

**UNASSUMING MODERNITY
MEETS OLD WORLD ELEGANCE
IN 13,000 SQUARE FEET**




WINDWARD OAKS

M. KNIGHT CONSTRUCTION

Words by JESSICA KRIPPENDORF
Photographs by VINCE KLASSEN

HOME BUILDER M. Knight Construction Ltd.		
DESIGNER Michael Cullin		
INTERIOR DESIGN M. Knight Construction Ltd.		
STYLE Tudor Revival		
BEDROOMS 4	BATHROOMS 7	SQUARE FEET 13,000



An indoor/
outdoor
sensibility that
harmonizes
with its coastal
surroundings

Windward Oaks is an enthralling collaboration between brooding, old world elegance and the inviting, location inspired setting that typifies custom homes on Vancouver Island's southern coast.

With an enormous sky and vast ocean to its back, the 13,000 square foot mansion seems to rise up out of the sea with a castle-like presence that invigorates the streetscape. Decorative Tudor styling, cedar shingles, and extensive rock work are a mixed array of finely detailed materials chosen to fulfill the homeowners' specific requirement to make the completely new build look as though it has been there for 100 years.

The homeowners modelled their vision for the home after properties created by Samuel Maclure—a residential architect from New Westminster, B.C, widely known in Victoria for his Tudor Revival and Arts and Crafts designs. Windward Oaks homeowners selected M. Knight Construction Ltd. as builder and general contractor on the project. Mike Knight has completed more than 60 custom homes in Victoria and the Saanich Peninsula with his team of respected trade professionals; all committed to excellence, teamwork, and continuity. Owner Mike Knight is adamant about the importance of start to finish continuity. “The outcome is beautifully crafted, distinctive homes that will stand the test of time.”

Above. Secluded sun trap overlooking the Pacific Ocean.



WINDWARD OAKS SEEMS TO RISE UP FROM THE SEA WITH A CASTLE-LIKE PRESENCE

M. Knight Construction provides full scale services from rock removal to turnkey completion, including carpentry, framing, and millwork. “The more services we provide in house, the more continuity we bring to the project,” says Knight. “The guys want to be able to complete the job, which is rare in the industry. The staff takes a sense of ownership over the job.”

Windward Oaks was a prized project for its scale and the stylistic specifications. It is constructed on an angular, sloping lot that created an interesting challenge for project architect Michael Cullin, who is also known for his work restoring Maclure homes.

One part of the lot, which boasts 550 feet of prime waterfront, is 40 feet below the elevation from another corner, which had an enormous effect on the allowable height. This challenge turned opportunity was solved by constructing a flat roof, the shape of which is hidden from the street by a series of dormers that create dimension on all sides of the home. “It isn't the typical Maclure layout,” says Cullin. “I wanted to splay the two wings so every room had a view of the ocean or mountain, but the layout was dictated by the lot.”

The blending of home and gardens was an important component of the Maclure tradition—at Windward Oaks, the “wild and tiled” mix of carefully laid stone work, sculpted lawn areas, and native plantings creates an engaging breadth of movement around the base of the home.

A covered garden space and a 2,500 square foot boathouse are positioned along a wide granite stone path that carries along to the back of the property and on to the ocean. The property is enveloped by a curving granite stone wall that layers on the street sides creating mass and interest beyond the footprint of the home.



Uncomplicated beauty with medieval undertones and elements of classic Edwardian

“ITS CONTINUITY AND COHESIVENESS MAKE IT TO READ LIKE A PURE MACLURE HOME”



The grand entrance is a stone and wood detailed opening, under one of three balconies visible from the street front, and is the first hint of the majestic scale and style that awaits on the inside.

The entrance foyer is a wide open, welcoming space where an exquisite display of custom millwork in vertical grain fir begins. The form and scale are large and exude uncomplicated beauty with medieval undertones, and features of Edwardian classicism. The ceilings are 12 feet in the hall and 24 feet in the great room, and even the doors are oversized at 2.25 inches thick with cast iron pulls.

To the left of the front door and facing the street a set of three, tripled tiered stained glass windows stretch upwards 15 feet flooding this crossroads for the home with natural light.

Period essence is captured with wainscoting, paneling, and crown mouldings throughout. Oak flooring runs throughout most of the main floor with a classic border detail, and custom rugs—many of them Persian—are art forms in each room.

To the left from the entranceway, an oversized staircase curls upward to the second level, and to the right, two pillared half walls announce the great room, which calls for attention with its meticulous, period charm and vast view of the ocean and mountains beyond.

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The back wall is a panoramic ocean view through large scale picture windows that are drawn into the home's ambiance by three rows of tiered, smaller square windows above. The central window header is curved, mimicking four exposed timber trusses that form the structural and aesthetic integrity of the space. Their moulded edges and exposed peg fastening on the trusses are careful and meticulous details. Large lantern-style chandeliers hang over the 24-foot-high ceiling, celebrating its brilliance, but also bringing it to a human scale.

The fireplace is shrouded in intricately detailed wood and blended hues of Pennsylvania blue stone that mosaic and pull colour from the rest of the room. Punched copper plates with a flower design are inset in the wood work, and are the first of several appearances the copper plates make throughout the home.

The hammered brass plates in the fireplace, posts, and exterior gates are one element that pulls through the space. Another is a basket weave pattern in the sunroom and upstairs bathrooms, and a third is a series of hand-crafted, West Coast inspired art glass pieces commissioned from a pair of artists from Maine Island. This repetitive and celebratory use of hand-crafted materials is a key element of Maclure architecture.

"Because of the continuity and cohesiveness of the entire home, it reads like a pure Maclure home," says Cullin. "This home was something genuine. There are lots of homes that have some of the features, but seldom follow through to this extent."

A fireplace fender from Victoria's historically famous Empress Hotel wraps around the fireplace, its deep green-grey fabric paying tribute to a subtle, but rich palette set by the room's carefully selected furniture. Three chairs in grey, green, and cream maintain an air of sophistication while the deep green of the sofa is a warm and grounding presence. The furniture collects ambiance around a simple wood and glass table where conversation can evolve in front of the fire.

To the left of the great room is the dining area where eight black and gold striped chairs surround a wooden table with tinted glass centre insert. The assembly is positioned centrally in front of a brass-faced fireplace. A millwork hearth extends upward to house an inspiring piece of art, and out to either side in glass-faced cabinetry. The room closes off from the rest of the house with glass pocket doors.

With an eye on the future, a gated elevator is built into the hallway, which features a stunning array of artwork. The homeowners' tendency to purchase art for the feeling it inspires is obvious in this place where warmth and personality radiate. Classic style meets cutting edge technology with in-floor radiant heating and an air exchanger unit hidden in the crown moulding.

Beyond the dining room, the kitchen and family room are combined at the end of the hall with the use of white cabinetry and lighter shades of beige, brown, and orange create a brighter palette that still adheres to the home's over-arching aesthetic. Two types of granite appear in the kitchen—an orange and golden sand pattern on the perimeter counter and an orange and black pattern one on the Island. Onyx and metal pendant light fixtures hang over the island while copper plates appear again over the stove.

Consider the Possibilities

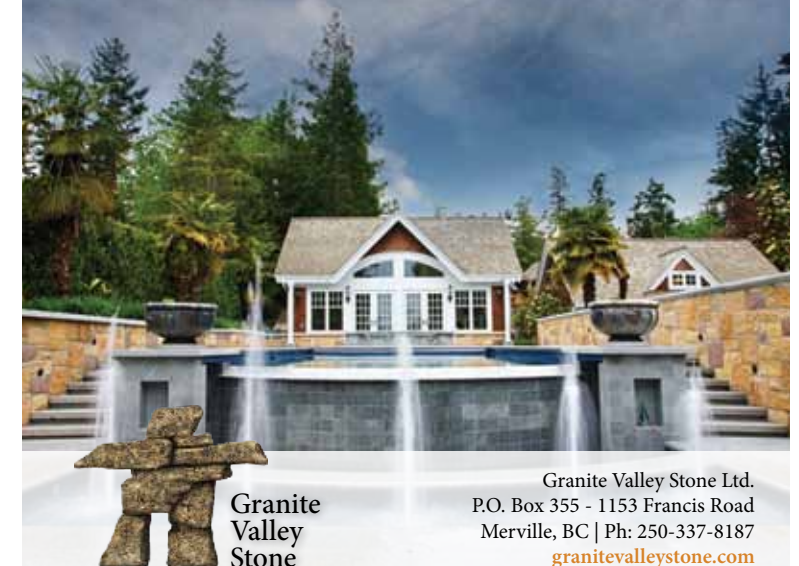


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Simplicity in the furniture allows the outside to set the tone of the room

The fridge and freezer are built-in and the island's curved edge on one side and solid fir base blend with the furniture. A butler's pantry is off the kitchen—a smaller, fully-equipped, and purely functional space with doors to pull shut when the guests arrive.

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Left. Restful kitchen nook with million dollar Beach Drive view.



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An oceanview breakfast nook is tucked away between the main kitchen area and the family room where two deeply recessed window benches flank a fireplace in the main seating area, for ocean gazing and storm watching.

To the right of the great room is the sunroom, where a soft yet bright palette reflects beautiful light through extensive glazing. Custom art glass in the crowning top sections of the windows adds a graceful touch, while the room's wood elements are emphasized by the lighter palette. A heated deck leads out from this room to a wide seating area under a pergola.

Architectural glass takes the eye from the sunroom to the billiards room where the mood shifts once again to a darker, refined ambiance. Extensive millwork shelving an impressive book collection wraps around the room, offering a backdrop of sophistication for the billiards table. A green-black granite tops the counter beneath the shelving and overtop a refrigerated drawer and scotch bar.

The mood throughout remains reserved and refined with recessed directional pot lights and wall sconces in matching shapes and materials. A signature trait of Cullin's is the use of granite in the window ledges for functionality and these appear in the stairway windows on the way to the second floor.

The handrail up the main grand staircase is hand carved with intricate detail and leads to a balcony that overlooks the great room. The master bedroom is completely windowed with a loft-like feel from exposed timbers in the ceiling. Two walk-in closets are 12 x 14 for endless space among mill worked shelving and custom art glass inserts in the windows.

The master ensuite is a remarkable collection of features that stay with the home's décor, but still exude the Zen-like ambiance of a spa-inspired environment. A glass steam shower is positioned just beyond a free-standing, jetted soaker tub that is a newer take on the traditional clawfoot tub. Double sinks are set into black granite counters with a stepped centre, contrasting beautifully with the grey and white softness of the marble floor. Directly across, Japanese maples are etched into the opaque window glass.

A guest suite on the upper floor offers refuge and ultimate comfort with a computer station, and a Jack and Jill bathroom that pulls green, grey, and beige tones from the rest of the home. The suite itself offers a bed in a custom milled wooden frame, and cozy seating area from which to appreciate the view. The soft and neutral beige and sage invites relaxation while a beautiful oak floor grounds the space. Guests can also take in the ocean air from a private deck that stretches out over the pergola below.

The office doubles as a showcase for some of the homeowner's collections—a guitar collection and several prints of vintage racecars set the tone for playfulness and dedication to life's finer offerings. Reserved charm and sophistication is apparent in every detail from the leather paneling on the floor to the over-size, custom built oak desk at the back of the room. Leather furniture and a wraparound counter with green and brown patterned granite complete the look.



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Above. A decadent master retreat for rest, relaxation and reflection.

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VINCE KLASSEN

Photographer, Vince Klassen, was born and raised in Victoria, BC. He shot his first photographs at the age of 9, experimented with film and video during his teens, and became a self-taught professional still photographer in 1987. Klassen has a thriving freelance photography business, and his commercial success includes dozens of corporate clients, projects with national and international publications, awards from the Graphic Designers of Canada, and his personal work has been exhibited and collected by the international photography hall of fame and museum.

"My approach to photography is a combination of imagination, pre-visualization, and the utilization of science to obtain anything I desire.

I love the challenge of creating a moment in time which explores concepts and creates beautiful and unique tableaux."

Klassen's knowledge of classical and contemporary photography is comprehensive. When not experimenting in the darkroom with platinum and other historical printmaking processes, Klassen can be found traveling and collaborating with his contemporaries.

On the lower level, the games room boasts a series of pinball machines from various ages that the homeowner enjoys collecting and repairing, a working jukebox and patio doors that open all the way up to the outside to create a true inside-outside space.

"We wanted to create some private, quiet spaces on the exterior too," says Cullin. "We blasted down and built a protected exterior fireplace that you can't see from the water. It was a wonderful opportunity to give the homeowners a place to sit outside and still be warmed by the sun."

Back inside, art glass doors with inset LED lighting—wired through the hinges—open up to a fully-equipped fitness room with cork flooring and a wall of mirrors. A half bath and guest room with double beds means the homeowners' dream of having a place their friends and family can visit comfortably has been realized. In the media room, eight recliners tip back to a wide screen TV with projector that displays movies on an electric actuated screen.

The attached fully equipped garage houses an impressive car collection. At the end of the yard, the boathouse features a full-scale service station-themed shop for some of homeowner's vintage cars. The epoxy floor and stainless storage

capacity make the room highly functional, along with a full-service hoist for working on cars. The second part of the boathouse is a "waiting area" where leather furniture and a 70s style teardrop table welcome guests for a seat by yet another ocean view and small exterior patio.

From the boathouse, the property stretches away from the buildings and a path ends at the ocean's feet. The patio curves and twists like the surf on a stormy day and the landscaping grows wilder the closer it gets to the ocean.

In many ways, the team reinvented the wheel at Windward Oaks, says Cullin, because contemporary homes are rarely built in this style. "Being observant about what is authentic and honoring the style and not trying to impose a contemporary aesthetic is important," says Cullin. "With this home we were really pulling threads together and creating something genuine."

"The contractor was great with marvelous tradespersons," he says. "It was a strong collaborative effort".

Windward Oaks is a master class in custom home building – a massive residence with a warm, comfy feel – a home where modern innovation blends discreetly with classic old world elegance.

Above. State of the art home theatre.

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