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*Harmonious
Architecture*

Home Sweet Guest Suite

Your garage may be the perfect spot to build the perfect space

By Kelli Wegscheid

Most people have the “wish list” of areas they would love to incorporate into their home, if only they had more room – a sewing or craft room, man cave, gym space or space for visiting relatives. Especially over holidays or long weekends, we welcome guests to our homes to share in laughter, fun and togetherness. Quite commonly lake homes fill up with visitors; friends, family, grown children and their children. But, too

much togetherness in a small home can make the visit feel uncomfortable for both the hosts and the guests. Where are we to put all these guests that we really do enjoy having visit?

When designing a new home, finding that right balance between the space you need for everyday living and the “wish list” spaces can become daunting. The underutilized space above a garage may very well be the happy medium in creating “occasional use” spaces,

without breaking the bank. Even in a home remodel, removing the standard garage roof and trusses, then adding attic trusses back in can create more living space.

With a 24-by-26 foot garage footprint and a 10-12 roof pitch designed with attic trusses, a living area with sloped ceilings and four foot sidewalls can be created; providing just enough room to transform the garage “attic” into a welcoming living space. Two bedrooms at 10-by-



15 foot, a bathroom at 5-by-10 foot and a small lounge space may be the answer to creating a perfect private retreat for your guests.

Creating a visiting family suite above the garage provides privacy between guest spaces and homeowner space. If your guests are typically families with children, consider creating a space above the garage similar to a hotel suite – smaller, separated bedrooms with a shared but divided bathroom, a space to lounge and watch TV, or work on a computer, if needed.

In a guest bedroom, dressers and closet space can be left to a minimum. The extra floor space available for portable cribs, or luggage, is more valuable to guests than closet storage. The sloped ceilings of a space above the garage bring the size and scale of that room down, creating a fun atmosphere that is especially comfortable for children. A dormer that pops the roof up provides additional headroom for adult guests and creates a nook perfect for a reading chair or desk.

With multiple guests sharing one bathroom, placing the stool and tub/shower in one room with a door, and moving the vanity with

sink out of that space is the best setup for accommodating multiple users, while still providing privacy.

An oversized lounge chair or loveseat may be all that is needed to provide an intimate TV lounge, accommodating both young children that wake up early to watch cartoons, and the teenager who wants to stay up late. If space al-

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Typically the space over the garage is difficult to heat and cool with the main house HVAC systems, because of its remote location. HVAC technology such as a mini-split (different

than, but comparable to a hotel wall heater/air conditioner) can be utilized to control this zone of the house separately from the main living space. If designed correctly, the guest space can then be closed off and the heat turned down when not in use.

With any type of new home or remodel, be sure to check your local ordinances to make

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sure your project can move forward within the specified codes or guidelines. Consult a licensed plumber to make sure any bathroom plumbing above a garage space does not freezer or create problems with our winter weather.

Putting this often under-utilized space to work for you can free up other space in your home, allow for more guests to visit at the same time, or simply make your guests feel more welcome. ~L&H



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