

To know the house with structure initially

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There are hundreds of thousand immigrants, travellers and tourists coming to Canada every year. Almost nobody could not be amazed by the variety and the styles of the houses and buildings especially in our lower mainland. Some people even drive around to have a house view. The fairy of Danish buildings, full of green private gardens and cottage kinds of villa residence all attract people to invest and buy the properties here to closely enjoy the life of nature.

But once people personally get involved into the real estate market, they start understanding and questioning that regular maintenance cost and labour have to be taken into consideration besides the mortgage and tax. This may be totally different from where they lived before. From the understanding of writer this is very common in the people coming from Asia. To have a further thought, the discrepancy is caused by the concept and structure of building as well as the culture of nature and humanity. Our local main stream building is wood structure. Most time we can see the construction of the building on site, which is similar to play a Lego. The builders use the simple tools and devices for example hammers, nails, saws and ready to go components such as trusses, studs and plywood, then to have the building erected and finished. But many people are used to seeing the cranes, cement agitators, elevators on the construction site in their original living area. Afterwards, the masonry and concrete buildings come into view.

People would ask why we do not build the masonry or concrete houses to reduce the maintenance work of homeowners. I summarized a couple of reasons after years of practicing home inspection. The most important factor is our living density and natural resources. There is no question that we have a small population and lower living density comparing with most other parts of the world. Also we are a democracy country and people have their rights to decide where and how to build their houses in term of not interrupting others. We have enough of or say endless wood resources. The construction of Wood structure is simpler than that of concrete, which is more complicated from engineering to on site construction. Moreover, wood structure buildings can still get enough efficient lives if properly maintained. We have known some local houses are close to hundred years. Plus we do not have the market potential to do the large residential buildings construction which is quite popular in Asia. Therefore, it is much cheaper to build the wood structure than the concrete for the individual houses and the small amount multiple resident buildings. That is why we can see even some 4 story condos made by wood in BC. Furthermore, wood structures usually provide the comfort for the inhabitants and have the advantages in coping with the insulation and earth quake. Although there are theoretically controversial on the rear 2 points, normally people accept in common.

For these reasons, our delicate house comparative prices are not as expensive as the ones in the other areas of the world but may not be any more at present. As a coin has 2 faces, due to the difference of materials, engineering, and construction, as well as our local rainy and wet climate, the permanent care and maintenance of the houses is not hard to understand. Possibly, the homeowners can taste more warmth and happiness during the process, which make them cherish more of their properties.