



**Janet Bayda & Graeme Boniface, Vancouver, BC** Lots of people talk about their “dream house.” For Janet Bayda, the phrase is quite literal: The design for the house came to her in a dream. “It had glass exterior walls,” she says, “and, for the most part, no interior walls. The main floor was wrapped around a koi pond that would lead through the house into the garden, where outdoors now became part of the indoors.”

Bayda, a financial consultant, and Graeme Boniface, the director of clinical research for a biotechnology company, had both been through divorces, which put them on track for a whole new way of life, one with far fewer belongings. They got rid of their past in a joint garage sale and at auction, having decided that a future together meant starting fresh.

During a two-year search for their ideal house, the couple discussed what was important to them in a home. “We both believe that a home should be a refuge or sanctuary,” Bayda says, “where one can find comfort, tranquility and peace. It should be a place of rest, where things are calm and serene and one can unwind.” But with nothing remotely like her dream appearing on the housing market, the couple bought a lot in Vancouver where they would build it from scratch.

The first of many roadblocks to their dream was a builder-architect who could not seem to grasp the couple’s vision, so they hired architect David Nicolay to conjure a habitable reality. Together they designed what Nicolay conceived as a “very well dressed box.” To keep it simple, Bayda and

Boniface, a native of New Zealand, limited the size of the house. It’s 2,400 square feet on three levels.

The couple opted for a less-is-more approach by using minimal materials in natural tones and textures and keeping surfaces uncluttered. On the main floor, the rooms flow into one another, each one providing views of a centralized reflecting pool while sliding glass doors on all three levels let in the light, and many of their rooms serve double duty. The guest rooms, for example, also function as spaces for entertaining and practicing music.

Bayda, who has lived in Europe and Asia, credits her international upbringing with influencing her passion for design. During the two years of construction, she scoured the Milan Furniture Fair, handpicking pieces that would complement her Zen-like aesthetic. “The furniture had to have clean modern lines as well as be functional and adaptable,” Bayda says. When existing furniture didn’t meet their needs, the homeowners ordered such custom-built pieces as the master bath’s maple shelves.

With the home of their dreams a done deal, Bayda and Boniface decided to seal another one. In January 2005, the couple got married, “the opposite of what most couples do after building a house,” Bayda jokes. For these lucky newlyweds, happily ever after came equipped with its own private sanctuary. 🏡

*See Resources, last pages.*

**PRODUCED BY LINDA O’KEEFFE. PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN KESSLER. WRITTEN BY MEGAN O’NEILL.**

The storage capacity of a vanity, the openness of a pedestal lav and the convenience of a double-wide sink meet in the custom-designed maple millwork in the master bathroom. Opposite (from left): A Vitra *Butterfly* stool and Wet tub are accompanied by a Philippe Starck toilet from Duravit; an S chair from Cappellini and Moooi's *Random* hanging lamp complement the crisp lines of the master bedroom.

