



PERSPECTIVES

SOLAR CREST, SIDNEY ISLAND, BC

Blue Sky Architects Bo Helliwell and Kim Smith have been working together for over 25 years, with a focus on seasonal and residential homes. Their portfolio of work incorporates organic planning and design to create fluid living experiences that become seamless extensions of the land.

The firm calls their style of design “West Coast Organic Modernism” and their love for natural landscapes and spectacular vistas is apparent with every project they undertake.

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One of their standout designs is Solar Crest, on Sidney Island, BC. Nestled in the Gulf islands, east of Saanichton, the property has stunning views toward the Olympic Mountain and is completely

off the grid. The centre of the island is a common area, with the outside of the island divided into lots for seasonal residences. There’s no power or water service, and that was one of the reasons that the site appealed so much to the firm and to the client.

The 2,800-square-foot house is designed to be completely self-sufficient, with solar panels, a wind turbine and a backup generator providing power. Even the rainwater is captured in giant cisterns stored in two deep wells hidden from view.

The largest challenge with site was the land itself. Built on solid rock, the plans called for limited blasting to preserve the natural landscape. And with no building materials readily available, everything had to be





brought in by way of a four-kilometer barge crossing to the island.

That's when durable materials came into play. The project called for a design

that incorporated products built for tough weather situations. This included custom glulam beams and rafters and Loewen metal clad exterior and wood interior windows. When buildings are off the beaten path, you can't afford any problems or warranty calls.

Completed in 2009, the Solar Crest house won a gold CARE award in 2010 for best single-family detached home in the \$1.5-million to \$2.5-million range. The award-winning firm continues

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to design homes that express their vision from within, creating homes in total harmony with the incredible beauty of their landscapes. With all the care that goes into creating these spectacular, natural residences, it's no wonder that homeowners seldom let go of their properties after they're built. ■

LOEWEN PRODUCTS USED

Solar Crest utilizes a variety of Loewen products throughout the structure. One of the key products is the integrated use of Terrace and French Doors and their connection to the exterior landscape and decking. These key passageways are strategically positioned for both circulation and access.

No other hinged door can capture as expansive a view as a Loewen Terrace door, thanks to the large glass areas and sturdy wood construction. The frame and panel are designed with a 4 9/16" (116 mm) jamb, multi-point locking hardware, and robust handle set and dead bolt to accommodate high traffic areas. The doweled stile and rail panels enhance the rugged dependability, while the vertical grain Douglas Fir aesthetic provides an unparalleled beauty.



ABOUT LOEWEN PERSPECTIVES

Loewen Perspectives showcases the dedication and craft of the passionate design professionals who use Loewen products. Our goal is to provide a snapshot of the process and materials that go into creating great buildings and the people who make these projects come to life. If you're a passionate firm looking to share your vision, we'd love to hear from you. Email perspectives@loewen.com to begin the experience.



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