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such large, expensive houses on speculation. "We trust our judgment," he said. "From design and culture, we believe exactly what a client should want. We haven't missed yet."

"There are people who cannot visualize what they want," Siler added. "The whole process is very painful. There's no visualization. These people are happy to walk into a home that's glamorous, ready to move in. They don't have to go through a brain exercise to design."

Gurka said he's seen many arguments among family members who can't agree on exactly what they want in a luxury house.

"Better to walk in, both will love it," he said of building to his specs. "They'll say, 'This is it. Let's move in.'"

Gurka said he knew for years that this model probably would be used as a fund-raising showcase for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. While he's pleased to show off his work, Gurka maintains that it does nothing to secure a buyer.

"I'm opening the door and revealing all my secrets," he said. "Thirty thousand people come by... and none is my customer."

Gurka and Siler found the acreage for Villa Baronna after conceiving of its design. A smaller house was demolished on the site before the villa arose.

It's difficult to get bank financing for spec jobs, Gurka said. "I cannot approach them at the

Under construction for three years, the model contains five bedrooms with their own baths, a four-room master suite, nine fireplaces, a great room, family room/solarium, a library, music/reception room, formal dining room, billiards room, game room, media room, plus a pair of attached two-car garages.

beginning," he said. "We have to get at least under the roof, then they are willing to listen and supply some short-term financing."

Typically, Gurka said he and partners finance 60-65 percent of construction costs on speculative jobs.

Gurka declined to reveal construction costs or margins on their most recent effort. "Our profit is probably a tenth of what people think," he said.

Villa Baronna, showcasing the efforts of 24 interior designers, will be open to the public Oct. 2-24. Proceeds will benefit the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall Volunteer Council. Tickets, \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door, are available by phoning DSOH at 962-1000.

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