2007 Parade of Homes, which starts today and continues through April 29.

Eleven of the remodeled homes and both design entries will be open to the public. Three of the remodeled projects will be available for viewing online.

Some of the larger projects cost more than \$1 million. The smaller ones cost tens of thousands of dollars. Along the way, there were unexpected delays and unplanned price increases. But in the end, they all provide the same result: a seemingly new home mostly within the same walls.

"One of the advantages of doing a renovation is you're living in the space," says Abigail Rizor, an interior designer whose 1920s Mediterranean home in Delaney Park was gutted and updated. "New houses have a lot of amenities. With renovations, it's a lot more creative."

One of the remodeled homes was even moved before it was redone. The Renewed American Home, a 1909 Florida vernacular home in downtown Orlando's Lake Eola Heights Historic District, was remodeled as part of this year's International Builders' Show. It was moved three times before construction began.

Builder PSG Construction and residential designer Lucia, Kassik & Monday more than doubled the size of the original home. The addition included a 2,073-square-foot basement.

Inside, decorative touches such as white-paneled custom millwork applied 5 feet high and honey-colored oak floors and stairs duplicate what was found in early 20th-century homes. There are modern amenities, too, such as an elevator that reaches all three floors, a climate-controlled wine cellar and a safe room for gathering when storms arrive.

Among smaller projects, remodeled kitchens -- always a popular room to redo -- took the spotlight in homes in Longwood and Winter Springs.

"In a kitchen, you recoup anywhere from 90 [percent] to 100 percent of the value when it comes

to resale," says Rick Jennings, senior vice president of Nautilus Homes. "And it changes the lifestyle -- radically -- of a home."

Jennings renovated the kitchen of a home in the Tusawilla community for a homeowner who loves to cook for her extended family but felt cramped in her 1970s-era kitchen.

"We were able to go in and structurally raise the ceiling in the kitchen into a tray that soars up to 11 feet in the middle," Jennings says.

And what better way to please a cook than to add nifty ovens that cook food four, five, even eight times faster than conventional ovens?

Jennings added two such GE ovens. One uses Trivection technology -- a combination of a traditional oven, a convection oven and microwave heat. The other is the GE Advantium oven, which uses Speedcook technology in the form of an intense halogen light to prepare food in a fraction of the time.

Builder Jack Machise of JLM Design & Remodeling expanded the kitchen of a Longwood home by taking out a wall and adding a breakfast bar, stainless-steel appliances and wood cabinets. The black-and-gray granite countertops and breakfast bar have a hint of green picked up by the new recessed lighting.

An outdoor kitchen on the patio was updated with a granite-topped brick bar area, a gas grill, a small refrigerator and a sink. A pass-through window into the indoor kitchen conveys the feel of one big space that can accommodate several cooks.

"They wanted more room, and they wanted it to be more functional," Machise says of the homeowners.

The kitchen was also central to a whole-house remodel of a Tusawilla town house, where builder Tim Wiczorek, owner of ATD Home Renovations Inc., transformed the 1970s "rustic" feel to a contemporary space.

Wiczorek did so by combining Brazilian and American cherry floors downstairs with stainless-steel backsplashes in the kitchen and steel cables on the stairway. A wall of cabinets between the kitchen and dining room has obscured glass on both sides to let light through, which contrasts with black granite countertops in the kitchen.

"It's got cool areas, and it's got warm areas," Wiczorek says.

In Winter Park, it's the curb appeal that builder Lonnie Richardson says is eye-catching about the home he renovated. The owner of Richardson Builders Inc. added a front porch with a tongue-in-groove ceiling to a 1960s ranch home. Inside, the home's four bedrooms and two bathrooms have been remodeled, too.

But he hopes whoever buys the home will spend time outside on the new porch among the old oak trees.

"I like living in the front yard," Richardson says, "and meeting the neighbors."

Project profiles on H2, H10, H13 and H18.

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