

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE:

THE DIVERSE HOUSING MARKET IN THE GTA



In today's world of climbing real estate values, many feel that a fully-detached single-family home may not be within their financial reach. The white-picket fence ideology has shifted to fit the changing real estate market. Buyers are now looking at alternative forms of housing that offer affordability and often a wider selection of floor plan options. These houses can be a great investment and still give you a lot of home that fits into your lifestyle.

The alternatives can come in many different shapes and sizes and delving into the various built forms can be confusing at first, so make sure to do some research. To give you a head start, I've drafted a brief outline of the most commonly marketed home types apart from the traditional detached home and the condominium apartment building.

STACKED TOWNHOUSE

A stacked townhouse is usually a three- or four-level building with one unit stacked above another, and they typically include:

- Individual front entrances that face the street or a courtyard.
- Private outdoor spaces provided either through front or rear yard patios/courtyards, balconies and/or rooftop decks.
- Private internal corridors.
- Usually just one level of parking, which can be underground or above ground.

- Building designs which have both through units with windows and entrances at both ends or back-to-back.
- Units with windows only at one end.

LINK

A link, sometimes referred to as a carriage home, is joined by a garage or carport. These houses can be less expensive than detached homes and typically feature:

- A garage or carport which gives access to the front and backyards.
- Joined basement walls so that link houses give the appearance of being single-family homes on small lots.

SEMI-DETACHED

A semi-detached home is a single-family home that is joined on one side to another home and shares a common adjoining wall. Semis can be either bungalows or two storeys and typically feature:

- Individual backyards.
- Advantages of a single-family detached home often without the price tag.

DUPLEX

In some cities, semis are called duplexes. A duplex is a building containing two single-family homes, located one above the other. In the GTA what is commonly referred to as a duplex typically features:

- A two-storey house with separate dwelling units on each storey.

- A yard, which is usually only for the use of the first-floor residents.
- This can be a two-family home or an income unit.

TRADITIONAL TOWNHOUSE

Townhouses, which are sometimes called row houses, are side-by-side single-family homes, joined by common walls connected to the unit on either side and typically feature:

- Two or three stories.
- Freehold or condominium homes.
- A separate outdoor space for each tenant.

BACK-TO BACK TOWNHOUSE

Back-to-back townhomes have attached units separated by a common wall above grade that back onto each other. They also:

- Do not normally have rear yards and often have their outdoor space in the form of a rooftop patio or front yard.
- Have individual front doors accessible from the street.
- May have garages or underground parking.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

This is just a glimpse at the alternative housing available in a city like the GTA. No matter your budget and lifestyle, there really is something for everyone. Your dream home may not be as far out of reach as you think; find the neighbourhood you love and see what's available!

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