

All about *Architecture***Destination living: Family compounds becoming more popular**

People often move to Florida looking for a particular lifestyle. They are attracted to the subtropical climate that allows them to enjoy beaches throughout the year, five-star dining options, world-class shopping, and outstanding medical facilities.

For these reasons, many thousands of people cross our state line each year to explore the real estate possibilities. Two of the most sought-after housing options are country club communities and oceanfront condominiums.

Now a third type of buyer is emerging: those looking for open spaces. These want it all, including the advantages previously stated — plus privacy and the option to customize their living environment to their specific lifestyle.

Question: What are these new buyers looking for?

Answer: Options, or what I like to call "destination living." These buyers are no different from any of the others in Florida except they have something unique in mind for themselves.

By purchasing larger land areas, they have fewer limitations and can enjoy all the great things for which Florida is renowned. At the same time, these buyers can custom-design their homes and live the life that is suited for them.

Many are looking for a "family compound" — a place that their immediate family members, including

their parents and children, can enjoy today. Then the property will become a legacy for generations to come.

Q: What types of homes are being built on these larger parcels of land?

A: We're seeing a lot of clients looking for generational living possibilities. With the leading edge of the baby boomers now in their early 60s, we're going to see a lot of this.

Though Florida offers many retirement-community options, the vast majority of the retiring American public would prefer to remain in their own homes.

Taking this a step further: Some boomers, as they continue to age, will live with their family members. These clients are among those purchasing land and hiring architects to design a home that will suit their extended families, often opting for a main residence with a "grandparents' wing."

Some are even planning a separate cottage so an elderly family member(s) can live somewhat independently.

There also is a demand for functioning home offices that are segregated from the main house. As a result of advances in technology, a lot of people work from home, and they want that separation between home and work life.

The separate building also could be a guest house. This is another emerging trend that we're seeing in Florida as younger generations are returning home for longer periods.

Offering additional flexibility, this separate building also might serve as a hobby house, a party room or a retreat of sorts.

In addition, we are seeing great interest from families in which one or more members are equestrians. They want to have that lifestyle in their own back yard, along with a home office and multigenerational living.

Q: With the heat and frequent summer rainfall, is Florida really an ideal place for stables?

A: Florida is a great place for equestrians. By building a home with a stable, an equestrian — and the horses — enjoy far more days of sunshine and warmth than they would elsewhere, while still enjoying all of our state's other wonderful advantages.

Accustomed to Florida's weather conditions, some architects and builders have perfected the design of these barns. Proper and (sometimes) creative planning is necessary to ensure adequate ventilation, drainage, pest control and safety precautions.

Other important elements include the type of roof, the size of the doors and windows, the height of stalls and the materials that they are made of, the need for an exhaust fan, and so forth. These barns also are built to be hurricane-resistant and can be just as customized as the home.

The bottom line: No matter what your lifestyle, there are architects and builders who can work with you to construct that special compound you've always dreamed about.

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The ranch house's open floor plan includes fun features such as a game room, cowboy bar, country kitchen, five-car garage, and rustic yet elegant-looking exposed rafters and stone fireplaces.



Designed by Affiniti Architects and built by Cribb Construction, this barn's open design and the construction of the stalls allows for natural cooling, as well as the ability to be completely closed in poor weather. The hurricane-resistant barn features eight stalls with individual run-out areas, a fly-spray system, swinging feeders and an automatic watering system for convenience and safety, a groom's apartment, feed room and two wash stalls.



The 7,000-square-foot main residence was designed by Affiniti Architects and built by Cribb Construction. With a multigenerational living design and a South Carolina Low Country charm, this home features four wings that are attached to the central/public areas of the house.