

# The Scenic Route

*Multi-panel doors are gaining in popularity for residential use*

By Zach T. Gay

**M**ore and more homeowners who want the practical and psychological benefits of a full remodel without the cost are opting to replace their doors.

“People are still cautious with their home-improvement spending, and many are realizing that upgrading doors is a cost-effective way to improve their homes,” says Paul Bors, a remodeler with Handyman Matters Chicago.

At the forefront of this trend are the multi-panels that are slowly but surely having an impact on the patio door market. Multi-panel units have had a market presence for more than 20 years, but not until recently have they commonly been seen outside of commercial projects and high-end new homes, especially in more temperate climates. Whatever the style—sliding, folding, or pocket—as the technology of these doors evolves and the indoor/outdoor lifestyle continues to grow, experts are expecting an increase in multi-panel doors, even for midrange homes.

## A new market

Matt Thomas is the marketing director of California-based manufacturer NanaWall, which has dealt exclusively in multi-panel doors for the last 25 years. For much of that time the company has catered to commercial developers and the architectural needs of high-end residential clients. However, within the last few years, NanaWall has seen an increase in sales for more modest homes.

“We’re growing fastest in the mid-tier market,” says Thomas, adding that it’s no longer just new-home builders buying these doors. “We’re seeing a lot of renovations of mid-century homes that were built around the indoor/outdoor lifestyle,” he explains.

## Regional differences

But the trend hasn’t caught on everywhere. “Unfortunately, we’re in the wrong place for large, multi-panel patio doors,” says remodeler Chaden Halfhill. “They’re either too expensive, or there are issues with the climate.” Halfhill owns Silent Rivers Design + Build, based in Des Moines, Iowa, an area that he calls “a conservative,

Midwestern market filled with practical consumers.” Halfhill has had better luck selling 12-foot French doors to those of his clients who want to take advantage of views or enjoy a summer breeze. “There’s one from Pella that we like that has screens integrated,” he says.

## A bright future

That said, the interest in multi-panels is likely to grow geographically as long as the technology keeps improving and Americans’ taste for alfresco living continues to evolve. After all, what other product is a door and a wall and a window in one? When closed, it allows the light in as if there were no wall at all, and when open, it seamlessly incorporates the outdoors into an interior living space. There’s no looking back, there is only looking forward. And the view is a scenic one indeed. **PR**





#### ↑ Marvin Windows and Doors

Marvin's Ultimate Multi-Slide door is available in a variety of configurations, including a stacked panel arrangement or a pocket design. Customers are ensured wide-open views by choosing either 10 bidirectional panels or six panels in a unidirectional configuration. A modular frame that snaps together on site guarantees ease of assembly for any qualified technician. Additionally, a flush sill that adheres to ADA standards provides a seamless transition from inside to out. The Ultimate Multi-Slide is available summer 2015. [marvin.com](http://marvin.com)

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#### ↓ LaCantina Doors

LaCantina's new Multi-Slide system features an uncommon symmetry. Most multi-sliders have tall bottom rails and thin top rails buried in the header. This new door has even-width rails to ensure unparalleled balance and longevity. Plus, a self-draining sill/threshold negates the need for an aftermarket sill pan. Integrated screening mitigates insects.

[lacantinadoors.com](http://lacantinadoors.com) **No. 802 on reader service card**



#### ← NanaWall Systems

The horizontal roller and guide track design in the NanaWall HSW60 allows each panel to move around corners with a one-handed action. Any number of panels can double as swing doors and sliding panels, and any swing door can accommodate a variety of push/pull handles. Tested to NFRC standards, the HSW60 is built to withstand almost any natural combination of wind and water. [nanawall.com](http://nanawall.com)

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#### ↑ Andersen Windows & Doors

The A-series is one of the most versatile lines that Andersen has to offer. Depending on space, these multi-panel swing doors can range from 4-to-48-feet wide and up to 10 feet tall. Interior frames of pine, oak, cherry, alder, mahogany, or vertical-grain Douglas fir surround energy-efficient low-E4 glass. Homeowners can choose from 11 exterior colors. A multi-point locking mechanism provides systemwide security.

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