

# PICTURE PERFECT

## Couple's dream home started with an online search

Just one look is all it took for Don and Susan Brown to know exactly what they wanted their new home to look like.

A combination of family experience and online research led the Browns to contact Royal Homes to get the job done.

After retiring from a long-term position in Ontario, Don took a short-term consulting contract to work overseas. They had a property to move

back to when the contract was over, but not the home they wanted on it. So they began looking at pictures of homes online to get inspired.

They eventually found images of their dream home. "I fell in love with it," says Susan, who then showed Don. "And Don fell in love with it. Because it was perfect, with southern windows, a walkout, and the open concept we wanted."

Susan's parents had previously purchased a home from Royal Homes and had a good experience. So, the couple connected with a representative, and the process began.

Working with a Royal Homes sales and design consultant while they were still overseas, the Browns emailed the picture.

"He said, 'it's not like anything we have, but we can do it,'" recalls Don.

Within a week of returning to Canada, the design and planning process really started moving. Speed was important – Don and Susan were living on a trailer on their property without running water or electricity while the process was underway. "But it was worth it to get this," says Susan, and smiles as she looks around their home.

### Prefab fabulous

Don and Susan's initial thoughts about a prefabricated home were that it would be built in a factory, come in a few pieces, and be erected in a couple of days.

The reality is a bit more complicated, particularly with a custom design. The home is, indeed, built in the Royal Homes facility, shipped to the

site, and then erected. But it does take a bit more than a couple of days of onsite work to achieve the level of detail Royal Homes achieves.

Don says the process further cemented the company's reputation in his mind. "I did project management for a lot of years. There are four pillars of project management: safety, quality, cost, and time. They nailed it in every regard."

Work was done quickly but safely; the quality is incredible; the agreed upon price didn't change; and they hit their deadline. "They promised Susan she would be out of the trailer by December 20th and they did it."

Living in their trailer throughout the build, Don and Susan got a closeup view of the team's work ethic. "We were here through

the whole thing, so we saw everything being done," Susan says, adding that they also toured the factory to see their home being built.

### Solid planning

Although the final design was true to their vision, Don says the Royal Homes team made some suggestions for modifications along the way. Don and Susan are delighted with the results, especially with a cozy office space that gets lots of use.

"They said, 'you're going to want a bigger master bedroom,'" says Don. "Make an office and two bedrooms upstairs.' But the basic footprint and look of the house were exactly what we wanted."

One of the most impressive details is the way both the design and construction manage to conceal the "marriage walls" – the walls

where two modules join. "When people come in here and we tell them it's a modular home, they always ask, where are the marriage walls?" says Don. Some are concealed in closets and dividing walls, while others are hidden in plain site as architectural details.

A little more challenging was the cathedral ceiling the Browns wanted in their main room, but Royal Homes made it happen.

Don says the designers adjusted the plan from a 4/4 pitch (a low slope) to a 4/8 pitch (steeper), which gave them the cathedral ceiling without sacrificing other elements of the design.

Similarly, the couple's preferred location for a woodstove would have meant an awkward-looking chimney installation. The Royal Homes team had a better idea, explored the

options with Don and Susan, and came up with a solution that fit their goals for the way the home would look and function.

Don says he was also impressed by the attention to detail, whether it was a piece of fascia out of place that the untrained eye wouldn't notice, or an area of flooring needing a touch-up.

"They went through this house with a fine-tooth comb before they put their stamp on it."

It all started with a picture on the Internet. Now the Browns are living in their dream home and Royal Homes made it happen.

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Don and Susan Brown,  
Homeowners