

Guide to Home Remodeling Searching for Great Pizza
How I Lost 75 Pounds Homes of the Financial Fat Cats

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**WE LIVE IN
ONE OF THE
MOST BEAUTIFUL
PLACES ON
EARTH. ARE WE
PROTECTING THE AIR
WE BREATHE, THE WATER WE
DRINK, THE LAND WE USE?
HERE ARE THE PLAYERS,
THE WINS AND LOSSES,
THE FUTURE**



top remodelers

Here Are Local Architects and Builders

Recommended by Experts

By BARBARA C. NEFF AND SHERRI DALPHONSE

WHO ARE THE BEST ARCHITECTS, CONTRACTORS, AND DESIGN/BUILD FIRMS IN Washington? To find out, we asked builders to name the architects whose work they admire. We asked architects about builders who can get a job done right. Interior designers gave us the scoop on both.

After polling more than 100 experts, we came up with this list—the architects and builders who received the most recommendations from their peers.

If a firm is not listed, that does not mean it isn't good. A survey may miss good architects and builders. Some respected firms, such as Adamstein & Demetriou, do more commercial than residential work. Other top talents, including Hugh Newell Jacobsen and Heather Cass, have national reputations, but are not who you'd call for a family-room addition.

MAJOR CONSTRUCTION USUALLY REQUIRES AN ARCHITECT AND A builder. Design/build firms, which have contractors and architects on staff, are a one-stop option.

A common knock on design/build firms is that designs can be formulaic. But we've seen top architects repeat the same look for client after client—who may come to the architect for a trademark style.

If you want your new family room to win architecture awards, an independent architect may be the best bet. But some homeowners who hire architects find the plans too grandiose for a kitchen or bath. Design/build firms may be best for smaller, straight-



forward jobs.

“If people are very discriminating, if details are something you’ll be very aware of, sometimes design/build is not the best route,” says interior designer Barry Dixon. But, he says, design/build firms streamline the process and can do a project faster. It doesn’t necessarily cost less. “You’re paying for convenience.”

30 Top Remodelers

MOST OF THE BUILDERS AND design/build firms listed here perform a range of work, including renovation, additions, and new-home construction. An asterisk (*) in-

dicates that the builder won awards for residential work from NARI or the AIA in the past three years.

***Bowa Builders, McLean; 703-734-9050; www.bowa.com.** Bowa specializes in large, upper-end residential projects and is noted for good customer service.