

Michigan Home – June 2010

The bedroom is a space in everyone's home that has commonly accepted realities; it is a finite amount of space with specific functional needs and the two don't necessarily go hand-in-hand. Because the bed itself takes up valuable floor space, the rest of the room is a secondary consideration in most cases.

That doesn't have to be the case though and the Murphy wall-bed is making a big come-back as families are staying put in their homes and tightening their belts, looking for better ways to make efficient use of the space they have.

You know the Murphy wall-bed, it folds-up and tucks out-of-sight when it isn't needed -- once a common source of laughs in Hollywood movies, providing hide and seek fun for the likes of Charlie Chaplin or Abbott and Costello. The truth is, these beds don't really close-up on their own but it does make for good comedy.

Spare bedrooms, dens, home offices, exercise rooms and children's playrooms are areas where wall-beds make perfect sense. Adding other cabinetry elements to a room design like bookcases, entertainment centers, desks, or toy boxes often make the wall-bed undetectable until it is opened for use and many homeowners find that visual slight-of-hand appealing.

"People find themselves hosting visitors in their homes for short periods of time, but they would prefer not to dedicate a room for such limited use," says Scott Korsten marketing director for Showplace Wood Products, a cabinet manufacturer who builds wall-beds distributed nationwide through their network of kitchen and bath dealers. "Murphy wall-beds allow homeowners to turn any room of their home into an on-demand guest room, which is a very cost effective way to fill that temporary need."

This is especially true for many baby boomers who are downsizing their home but still want comfortable space for visiting children and grandchildren, or for those who have set-up second homes in appealing locations – that lake cabin or southern condo where frequent visitors are a desirable norm but the available space is limited.

From a comfort standpoint the wall-bed bests many of its sofa-bed alternatives by using standard mattresses, so there isn't that nasty bar to sleep on causing morning pain. "Since wall-beds are built-to-order with choices selected from a vast array of styles and finishes, rooms can be as simple or sophisticated as the homeowner wants," says Korsten. "They have the creative freedom to express their own personal style in a way that harmonizes perfectly with the rest of their home's décor."

As the adage goes, everything old becomes new again and the Murphy wall-bed is one "oldie" that has found a new niche that is right for the times. Making dual-purpose rooms both functional and visually pleasing is a great way to add value to a home.

Compliments of Showplace Wood Products.