



## SUMA DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION PRESENTS THE SANTA CLAIRE R MODEL

**BUILDER:** Mark Sumada  
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Mark Sumada, owner of Suma Design & Construction, has built in all styles, from traditional to Tuscan, but his passion is — and always has been — Contemporary-style homes.

Mark studied at the University of Kansas' School of Architecture in the 1970s, where one of his professors, Curtis Bessinger studied and worked under Frank Lloyd Wright. Inspired by modernism, Mark started his construction company to pay his way through school building homes with Contemporary finishes. After a short time, Mark discovered that the Kansas City market was a Traditional style and wasn't ready for Contemporary-styled homes.

For decades, very few customers in Kansas City wanted a Contemporary home. But eight years ago, a custom build job started turning the tide for Mark's business. Clients who saw his design and home started adding up. Now the company offers a wide variety of Contemporary floor plans and builds them in neighborhoods from south Johnson County to Lee's Summit to north of the river.

What is so different about these houses? "The designs are cleaner, different and exciting; they are more polished," Mark says.

The trend toward simpler style has been evolving in recent years since, and along with it, Mark's approach to construction.

He builds fewer houses — scaled down half from his high of 30-40 per year — and is more involved with each customer, helping them with their design, cabinets, trim, color selections, tile selections and exterior veneers. Mark is a hands-on builder; attention to detail is one of his biggest strengths. "It's an enjoyable experience, and I really love the process," Mark says.

The Madison is one of his signature designs. "It's a statement

house," Mark says. "Everyone who sees that house loves the home, from the front elevation to the interior design and finishes and to the functional living spaces that I incorporate in all of my designs."

With such great response, Mark has put himself out there as one of only a handful of builders who work in this style.



Another of his floor plans, the Santa Claire R, shown here, finished construction just months ago. It's a smaller version of the plan, at 3,000 square feet, built for an empty-nester couple in Chapel Hill.

In essence, the plan lives the same as any traditional plan does, with open living spaces, a main-level master suite, second bedroom/office and lower-level recreation space.

But the looks are the defining characteristics. You see it in the tiled

fireplace surround with lineal gas insert; the stainless steel cabling on the stair handrails; and most of all, the lighting. High-end indirect and accent lighting, along with automated technology to run the system, is part of the wow-factor. "It does a lot for showcasing the house," Mark notes.

It's particularly alluring in the living room, where soft light illuminates from behind a wood wraparound element behind the TV, and above, from a stained dropdown vaulted ceiling.

"Comfortable spaces are what I'm aiming for," Mark says.

Comfortable, yes, but also grand. This plan has a 1.5-story entry that leads into an open great room, kitchen and dining space. The kitchen, to some degree, isn't full on modern, although it camouflages itself as such in all white and gray.

"We advance elements on Contemporary styling, adding new features to all of our homes, which makes them exciting and ahead of their time," Mark says. "We have not taken it to the limit yet. We move in that direction with every home we build, and we welcome our customers' ideas and input to create their own sense of style. Our focus is on our customers and style for the way they want to live."

Included in the Santa Claire plan is a 12-foot scissor door off the great room directly to the back deck. One part of the door opens as usual, but removing pins at the top and bottom of the other allows the wall to open up to a clear 12-foot opening from the great room to the covered deck. This outdoor access brings the outside in and vice-versa.

Customers still need extra space for entertaining and hosting company, and this plan provides that with a downstairs level that has two bedrooms with two full baths, plus a built-in bar with wine cubbies



and an attention-drawing tile backsplash.

Mark still builds whatever style his customers want, but his heart's desire for architectural diversity is being reciprocated. "It's so refreshing when you find someone who enjoys the same features that we have incorporated in our homes," He says. "These homeowners are elated, and that's the ultimate goal."

He expects more and more people will find their way to the Contemporary style. Mark says people in Kansas City of all age ranges, from Millennials to retirees, are showing interest. "They like it because it's refreshing, clean and different," he says.



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