

Globe Real Estate

Architecture

The green trend

The growing number of people who care about sustainability have a lot more than the hydro bill in mind. John Bentley Mays discusses a new book that details the latest in environmentally friendly residential design.

See **The Perfect House**, page G2



Home renovation

Talking tiles

Most floors are enhanced by tiles. Mike Holmes has some tips on what's available and how to install them.



See **Make It Right**, page G4

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RICHARD LIBRACH ARCHITECT INC.

ARCHITECTURE

The less-is-better home

Richard Librach avoids the usual approach to infill sites, **JANE GADD** writes

Drive the eerily straight, ice-crusted streets of the well-heeled Ledbury Park neighbourhood in the north end of the old city of Toronto and, if you're not sideswiped by an SUV shooting out of a driveway, you'll notice you're in a truly odd landscape.

Immense, blocky new houses in the "faux-teaux" style meant to

evoke French chateaux jostle each other for shoulder room and loom over the occasional sad-looking remnants of the neighbourhood's original style — bungalows and 1½-storey dwellings of soot-blackened red brick built in the 1950s.

The area, north of Lawrence Avenue between Bathurst Street and Avenue Road, has been largely demolished and rebuilt by specula-

tors in the past decade or two. But most blocks still are dotted with a few of the tiny old homes and the occasional picket fence.

Just such a home with just such a fence used to occupy the southeast corner of the neighbourhood's axis at Ledbury Street and Fairlawn Avenue.

See **LEDBURY** on page G4

Windows in the Ledbury Park home are odd-sized panes of glass cased in pine to give a sense of an abstract composition rather than just a framed window.

PRICES

For luxury homes, \$10-million is the new benchmark

BY UNNATI GANDHI

Five bedrooms, four bathrooms, an indoor sauna and sunroom, a private office overlooking Fame Lake and a custom fireplace made of local Precambrian granite that extends from the living room up to the second floor.

With specs like that, the 5,500-square-foot Engle Estate in Yellowknife — the most expensive residential property currently listed in the North — could easily fetch several times the \$2.6-million it is valued at, were it a little further south.

That's because demand, for one, is holding strong.

The recent listing of a \$10-million home in Banff, Alta., the most expensive to go on sale in that town, is simply indicative of the booming luxury-home industry in Canada, real estate experts say.

If anything, that \$10-million price tag is considered low for many markets in the West.

"In a place like Calgary, where you have a whole bunch of economic growth with the oil industry, and a lot of people getting pretty good bonuses, it's no surprise that it's allowing them to move upscale in the homes they are purchasing," said Bob Dugan, chief economist at the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corp. market-analysis centre.

"But you look at a place like Ottawa, where the senior officials are politicians and techs, the bonuses aren't so good, so the market for luxury homes is that much smaller."

Looking at the threshold for what constitutes a "luxury" home, Re/Max Realty recently found that a luxury home in Toronto and Vancouver was one that sold for at least \$1.5-million.

In Victoria, Kelowna and Calgary, the cutoff was \$1-million.

See **LUXURY HOMES** on page G2



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