

A DESIGNER ADAPTS A COZY CLASSIC FOR MODERN FAMILIES

# Beyond the basic bungalow

By Ruth Mullen ♦ Photos by Serge A. McCabe  
THE OREGONIAN



ABOVE Just like the bungalows of old, Christian and Christen Gladu's living room is a place for the entire family. Their brand-new bungalow is already turning heads in their Bend subdivision. BELOW: Look familiar? This exterior takes unabashed inspiration from architectural forms of the past.



Call it the über bungalow.

At 2,900 square feet, with Brazilian-cherry floors, a welcoming front porch and a two-car garage set back discreetly from the street, Christen and Christian Gladu's new house reinterprets the historic style with some 21st-century twists. The bungalow, among the most popular house styles of the Arts and Crafts movement, was widely embraced in middle-class America from 1905 to 1930.

The open floor plan created cozy, inviting interiors with handcrafted, space-saving built-ins. The fireplace was the undisputed heart of the home, the kitchen small but efficient, the bedrooms modest by today's standards.

This charming residential style revolutionized housing for the middle class, and the Gladus say

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**Fine craftsmanship remains the backbone of good bungalow design.**

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there's a bungalow revival brewing almost a century later. They recently built a brand-new one for their growing family of four in Bend. And their architectural design business, The Bungalow Co., has helped spread their modern-day Arts and Crafts philosophy to neighborhoods throughout Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California, Georgia and Texas, among others.

The Gladus' new bungalow

sits snugly on a 60-by-130-foot lot in a new subdivision where no two houses look alike. It boasts all the bells and whistles associated with early-20th-century craftsmanship: wainscoting in the dining room, built-in bookcases on either side of a custom fir mantel, a cozy kitchen nook and pocket doors leading to a sunny den.

There are aluminum-clad wood windows throughout; clear, vertical-grain fir doors;

glazed quarry tiles in the kitchen; and a tumbled-marble shower in the master bath. Outside, tapered masonry columns, exposed rafter tails and other structural ornaments typical of Arts and Crafts design give the house a distinct turn-of-the-century feel.

"Whenever I build a house, I always build it as if I were building for myself, and throw in a few extra details," says Terry Bingham, Christen's father, a

retired custom-home builder from Newberg who did all the interior and exterior trim on the house. "That's the way the bungalows of old were built."

These are the gracious touches that make the old houses so charming, despite less endearing features: dark galley kitchens; tiny, one-car garages more suited to a Model T than an SUV; closets and bedrooms far too small to accommodate today's wardrobes and king-size beds.

"People just didn't have as much stuff back then," Christian Gladu says. "Somebody in 1926 did not have my wife's shoe collection." But to re-create the bungalow in its original form would be to ignore how American lifestyles have evolved. Nowadays, people want at least two full baths and a walk-in closet. They want attached garages, playrooms, offices and master suites.

The Gladus built their three-bedroom, three-bath house for about \$300,000, including the price of the lot. Granted, they put about \$30,000 worth of sweat equity into it, not an option for families less skilled with a jig saw. They also chose to go with a composite wood product for their painted interior trim, which costs about half the price of paint-grade wood.

"Bungalows are all about



**An open, flowing floor plan, a hallmark of bungalow design, lets the Gladu home live large. Glass pocket doors between a sunny den and the dining room help define the areas while allowing natural light to flood the main floor.**

taking care to do thoughtful work," Gladu says. "It's that part of the philosophy that sticks to my ribs."

His own house is a testament to that kind of careful attention. "All the materials and detailing are pretty honest," he says.

To be sure, Gladu uses the term bungalow loosely, since his house is a roomy 1½ stories — a far cry from his former 980-square-foot, single-story, two-bedroom bungalow on Bainbridge Island, Wash. That 1926 house helped launch his design business seven years ago. Inspired by its charm, he wandered old Seattle neighborhoods built at the height of the bungalow craze, observing and taking notes for what would later become speculative design sketches. Gradually, builders and homeowners took notice.

"A lot of guys search their whole career look for a signature style," Gladu says. "I try to build an anonymous style, where you can't tell if it's new or old."

Today, his subdivision in Bend already has three of his own designs, each one a variation on the Craftsman themes that inspire him.

Gladu believes the bungalow's detailing and style — so popular a century ago — still speak to the current housing market.

A recent client, Kathy Heirendt, knew she had found a

## COST-WISE DESIGN TIPS

**Use wood where it counts:** windows, doors, floors, mantel and bookcases, kitchen cabinetry and nook. If you paint interior trim, go with a composite wood product that is far cheaper than wood. All the painted interior trim in the Gladu house is a composite wood product and cost only \$2,500, not including labor. By contrast, a paint-grade wood would easily be twice that.

**Treat cabinetry like furniture:** Store dishes, not food in kitchen cabinets. Build closet/pantry with easy-access shelves for appliances, canned goods and foods. It provides storage and leaves money for high-quality cabinetry.

**Windows:** Create an added sense of space and light with fewer, larger windows.

**For window placement,** keep sight lines in mind by raising and/or lowering windows for more privacy. Downstairs sitting areas at the Gladus' have outdoor views in at least two directions. Windows in their bath and kitchen are placed so neighbors can't see in.

**Don't skimp on character.** Wood bookshelves on either side of the fireplace and kitchen banquettes are beautiful and practical.

**Choose high-end materials where it counts:** real brick on porch piers; tile on kitchen counters, bathroom and mud-room floors; high-quality woods on kitchen-island counters and in the breakfast nook. Cut costs with durable vinyl tile in hidden utility and pantry areas.

solution to her housing dilemma when she stumbled upon the company's Web site. She longed for the character and craftsmanship of an old bungalow, but her husband, Pete, didn't want the maintenance headaches. Now Heirendt can't help but grin when newcomers think her brand-new, 4,100-square-foot, four-bedroom bungalow overlooking Custer Park in Multnomah Village is a remodel.

And why wouldn't they? It fits in with the turn-of-the-century fabric of the neighborhood. She has a formal dining room with

wainscoting, built-in glass cabinets on either side of the fireplace, pocket doors and oak floors throughout. Not to mention 9-foot ceilings and a breakfast nook with built-in seating. "It's timeless," she says of her customized design. But it also boasts 21st-century amenities: roomy closets; a full, finished basement that doubles as a playroom; 3½ bathrooms; and a two-car garage.

Cathy Galbraith, executive director of the Bosco-Milligan Foundation, a preservation

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The kitchen is a frequent hangout for Sydney, 6, and her parents, Christen (left) and Christian. Ample light and an open layout are a welcome departure from the cramped galleys of the past. The cooking island, with old-fashioned wavy-glass cabinet doors, is all that separates the kitchen from the formal dining room.



The 600-square-foot guest room above the garage doubles as an out-of-the-way playroom.

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group, says buyers like Heirendt are slowly changing the nature of new construction. More home buyers are longing for the craftsmanship of old and a renewed sense of neighborhood. Fewer are satisfied, it seems, with the superficial nod to Arts and Crafts detailing found in many housing developments. The homes may sport a few well-executed exterior architectural details, but inside, they look like any other mass-produced house.

"Builders are just responding to market demands," Galbraith says. "People want homes with character. They don't want an anonymous house that looks like 30 other houses in their subdivision."

Part of the bungalow's newfound popularity is nostalgia. Many buyers associate these old houses with the tree-lined streets their parents and grandparents grew up on. But a finite number of vintage ones remain. And the fact that older houses, warts and all, are commanding premium prices has not escaped the notice of builders.

David and Brenna Marx of Westchester, Penn., looked long and hard for an older house with its character intact in a turn-of-the-century neighborhood. They saw so many "remuddles" that

they eventually purchased a Gladu design. It's a 2,300-square-foot, air-plane-style bungalow with wide eaves and a ground floor gleaming with quartersawn-oak woodwork, including 5-foot-tall bookcases framing a tiled fireplace.

These kinds of interior appointments are rare in new construction, but the Marxes wanted to re-create the interiors they saw in preservationist magazines. By following Gladu's suggestions on saving money in ways that wouldn't be noticed, the Marxes say, they didn't have to skimp on all those built-ins.

"So many people think this is a house that's been here forever," David Marx says.

In essence, Gladu believes that efficient use of space and high-quality materials are what the modern family needs. His bungalows spend money where it shows: tilework, wood floors, windows, doors and millwork. Natural light is important, too, as are interiors that flow naturally into outdoor spaces.

For his own house, Gladu followed one of his stock plans almost to the letter. But he individualized it with his own touches, including a custom fir mantel with inlaid Brazilian-cherry pegs.

In fact, most period bungalows in older neighborhoods came

#### MORE INFORMATION

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from speculative plans. The majority of them weren't designed by architects, and more than a few came straight out of a catalog. Yet each is prized for its individuality, thanks to the care of builders.

Today, bungalows are still considered a milestone of modern design: They encouraged renewed connections to nature and neighborhood. Honest materials, thoughtful design and careful craftsmanship mattered more than size.

A hundred years after the first bungalows were built, that philosophy is still timely. These are the homes, Gladu believes, that will endure the test of time.

"What we do really has a generational effect," he says. "You've got to hope that home is a place where generations will enjoy spending their lives." ♦

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From an advertisement for a Sears mail-order bungalow in 1926. The Sunbeam home cost \$2,707.

#### THE BUNGALOW OF OLD

No attached, two-car garage.

No bathroom on the main floor, no private bathroom linked to an upstairs master bedroom.

In the kitchen, no room for a dishwasher; severe lack of storage and cabinet space. Informal eating area is cramped.

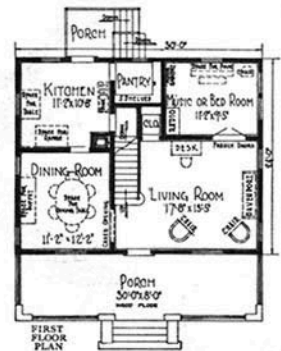
No separate den for a television or home office.

Few transitions to outdoor spaces, save for the wide front porch. No French or sliding doors linking the rear of the house to the back yard.

No mudroom or formal entry.

Single-pane windows and poorer-quality wall insulation make houses harder to heat and cool.

Small closets.



Square footage is about 1,200.

Laundry area is in a dark, unfinished basement.

Fewer regulations meant setbacks from streets and neighboring houses were often as little as five feet.



#### THE NEW BUNGALOW

##### FIRST FLOOR

**Front porch** runs the width of the house and can serve as an outdoor room.

**Entry hall** has a roomy closet and an open stairwell.

**Living, dining and kitchen** areas open into one another. Focal point is a fireplace flanked by built-in bookshelves and two high windows.

**Den** connects to the dining room with glass pocket doors and opens to the back yard.

**Cased opening** links and defines living, dining rooms.

**The kitchen**, with an old-fashioned

##### SECOND FLOOR

**Guests sleep** in a 600-square-foot vaulted studio above the garage that doubles as a play area for the kids.

**A small laundry room** at the top of the stairs is an efficient, unobtrusive use of space.

**The master bedroom** was widened a few feet to fit a king-size bed and adjacent bath.

**Second bathroom** and two additional bedrooms.

breakfast nook, departs from cramped, walled-off galleys of the past. It connects to the formal dining room. A cooking island is all that separates the two spaces. Light floods the open combined areas on both sides.

**Mudroom** adjoins the garage and a downstairs bath.