

Custom HOME OF THE WEEK

Homeowner loves her nontraditional home

Summer Koplin refers to herself as a minimalist and someone who gets pleasure from simplicity in her surroundings. This description is evident in her new home.

Entering the home, visitors step onto a concrete floor that is delicately tinted and grooved to appear as large tiles complete with grout. Lighting comes from low-voltage fixtures suspended from cables that crisscross the large living space.

The look of steel is everywhere in the house, from the stainless steel and granite in the kitchen to the metal sink in the upstairs bathroom. Furnishings of glass, metal and intense colors reflect the homeowner's style.

However, light flooding in through the wall of windows makes the kitchen sparkle with color. Cabinets of cobalt blue reflect in stainless steel countertops and complement the flecks of blue in the granite eating bar.



Koplin and her builder, Mike Cohen and his staff at MC Construction Consultants Inc., carefully orchestrated the whole picture.

Because the house is nontraditional by Northwest standards, Koplin had some difficulty finding a builder who would design the home of her dreams.

"I talked to a few builders and would go look at their products and talk with them.

In the first five minutes they'd try to talk me out of things. They were so close-minded," Koplin said. "When I met Mike I knew he would be the one because he was so kind and open to anything. There were some things he'd never done before,

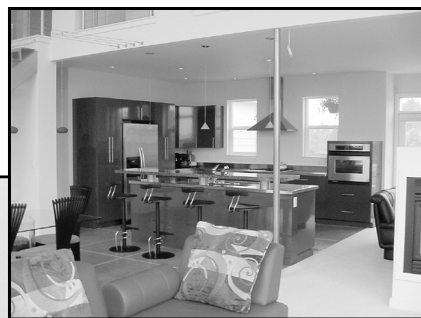


but he is always looking for something new. I'm adventurous, and Mike helped me accomplish what I wanted. It was the most pleasant experience — I believe in Mike totally."

Using sketches from her imagination and pictures she'd cut from magazines Koplin conveyed her ideas to Cohen. The result is dramatic and exciting.

Although concrete floors and steel accents may sound a bit cold, the combination is anything but that. The look is clean, not stark, and Koplin's simplicity in ornamentation produces an open and free-flowing feel in the entire 2,265-square-foot living area.

Modern materials create continuity throughout the home. The steel staircase has a cable railing and metal steps that seem to meld seamlessly with the surrounding space. The steel and cable of the stairs continues to the balcony, which overlooks the downstairs and connects the three bedrooms. There's also a special, last minute feature — a small deck outside the master bedroom.



"I've always wanted a balcony and that was the last decision I made. I told Mike to go ahead and do it, and I love it."

Another feature she enjoys is the fireplace that divides, but doesn't obscure, the dining and living rooms. The double-sided fireplace is low, so there's an uninterrupted view of the rooms. Although necessary, the chimney

is unobtrusively built into a divided wall to the side of the glass-fronted fireplace.

The many windows in the living room enhance Koplin's view of the Black Hills.

"I'm new to Washington and knew the winters would be gloomy, and that's why these windows are here," said the newly transplanted Florida resident. "The house might remind you of a commercial building because there are lots of small windows — two walls of them."

The combination of all the elements is what made other builders question



Koplin's design decisions.

"I don't believe in building a house for someone 10 years from now. I built it for my own tastes," Koplin explained. "I've always been interested in modern materials and I like modern art and architecture. This house is perfect for me."

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