

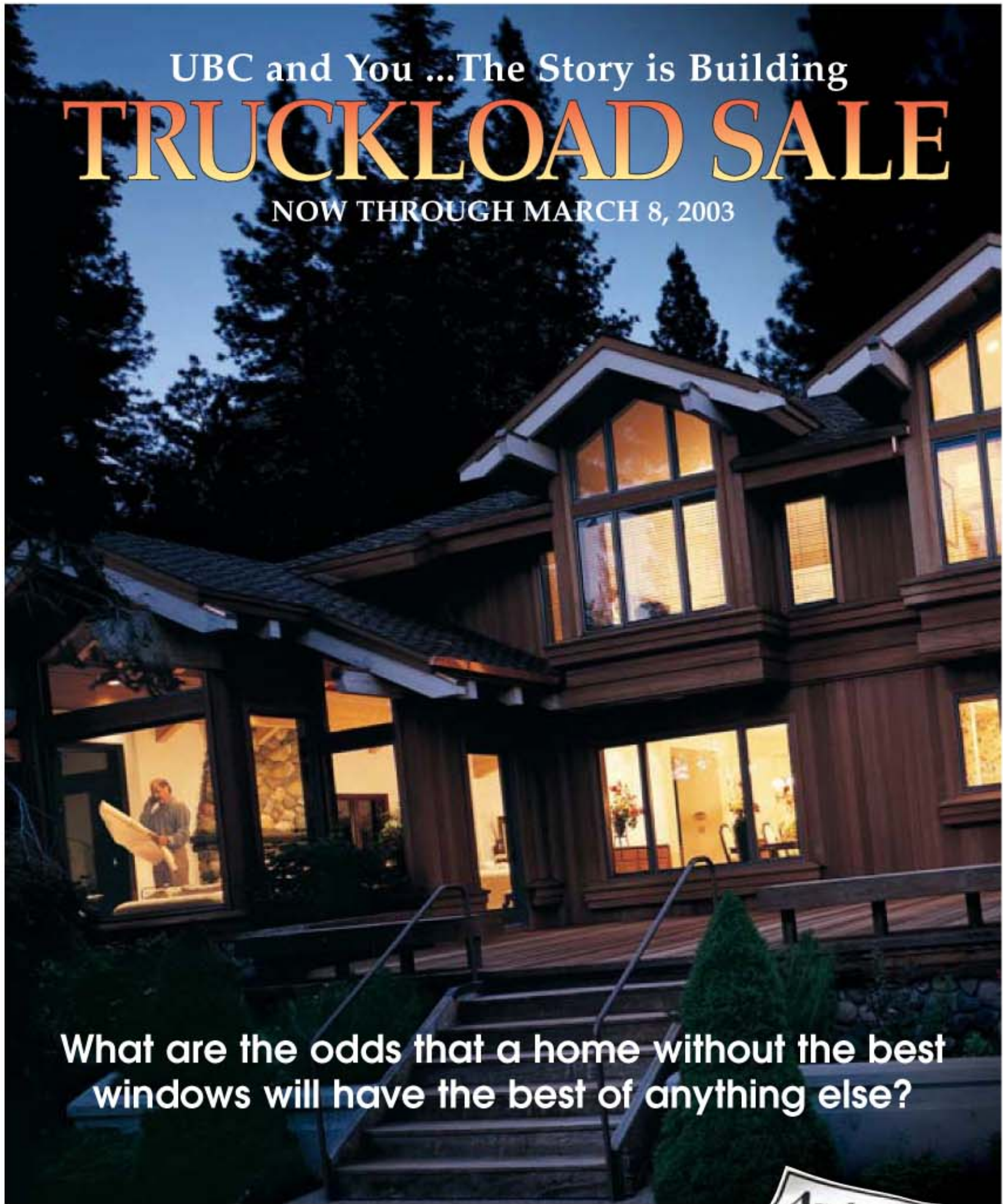


Record-Eagle/Elizabeth Conley

Above, the dishwasher is elevated to reduce bending over while loading and unloading. The kitchen counters are granite that have been sealed. The sink is farmhouse-style with a single sink and a raised spout, which makes cleaning pots and pans easier. The floor is European-style limestone tiles, which are cut long and laid asymmetrically. At right is a self-serve kitchen bar, featuring a wine refrigerator, bottle rack, hanging glass racks and cupboard space.

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The latest in boiling water

By SARAH ROBERTSON
The Wall Street Journal

When Rick Aneiros wants to boil pasta, he no longer has to go to the sink: The Michigan car designer just fills his pot with water from the faucet right above the burner and turns up the heat.

"It's a godsend," said Mr. Aneiros, 57. "Now I wonder how I could have lived without it."

And you thought a Sub-Zero refrigerator was enough. For high-end kitchen renovations, the list of must-haves just got longer. Kitchen renovators and faucet makers say demand for "pot fillers," cold-water faucets positioned right above — or next to — the stove (six-burner industrial model, of course), has jumped during the past year, with sales at makers such as Franke up as much as 50 percent. At de Giulio Kitchen Design in Chicago, 70 percent of the kitchen renovation projects include one of the faucets, up from about 50 percent two years ago.

It isn't as if homeowners really needed to spend more money. Kitchens are already the most-renovated room in the house, and the average job costs more than \$36,000. But kitchen pros say the pot fillers are popular in part because of the labor they save (after all, a gallon of water weighs 8 pounds), especially as American kitchens get larger and larger — and baby boomers get older. Even more important, perhaps: The faucets are staples in restaurant kitchens, and for serious cooks — or people who just want to look like one — they add a professional touch.

"It's like the client who gets a Ferrari and then buys racing gloves — even if they don't help him drive any better," said Doug Durbin, president of NuHaus, a kitchen-design firm in Highland Park, Ill.

While the pot fillers in restaurant kitchens tend to be pretty basic, residential models are sleeker, smaller and can be a lot more expensive. Kohler's ProMaster model, in polished chrome, goes for almost \$900 (and that doesn't include the cost of running a water line to your stove). Others, such as Dornbracht's \$575 Tara version, have extendable spouts or retractable hoses that let cooks fill far-away pots or even nearby coffee makers.

Because they require plumbing, most people put in a pot filler only when they're completely redoing the kitchen. And it pays to make sure your contractor has put in a few.

Greg Rohl, director of marketing for faucet maker Rohl, said some homeowners have installed them so low, they can't fit a pot underneath.

"It's a little tricky. You can't change it once it's there."

On the shelf

Sometimes a kitchen can get a new look in a matter of hours or days. Those sorts of quick fixes are at the heart of "100 Bright Ideas for Kitchens" by Sue Rose (Betterway Books, \$19.99). The book helps homeowners give their kitchen a fresh style through such projects as repainting or restyling cabinets, replacing window treatments and creating new accessories. Many of the projects can be done in a matter of hours, but figure in time for translation. The book, originally published in England, contains a number of references obscure to Americans, such as sugar soap (a cleaner and degreaser), white spirit (mineral spirits) and emulsion (water-based paint).