

REAL ESTATE PLUS

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Dramatic design on a narrow lot

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How do you build a new house on a lot the width of a doublewide trailer? And how do you design it with contemporary flair while ensuring it will fit comfortably into its traditional Fairfield neighbourhood?

Rob and Janice Mickelberry solved that dilemma this year by building themselves a traffic-stopping home that packs a lot of style into a building that is only 15 feet wide (16 feet on the outside). The lot had been owned by the City of Victoria and left vacant for years.

Designed by Rus Collins of Zebra Designitects, the building is the antithesis of a cookie-cutter mobile home.

"All the elements are quite traditional," said Rus. "But the edge to it is the centre link. Rob challenged me to do something quite different."

Adds Rob, "I didn't want a long

facade. I wasn't comfortable with that look at all. So we did it in two houses and split it with a bridge."

The result is a house with multiple personality — a hipped roof on one end and a gable on the other. The only thing carried through is the window trim.

The exuberant exterior is enhanced by the offbeat colour scheme created by designer Adam Ludwig — three colours for the stucco and two for the siding, as well as other shades for the trim and the shingled skirting around the base.

Situating everything — staircase,

QUICK TOUR

- **Year built:** 1998
- **Size:** 2,800 square feet
- **Rooms:** Three bedrooms, four bathrooms, studio, office, living room, dining room, kitchen.
- **Unusual details:** Bright exterior color scheme, rich wood kitchen cabinets, birch floors, tapered staircase and chic, industrial railing.

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Photographs by Debra Brash

Main photo: The entrance is set into the middle of the long house.

Below: The exterior is painted in bright colors for maximum impact from a small home.

Bottom left: The cool, clean lines in the dining room give way to the warmth of wood in the kitchen.

