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Peter and Elizabeth Guida's Mission-style kitchen fits their home—and their heads—perfectly.

Smaller but better

Four years ago, contractor Peter Guida started a new business called Bethesda Bungalows. His aim was to build smaller houses better, so the home buyer would have a choice: For the same price, they could purchase either a 7,000-square-foot home with fewer extra details and more standard materials or a 3,000- to 4,000-square-foot house with higher quality materials and more extras. If it was designed right, Guida felt, the extra square footage wouldn't be necessary.

Since then, Guida has been following his muse. Working with Oregon-based home designer Christian Gladu, Guida is now producing Craftsman-style bungalows that are substantially smaller than a typical new home in the Bethesda area. And being a builder, he moves his family—wife Elizabeth and two daughters ages 4 and 2—in and out of these houses before he puts them up for sale. In fact, they're living in one now: a Prairie-style

(the Mercedes-Benz of the Arts and Crafts movement) home in Bethesda that at over 4,000 square feet is larger than most of his bungalows but smaller than his neighbor's house, which is about 7,500 square feet. The Prairie-style home includes a solid cherry Mission-style kitchen with top-of-the-line appliances as well as extensive Prairie-style millwork—continuous picture-rail headers on every wall, wainscoting and door and window moldings.

Along with beautiful high-end woodwork and the obligatory gourmet kitchen and master bedroom suite, the five-bedroom house has other extras, such as a home theater (a perk Guida always includes in his homes; the seating and equipment are included in the sale price) and, in one of the kids' rooms, a 12-by-14-foot carpeted play space under the floor that's accessible by a trap door. This is part of a larger crawl space between floors on one side of the house. The small finished basement area with the theater in it also hous-

es an office where Guida's wife works as an artist. Creating a storage area rather than enlarging the basement is one of the space-saving measures Guida employs to keep his projects small. The storage area is accessible from the garage.

In the Craftsman vein, the kitchen opens onto a large family room with a big stone fireplace and cherry-stained wood paneling that reaches close to ceiling height. There's a breakfast nook with built-in wooden benches off to one side for everyday eating; a full dining room is used for larger groups rather than the immediate family. When explaining his building philosophy, Guida refers to the popular book, *The Not So Big House* by Sarah Susanka, a Minnesota-based architect who has spearheaded a movement toward building smaller homes. She advocates building houses that favor quality of space over quantity. "It's the anti-mansionization home," Guida says.