

the expansive houses of natural wood. Set on mountain slopes or on cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the typical modern west coast house uses an open, casual design to allow uninterrupted views of the spectacular natural environment.

At the western limit of the country, on Vancouver Island itself, an affectionate affiliation with the gentle, British, country way of life can be read from the profusion of Tudor-style residences. High peaked roofs perch upon bleached white stucco walls and decorative timber ornaments stand out in high relief.

### Let There be Light . . .

Canadians are well aware of the change of seasons. While some regions are blistering hot for the summer months, most enjoy the crisp chill of winter when it hits. The environmental response to this reality has been widespread use of the skylight in private houses and of the atrium — a large glass roof or skylights — in public places.

Designed with great regard for the spatial qualities of the structure and the environmental needs of those using the space, these atria have become an identifiable symbol of present-day Canadian architecture right across every regional boundary.

Responding also to climatic imperatives is the indoor street, now a hallmark of Canadian architecture. On even the most blustery of winter days in the charming city of Quebec, for instance, one may stroll narrow streets in shirt sleeves, perusing the goods of local merchants as they appear in characteristically narrow store fronts. This is not, however, the old Quebec of 200 years ago but the indoor world of shopping centres and malls which have appeared at the outer

edges of the original city. In Montreal, this kind of indoor stroll can be enjoyed in a network of underground shopping malls and major buildings, all linked by subway.

Similarly, the Eaton Centre in Toronto and the West Edmonton Mall in Edmonton, Alberta, with their vaulted glass ceilings and huge interior gardens (and, in one case, a lake) do not necessarily reflect the character of their respective regions but employ climatic control as a guiding principle in their design.

Modern west coast homes typically employ an open casual design to allow views of the natural environment.

### Into the Future . . .

Canadians have no homogenized architecture any more than they have a homogenized literature or folk music. This is no melting pot. But there are definable elements in the architectural development, past and present, that articulate the distinctly Canadian experience. Because of the size of the country, much of that experience has been and will always be linked to regional realities.

As Canada moves forward to the future, trends will continue to attach great importance to energy efficiency. Experts also predict that respect for heritage buildings will stimulate a revival of older architectural traditions, including the re-establishment

of the street as a place of community definition, the erection of buildings of moderate height, continuing respect for regional identity, and the promotion of friendliness and accessibility in Canadian cities.

While a strong national identity has bridged once-distinct geographic and cultural lines, anyone who travels across Canada will immediately spot happy peculiarities of architectural design that distinguish one sector of the Canadian population from another. For within each region of this country there are and will continue to be irrepressible expressions of regional character, ethnic heritage, geographic uniqueness, commercial endeavour, community spirit and natural beauty.

