

Leading the way on timber frames

BY JACK MCGINN

According to Chris Zencich and Malcolm Holmes, nothing quite compares to a timber-framed home – and if sales are anything to go by, there are plenty of people in the state who agree with the Total Home Frames founders.

With the company's marquee Queenslander home a throwback to the colonial styling historically associated with country living, chances are if you've taken a trip along the WA coast you've passed a Total Home Frames house.

The homes are characterised by their prominent and spacious verandahs, which are accessible from both the living areas and bedrooms, allowing occupants to enjoy the outdoors in rain, hail or shine.

Total Home Frames services a large portion of the state, catering to the desires of clients everywhere from Geraldton to Esperance to Kalgoorlie to the Perth suburbs.

Total Home Frames Sales Manager and Proprietor Chris Zencich said the homes appealed to a certain notion of traditional living.



"Some people come to us, and if they're building a holiday home or moving to the country they don't want the standard-type home," he said.

"They're looking for a timber-framed colonial look. They want a big open home that looks quite majestic on the block from the road or where they enter,

and big portico entries. On some of our bigger houses we've got a lot of detailed finial work and lattice, things like corner brackets, all that colonial heritage look in our design – we get people specifically looking for that."

The benefits of building a timber-framed home are plain to see.

The stumping style of the build allows for homes to be built to the natural gradient of the land, saving on costly siteworks compared with building on a concrete slab.

The implications of stumping are significant – some Total Home Frames residences are built as high as five metres off the ground.

The homes are eye-catching, built with quality James Hardie products, and the nature of the build means the home interiors are extremely customisable to meet the needs of the individual client.

The positives don't stop there.

Total Home Frames homes are designed in line with HIA's GreenSmart initiative, and

all the company's homes have an energy efficiency rating of at least six stars.

Demand for Total Home Frames builds isn't limited to rural areas either.

The company offers its popular City Series which caters to the more modern feel of city living, while first home builders are covered by its Getaway Range.

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Mr Zencich said while the country continued to reign supreme, city demand for Total Home Frames houses had increased in recent years.

"Our ratio of build from country to metro is probably 25-30 per cent in the metro area and roughly 65-70 per cent in the country," he said. That's the extended metro area too – we could still be in the metro area but in the foothills, or in Mandurah or places like that."

While Total Home Frames is a market leader in its field, Mr Zencich said he felt the rest of the industry was starting to catch on to what he's already known for nearly two decades.

"You're seeing a lot more frame construction getting mixed in with the general populous of builders," he said.

"Where they're mixing our type of construction they're starting to see the benefits of timber framing.

"I think the people of WA are a lot more open to building these homes these days, obviously because of the look but also the benefits that come with it."

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