

Since its founding in 1989, John Henshaw Architect Inc. has focused on one idea: that each project should have its own soul. The concept centers on the delicate balance between form and function, which requires an acute sensitivity to every detail and ultimately relates back to the personality, desires, and lifestyle of the homeowner. From the layout of each room to the proper placement of a towel ring, every element must meet both purposeful and aesthetic requirements.

John Henshaw knows the combination poses a unique challenge to each project, but that's what thrills him about architecture. In carrying out the goals and vision for the home, he and his staff pay particular attention to the lighting—both artificial and natural—and the flow or movement throughout a building. Within their wide range of experience, the architects also have a unique understanding of how to appropriately blend Western and Eastern design characteristics; one of the partners and some staff members also speak Mandarin and Cantonese. Whatever the resulting style, a John Henshaw residence is at once comfortable and delightful.



“Architecture has to be experienced, not just viewed.”

—John Henshaw



JOHN HENSHAW ARCHITECT

“The urge to build seems to be innate in all of us.”

—John Henshaw

RIGHT: Nestled into the crest of a ridge that rises up from Burrard Inlet, the summer home enjoys panoramic views of the water and mountains on the north shore. We used stone to connect the home to the ground and strong horizontal planes of the roof to provide protection from the rain.

*Photograph by Janis Nicolay Photography*

PREVIOUS PAGES: Suffused with natural light, the spacious living area of a heritage loft penthouse faces south and east to capture the sun and fabulous city views. We planned for roller blinds to allow for summer shading and privacy. White walls and ceiling, glass, stainless steel, and aluminum suggest lightness, while the dark wood and tile give warmth.

*Photographs by Michael Boland Photography*







“It’s all about light.”

—John Henshaw



RIGHT: We paid careful attention to natural and artificial lighting, even calling for an automated lighting control system. Within the spa area—where a sauna, hot tub, changing room, and shower complement the pool—concealed cove lighting sets a calming mood. In the home, we also included a climate-controlled wine room, which becomes an elegant showpiece with the wall lighting and spotlights.

FACING PAGE: Since the home is meant for entertaining, we wanted to combine elegance and luxury with comfort—all while exploring a contemporary modern design. A mini resort was the solution. Natural materials—stone, copper, and fir—anchor the authentic palette of materials. Richness, texture, and color are then added through the finishing elements, such as the inlaid wood veneers, marble, granite, stainless steel, artwork, and furniture.

*Photographs by Janis Nicolay Photography*



“Vision is the ability to look backward and forward and see how we fit into the cultural phenomenon.”

—John Henshaw



ABOVE: An older Vancouver home provided a special opportunity for us to re-imagine the rooms for maximum spaciousness, light, and views. We dissected, deconstructed, punctured, pushed, and pulled until everything was perfect. An open-riser staircase with glass railings is just one example of how we opened up the previously constricting spaces.

ABOVE & FACING PAGE: We extended the home visually into the backyard through floor-to-ceiling windows and sliding patio doors that connect to outdoor living spaces. The use of natural materials inside—such as the beautiful marble strata fireplace—enhance the connection to nature, too.

*Photographs by Janis Nicolay Photography*







“Using natural products from the surrounding locale makes houses seem more inherent to the landscape.”

—John Henshaw



TOP & FACING PAGE TOP: Indoor comfort stems from a contemporary use of space combined with the traditional style and craftsmanship of the 1920s-era, Shaughnessy-style home. Exterior elements—painted wood, textured stucco, stone, and cottage windows—mark the uniquely Vancouver style.

*Photographs by John Henshaw*

MIDDLE, BOTTOM & FACING PAGE BOTTOM: Inspired by a book by A. J. Downing about country homes, the cottage-style residence became a country house in the city. High-quality construction with an airtight envelope ensures the home is energy-efficient, comfortable, and healthy to live in. We integrated Chinese Feng Shui principles into a North American-style home and lifestyle.

*Photographs by Janis Nicolay Photography*

