

REAL ESTATE

Designer Cottages gives tiny homes a luxury makeover

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Luxury tiny homes start at \$125,000 and up. Image credit: Designer Cottages

By SARAH RAMIREZ

While modular or "tiny" homes have found a niche among today's minimalist-minded consumers, Berkshire Hathaway's Designer Cottages is looking to bring the trend to the affluent homebuyer.

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Since these tiny homes are built-to-order, the company has opened Sales Village and Experience Centers so customers can better experience the lifestyle. What Designer Cottages' micro homes lack in space they make up for in quality designs and materials.

Small luxuries

Costs for tiny homes which tend to range from 100 to 500 square feet can start below \$40,000, and some communities have turned to them to solve affordable housing issues. Designer Cottages, however, have minimum prices of \$125,000 and floor plans of 452 and 464 square feet.

With small floor plans that can be adjusted to state and local construction codes, the off-frame modular homes offer homebuyers a large degree of flexibility.



Designer Cottages Sales Village and Experience Center in North Carolina. Image credit: Designer Cottages

Luxury tiny houses can be appealing to property owners looking for a second home, people looking to downsize or those who live near expensive cities. The speed of new construction is also a draw for many, as the homes can be built in as little as six weeks.

Interested buyers select from two floor plans designed by architect Jeffrey Dungan. From there, Designer Cottages connects buyers with local distributors and builders and helps with financing as needed.

The "Saltbox" and "Low Country" designs have open floor plans and were created with energy efficiency in mind. The builds include Summit brand appliances and aluminum clad wood windows, as well as French doors and quartz countertops.

Facebook post from Designer Cottages

Designer Cottages also has locations in North Carolina and Maine. At the Cashiers, NC location, consumers book overnight stays to better experience the "luxury tiny home" lifestyle before making a purchase.

Real estate trends

Wealthy homebuyers have begun to eschew larger, unmanageable homes in favor of residing in more urban areas.

Luxury condominiums are becoming an important part of luxury real estate, as baby boomers look to simultaneously downsize and upgrade for retirement.

Millennials are now showing interest in luxury condos as well, getting in at a lower tier as they age into inheritances.

According to the "2018 Re/Max Spotlight on Luxury" report, baby boomers and millennials are driving these changes in growth and slowdowns in detached homes priced between \$1 million to \$2 million ([see story](#)).

Affluent and mass-market homeowners often have the same values when it comes to renovating their homes, but the difference lies in how they do so.

Luxury homeowners also differ in regards to the size of their next home, with most looking for a smaller second residence, and a square footage reduction of 200 feet. But, at the same time, they are also looking for additional living spaces such as an extra bedroom, a home office and a master suite ([see story](#)).

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