

Fall 2026's Hottest Trend? Homes That Finally Feel Like Home

If the design world spent the last decade stripping homes down to clean lines, white walls and carefully curated minimalism, this fall's trend report suggests homeowners are ready for something more personal.

According to the Houzz Fall Design Trends Report, the era of cool, stark interiors continues to fade as homeowners embrace warmth, texture and individuality. Designers interviewed by Houzz describe a market where people are less interested in creating Instagram-perfect spaces and more interested in creating homes that actually reflect the people who live in them.

That shift feels especially relevant in Colorado, where homes often serve as gathering places for family, friends and visitors year-round. The report identifies several emerging themes, but they all point back to a single idea: comfort is becoming the new luxury.

Warmth, for starters, is no longer considered a trend. Houzz says it has become the foundation of today's home design. Rather than simply replacing gray finishes with beige ones, homeowners are layering warm wood tones, earthy colors, natural materials and varied textures to create rooms with greater depth and character.

The report also highlights a continued move away from minimalism. Instead of

homes that look as though they were installed from a single showroom catalog, designers are seeing growing interest in spaces that feel collected over time. Vintage furnishings, heirloom pieces and one-of-a-kind finds are being mixed with newer elements to create rooms that tell a story.

That desire for authenticity extends to materials. Houzz notes increasing demand for handcrafted tile, artisan plaster, natural stone, aged metals and other finishes that embrace variation rather than hide it. Natural stone is even appearing in less traditional applications such as sinks, furniture and lighting.

Designers report that homeowners are drawn to materials whose imperfections make them feel more genuine and lived-in. Perhaps the most interesting finding is how much emphasis homeowners are placing on personality.

According to Houzz, clients are becoming less concerned about designing for resale value and more focused on creating spaces tailored to their own lifestyles and tastes. Designers report greater willingness among homeowners to embrace bold wallpaper, unconventional tile patterns, distinctive furnishings and colors they simply enjoy.

In other words, the design question is shifting from "What will future buyers think?" to "What makes me happy every day?"

Colorado's Climate Signals Are No Longer Subtle

Colorado's climate story is no longer theoretical. Hotter temperatures, stressed forests, shrinking snowpack and increasingly smoky skies are visible signs that the state is changing now, not sometime in the future.

Drawing on recent Colorado Sun reporting, experts say Colorado is warming faster than the global average, bringing longer growing seasons, earlier snowmelt and more frequent extreme heat. Those higher temperatures intensify drought, dry out soils and place growing stress on vegetation and water supplies.

One of the clearest signs is the decline of Colorado's forests, particularly the ponderosa pine belt along the Front Range. Heat and drought weaken trees, making them more vulnerable to beetles, disease and wildfire. State Forester Matt McCombs warns that some forested areas may not survive in their current form.

For homeowners, deteriorating forest health means greater wildfire risk, rising insurance costs and increased focus on defensible space around homes.

Colorado's snowpack, which feeds rivers and reservoirs throughout the West, is becoming less reliable. More winter precipitation falls as rain instead of snow, and snow that does accumulate melts earlier. This creates challenges for water managers, agriculture, recreation and communities that depend on predictable runoff.

Lower streamflows can also reduce water quality and stress fisheries, particularly during hot summers.

Wildfire smoke has become a recurring part of summer life across the Front Range. Hotter, drier conditions contribute to larger fires and longer-lasting smoke events, affecting air quality, outdoor recreation and public health.

At the same time, plants and wildlife are struggling to adapt. Earlier blooms, changing migration patterns and stressed ecosystems are disrupting long-standing natural cycles. Alpine species, already living at the limits of their habitat, face particular challenges.

These changes have some practical consequences:

- Higher insurance costs tied to wildfire risk.
- More frequent smoke days and air-quality alerts.
- Greater demand for drought-tolerant landscaping and fire-resistant design.
- Increasing pressure on water conservation efforts.

Experts interviewed by the Sun stress that adaptation remains possible. Investments in forest management, water conservation, resilient building practices and community planning can help Colorado respond to a changing climate.

As McCombs puts it, Colorado may be experiencing an "end of innocence" as residents watch familiar landscapes change. Yet the message from scientists is not one of hopelessness. The signs of climate change are becoming impossible to ignore, but so are the opportunities to prepare, adapt and protect the places that make Colorado unique.

The report also suggests homeowners are thinking more strategically about the future. Houzz cites findings from its 2026 Houzz & Home Study showing that 61% of homeowners plan to stay in their homes for 11 years or more after a renovation, while 44% consider their residence a "forever home."

As a result, designers are incorporating features that allow homes to adapt over time. That includes everything from accessibility-minded layouts to accessory dwelling

units and secondary suites that can accommodate multigenerational living, guests, rental opportunities or changing family needs. Wellness-focused spaces such as saunas, cold plunges and meditation rooms are also gaining traction as people look for ways to support health and well-being at home.

For homeowners, the hottest look isn't about chasing a specific color palette or expensive statement piece. It's about creating a warm home that feels unmistakably yours.

NAR's Political Focus Turns to Capital Gains Tax

With Congress back in session this September, the National Association of Realtors is making a full court press to modernize the capital gains exclusion on the sale of a primary residence. It's an issue that has quietly grown into a structural drag on inventory, and NAR believes the moment is finally right for action. Their argument is straightforward: the \$250,000/\$500,000 exclusion set in 1997 no longer reflects today's home prices, and millions of longtime owners are now trapped by tax consequences Congress never intended.

NAR's fall strategy centers on two coordinated tracks. First, they are flooding lawmakers with updated economic data showing how inflation, appreciation, and aging housing stock have pushed ordinary homeowners into taxable territory. According to NAR's analysis, indexing the exclusion for inflation would have roughly doubled the thresholds by now, preventing what they describe as a "stealth tax on mobility." That message is being delivered directly to members of the tax writing committees, especially those representing districts where price growth has outpaced national averages.

Second, NAR is rallying support around

HR 1340, the More Homes on the Market Act, which would double the exclusion and index it going forward. The bill already has bipartisan cosponsors, a rarity in today's climate, and NAR is positioning it as the most realistic vehicle for near term reform. A second bill, **HR 4327**, would eliminate capital gains taxes on primary residence sales entirely, but even NAR acknowledges that it serves more as a marker than a viable end of session option.

The question, of course, is whether any of this can move before adjournment. The outlook is mixed. On one hand, the politics are favorable: members from both parties are hearing from constituents who feel locked in place, and NAR's polling shows overwhelming public support for updating the exclusion. On the other hand, Congress faces a compressed calendar dominated by appropriations and election year maneuvering, and major tax changes typically require a broader legislative package.

Still, NAR's timing is deliberate. If Congress assembles a tax bill this fall, capital gains reform could hitch a ride. If not, the association's groundwork positions the issue for early action next year.

Price Reduced on 4-Bed Wheat Ridge Farmhouse



This 3-story modern farmhouse at **3547 Depew Street** was originally listed at almost \$1,500,000 but is now only **\$1,395,000**. It features an open main level with oak flooring, gas fireplace, an 18-ft-wide south-facing window wall and a chef's kitchen with built-in refrigerator, gas range and walk-in pantry. There is a main-floor guest suite plus three 2nd-floor bedrooms, beautifully finished baths and an upper-level laundry. Third-floor vaulted great room includes a wet bar and 3/4 bath. The landscaped measures 0.13-acre, with a private yard, covered front porch and a finished detached 2-car garage with EV charger. This is a move-in-ready Wheat Ridge jewel. Take a narrated video tour of this home at www.GRElistings.com, then come to Saturday's open house or call listing agent **Chuck Brown** at **303-885-7855** to request a private showing.

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