



CASTLEBROOK
HOMES LIMITED



Castlebrook Homes

By Ken Clarke

Sir Rodney, the lifesize shining knight in armor that has become the symbol of Jay Rickard's Waterloo-based Castlebrook Homes, seems right at home in the medieval shadow of Kitchener's curious Pioneer Tower.

This steely endorsement that a man's home is his castle has graced Rickard's model homes since he founded the custom homebuilding company in 1983.

Like Sir Rodney, the tower stands as a testament to strength and courage. Constructed in 1925, poised on the horizon like a strange hybrid of a corn silo and lighthouse, the tower was created as a memorial to the German Mennonites who migrated to the area in the early 1800s. It also marks the location of a pedestrian bridge to span the Grand River that will link this area to more than 100 kilometres of hiking, biking and cross-country ski trails that wind through Cambridge, K-W and extend north into Woolwich Township.

Castlebrook's current interest is Vista Ridge, an enclave of the burgeoning Deer Ridge subdivision, a utopian subdivision located off old King Street, tucked behind the former Lulu's Roadhouse complex.

It is an auspicious subdivision, characterized by elegant brick executive homes and upscale condos, sprinkled across cornfields and meadows alongside the Grand River.

Castlebrook has 14 lots for sale in the 60- by 120-foot range, with building plans designed by Rickard for more than a dozen bungalows plus two-storey executives, starting at around \$500,000.

"These are original designs created just for this subdivision," Rickard explains. "When we finish here, the designs will be retired. These homes will all be one of a kind."

Judging by the model home that Rickard unveiled on Saturday, they are going to be homes that easily could grace the pages of Home and Garden magazine.

The model is an eye-popping 2,400-square-foot bungalow aimed at executive couples and "right-sizers" - couples looking to downsize in space with no loss of comfort and certainly not in elegance.

Rickard's reputation for fastidious attention to detail preceded him at Saturday's grand opening.

"I've been waiting six years for this, Jay," gushed one woman who was familiar with Rickard's most recent work in Waterloo and was waiting for his arrival in the Deer Ridge area. "It is absolutely gorgeous!"

Who says bungalows look too plain? The model home has a handsome facade of clay brick punctuated by big transomed windows and four sharp gables which allow for a variety of ceiling treatments inside, staggered, coffered and

dramatic vaults. The driveway is about triple width, composed of a pebbled concrete, allowing the double garage to open to the side, where it doesn't dominate the view from the street.

The front door is a wood-stained fibreglass ("Stronger than steel"), capped by an elliptical transom and sandwiched by two sidelights.

The view from the foyer is stunning, peering across yards of exotic Brazilian cherrywood, a wood that actually changes colour with the seasons, transforming browns into reds.

A "privacy corridor" to the right of the foyer leads to two bedrooms, laundry, garage access and bathrooms. To the left, behind a pair of beveled French doors, lies a den, large enough to serve as an office, and smart-wired - as is the rest of the house - for speakers, telephone and Internet services.

But what really draws you inside is the view of the gas fireplace in the gymnasium-sized family room, beyond the dining room and kitchen. The fireplace is surrounded by an enormous 12-foot-high wall of dry-stacked quarried shale, which two stonemasons took a week to build, pieced together like a giant puzzle.

The vaulted ceiling of the family room is duplicated in the kitchen, resplendent with cherry floors and custom cabinets, surrounding a grand breakfast island capped with a grey countertop of polished concrete and aggregate. A high-kicking chorus line could perform in this kitchen while still leaving you room to prepare meals. The kitchen is even further augmented by a butler's pantry, deep with storage space.

Bedrooms are similarly spacious, the master bedroom spectacularly roomy with floor-to-ceiling windows lining one wall and a walkout to a future deck.

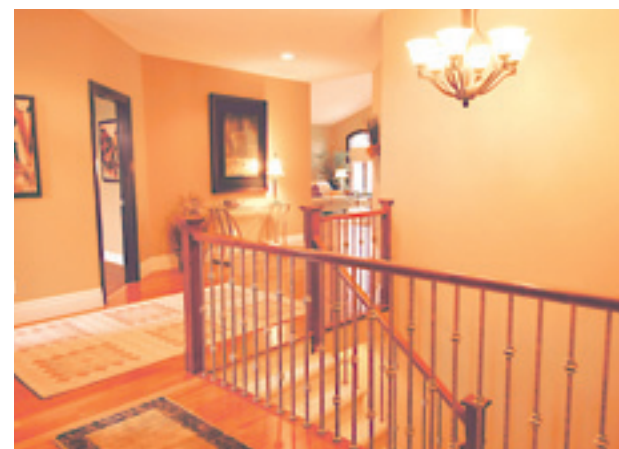
Large walk-in closets separate the bedroom from its ensuite which features a large soaker tub and a Mediterranean-style double shower with spa sprinklers in an optional glass enclosure. Double vanities and a water closet complete the picture.

The second bedroom is served by a separate four-piece bathroom.

Downstairs, a finished basement includes a third bedroom, full bath, and additional space for wet bar, entertainment centre, pool table, work out area and a future fireplace.

The home was furnished and decorated by Leslee Squirrell of By Design in Waterloo.

Don't miss a chance to explore this entrancing home. Open house hours are from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays.



For More Information Call: 519-746-6866
or visit the company
Web site at:
www.castlebrookhomes.com

How to get there:

To get there, take Deer Ridge Drive to Joseph Schoerg Crescent until it intersects Jacob Gingrich Drive. The model home is at 3 Jacob Gingrich, Kitchener.

