

Santa Fe REAL ESTATE Guide

Artisan/craftsman/**builder**

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Prepare for enjoyable building process

by Kurt Faust

Designing and building a custom home is one of the largest projects a person may ever take on and there is a lot riding on the outcome: financial security, peace of mind and personal satisfaction are some of the major ones. It is important to keep an open mind, temper your ideals with reality, do your research, and talk about all of it with the experts you've employed. Don't end up feeling regret over a bad building experience.

If you want a certain feature, find out more about it. Visit showrooms and talk to salespeople about the pros and cons of their products. Investigate design ideas and theories by reading magazines and books. Talk to friends and family about what they would choose and why. There are a lot of decisions to be made and the more you know, the more fun it will be to make them.

Design and construction take a long time. Expect this to be a part of your life for two years or more if you include the warranty period. It is important to choose designers and builders you enjoy working with and who have good references. They will make your vision happen, and you need to build a trusting relationship with them. They have expertise with the ins and outs of the permit and construction processes, and they are familiar with choices that work and how to integrate them. The better the communication, the more you will look forward to meeting with them and the better you can reach your goals.

Balance your dreams with reality. Express all that you want with the understanding that it may not all work together. Budget limitations are the number one constraint. Be prepared to make some tough choices. There may be legal restrictions you didn't count on. Expect some wrench in the works as well as pleasant surprises.

Require quality instead of perfection. Some slight discrepancies will happen. Your designers and builders will help you know what to expect. They will advise you on your pet ideas that might not produce the results you really want. Your designer will try to think of absolutely everything, but some details do fall through the cracks. A builder cannot build anything exactly. You should be concerned with how they correct errors rather than insisting that errors never occur. Keep your expectations within the realm of the attainable, and you'll be much happier in the end.



Kurt Faust is an artist, blacksmith, cabinetmaker, and homebuilder. He owns Tierra Concepts, Inc. and Taos Furniture with his two partners Eric Faust & Keith Gorges.

Designing and building a custom home is an exciting endeavor. It is so personal and so creative, but it is important to remind yourself to enjoy the process because it can be overwhelming at times.

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