



VISION

L U X U R Y
R E S I D E N T I A L



A VISION DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION GUIDE

The Vision Ultra Lux Guide to *Custom Homes*

An in-depth field guide to building an ultra-luxury home in the Southeast: from the lot to the last walkthrough. What to decide early, what to avoid, and what it actually takes to build a house from nothing but a vision.

35 Years Building in the Southeast

IN THIS GUIDE

A complete field guide to the custom build.

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THE DESIGN GUIDE: DECISIONS & PITFALLS, FROM THE GROUND UP

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This guide is written from thirty-five years of commercial and residential construction across the Southeast. It draws on the patterns, decisions, and mistakes we've seen repeat across hundreds of projects, from a single room to a full estate built from the ground up.

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THE VISION STANDARD

Building from the ground up is a different discipline.

A renovation works within a house you already chose. A custom home starts with a blank lot, and every decision is yours: where the morning sun lands, how high the ceilings rise, how the house meets the land and the street. Get those right and the house feels inevitable. Get them wrong and no finish can fix it.

Vision has spent thirty-five years building the Southeast's residential masterpieces and commercial landmarks: restaurants, retail, mixed-use, and sports and entertainment venues, on schedules and budgets that don't bend. A custom estate asks for the same discipline: structure, sequencing, and dozens of trades moving in the right order. This guide covers what it actually takes.

Custom Homes

Architect-led or design-build, shaped around your site and how you live.

Renovations

From a single kitchen to a whole-home reimagining. See our companion renovation guide.

WHAT'S AHEAD IN THIS GUIDE

The Lot	What to evaluate before you buy, and what a site can quietly add to the budget.
The Design Guide	Decisions and pitfalls for the exterior, floor plan, key rooms, outdoors, and the systems behind the walls.
Ten Rules	What separates a custom build that finishes well from one that doesn't.
Financing & Hiring	How custom homes actually get paid for, and ten questions for any builder.



35

Years Building in the Southeast

\$1–10M

Typical Project Range

In-House

Licensed GC, Owned Crews

Southeast

Where We Build

HOW IT WORKS

From an empty lot to a finished estate.

No mystery, no drift. Six stages, each with a decision you make before we move to the next.

01 **First Call** 30 MINUTES

We talk through the house you're imagining, the lot or the search for one, the timeline, and the range you're working with.

02 **Lot Evaluation & Feasibility** BEFORE YOU CLOSE

Boots on the land. Topography, trees, utilities, setbacks, and soils, so you know what the site will cost to build on before it's yours.

03 **Design** 2-3 MONTHS

Your architect or ours. Plans developed around the site, with Vision pricing at each milestone so the design never outruns the budget.

04 **Proposal, Financing & Permitting** 6-12 WEEKS

A fixed scope and price, permit-ready drawings, and if useful, an introduction to the right construction lender.

05 **Construction** 12-18 MONTHS

In-house crews, transparent draws tied to milestones, and clear communication from site work through final punch.

06 **Walkthrough & Warranty** AT COMPLETION, AND AFTER

A walkthrough before we call it done, a warranty in writing, and a team that still answers the phone after you've moved in.



4-6 Mo

Typical design and permitting window, from first sketches to permit in hand.

12-18 Mo

Typical construction window for a custom estate, site work to final walkthrough.

16-24 Mo

Typical timeline from first call to move-in.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Ten rules of an ultra-luxury custom build.

Patterns we've seen play out, for better or worse, across three decades of custom homes and high-end renovations. Read these before you read the design guide that follows.

DO

Evaluate the lot before you close on it.

Grading, retaining walls, tree ordinances, and utility runs can add six figures to a site that looked like a bargain.

DO

Arrange financing before design.

Construction lenders underwrite to an as-completed appraisal. Know that number before the plans grow past it.

DO

Design to the site, not a plan book.

Sun, views, and slope shape every room. A plan drawn for a flat lot rarely fits a wooded Southeast hillside.

DO

Plan for the next twenty years.

A main-level primary suite, wider halls, and an elevator shaft framed now are inexpensive. Adding them later rarely is.

DO

Lock selections before framing.

Every open decision becomes a delay once the house is under roof. Allowances are where budgets quietly drift.

DON'T

Let square footage outrun the budget.

Every added foot carries structure, systems, and finishes with it. A smaller house built beautifully outlasts a larger one built to a compromise.

DON'T

Value-engineer the envelope.

Insulation, windows, flashing, and waterproofing are the cheapest things to get right and the most expensive to fix once walls close.

DON'T

Assume “custom” means custom.

Ask what's truly yours to decide, and what's a standard package with an upgrade list.

DON'T

Let architect and builder meet at the bid.

Bring your builder in during design. Pricing each milestone early keeps the drawings buildable and the budget honest.

DON'T

Underestimate lead times.

Window systems, stone, and custom millwork can run four to six months. Order late and they set the schedule for the whole house.

BEFORE THE FIRST DRAWING

The Lot: where every custom home starts.

The most consequential decision in a custom build happens before the architect draws a line. The right lot makes a great house almost easy. The wrong one quietly taxes every decision after it.



FROM ABOVE: AN ESTATE SITED INTO A WOODED LOT

WHAT WE LOOK AT ON EVERY SITE WALK

Topography & drainage

Slope decides where the house sits, how much retaining it needs, and where the water goes when it rains.

Trees & ordinances

Many Southeast jurisdictions protect specimen trees and require replanting or recompense. Know the rules before the site plan.

Setbacks, zoning & review

Setbacks, height limits, impervious-surface caps, and architectural review all shape what can be built.

Utilities & septic

Sewer, water, gas, and power capacity at the street, or the cost of septic and long service runs where there isn't any.

Soils & rock

A geotechnical look before closing can catch rock, fill, or poor bearing soil that changes the foundation budget.

Teardown or raw land

Infill lots offer location but add demolition and tight access. Acreage offers room but often longer utility runs.

VISION TIP

Ask a builder to walk a lot before you make an offer, not after. A few hours on site can reshape what you're willing to pay for it.

THE DESIGN GUIDE · 01

Architecture & Arrival: the part you can't renovate later.

Interiors can be reimagined in a decade. The elevation, the roofline, and the way a guest arrives are permanent. This is where timeless matters most.



MOTOR COURT AND FOUNTAIN FRAMING THE ARRIVAL SEQUENCE

TRENDS WE'RE SEEING

European-inspired estates in natural stone

Limestone, tile roofs, and arched openings built with real mass, not applied as trim.

Transitional & modern-organic exteriors

Clean lines softened by wood, stone, and deep overhangs, trading ornament for proportion.

Motor courts & gated arrival

A designed sequence from gate to front door, with garage doors turned away from the approach.

Steel & bronze window systems

Slender profiles and tall glass that read as architecture, not as openings cut in a wall.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

<p>×</p> <p>A style chosen from a photo that doesn't suit the lot or the neighborhood.</p>	<p>×</p> <p>Garage doors as the first thing a guest sees on arrival.</p>	<p>×</p> <p>Exterior materials that look right in a rendering but weather poorly in Southeast humidity.</p>
<p>MOST REQUESTED</p> <p>Natural stone & tile roofs</p>	<p>WORTH THE SPLURGE</p> <p>Real window and door systems</p>	<p>OFTEN OVERLOOKED</p> <p>Exterior lighting designed with the architecture</p>

VISION TIP

Walk the site at the hour you'll most often arrive home. The approach you'll see a thousand times deserves more design attention than the rear elevation.

THE DESIGN GUIDE · 02

The Floor Plan: designed for how you actually live.

A floor plan is a daily routine drawn in advance: where coffee happens, where coats land, how a holiday crowd moves. A plan that photographs well and a plan that lives well are not always the same plan.



ARCHED GALLERY LINKING THE FOYER, STAIR, AND MAIN ROOMS

TRENDS WE'RE SEEING

Main-level primary suites

Increasingly standard at this level, even in two-story homes, so the house works for decades.

Elevator-ready framing

A stacked closet or shaft framed during construction, ready for a lift whenever it's wanted.

Guest wings & in-law suites

Private suites with their own entry or kitchenette for visiting family and long stays.

Back-of-house done right

Mudrooms, package rooms, and service entries that keep daily life away from the front door.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

×	×	×
Ceiling heights set for drama in one room and ignored everywhere else.	A kitchen that sits between every room, so the house is never quiet.	Bedrooms over the garage or media room with no acoustic separation.
MOST REQUESTED	WORTH THE SPLURGE	OFTEN OVERLOOKED
Main-level primary suite	Ceiling height & window placement	A real back-of-house entry

VISION TIP

Walk the plan with your furniture before it's framed. A room that looks generous on paper can feel narrow once the sofa and the traffic path are in it.

THE DESIGN GUIDE · 03

Kitchen, Suite & Wellness: built in, not added on.

Our renovation guide covers the trends in these rooms. What changes in new construction is that nothing has to be retrofitted: structure, plumbing, and mechanical can be designed around each room from the start.



NAVY CABINETRY AND A WORKING ISLAND PLANNED FROM THE FIRST DRAWING

WHAT NEW CONSTRUCTION ALLOWS

Structural spans for open kitchens

Beams sized from day one, so the island and the view aren't negotiating with a column.

A scullery designed in

A working kitchen behind the show kitchen, with its own ventilation and plumbing planned from the start.

Curbless showers set into the structure

Recessed framing or slab so the wet room floor runs flat, with no threshold to step over.

Wellness rooms with their own systems

Sauna, plunge, and gym planned with dedicated drainage, electrical, and HVAC.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

✗ Plumbing walls that dictate where the island and tub can go.

✗ A wellness room added to the plan after mechanical design is done.

✗ A primary closet sized from whatever space was left over.

MOST REQUESTED

A scullery & prep kitchen

WORTH THE SPLURGE

Recessed framing for curbless showers

OFTEN OVERLOOKED

Dedicated mechanical for wellness rooms

VISION TIP

Decide on heated floors, linear drains, and steam before the framing is designed. In new construction they're simple. Later, they're a renovation.

THE DESIGN GUIDE · 04

Outdoor Living: sited with the house, not after it.

In a custom build, the pool, loggia, and outdoor kitchen can be placed for sun, shade, and view before a single wall goes up. It's the best chance you'll get to make the outdoors part of the architecture.



A SPORT POOL ON THE AXIS OF THE REAR LOGGIA

TRENDS WE'RE SEEING

Pools on the axis of the house

The pool aligned to a main room or loggia, so it reads as a continuation of the interior.

Pool houses & covered loggias

A true second living space with a fireplace, outdoor kitchen, bath, and storage.

Outdoor kitchens built to cook in

Full prep, refrigeration, and ventilation, shaded and turned away from the afternoon sun.

Landscape as structure

Terraces, walls, and plantings designed with the grading plan, not after it.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

<p>×</p> <p>A west-facing terrace that's unusable on summer afternoons.</p>	<p>×</p> <p>A pool placed where the grading fights it, adding retaining walls and cost.</p>	<p>×</p> <p>Power, gas, and lighting runs forgotten until the hardscape is poured.</p>
<p>MOST REQUESTED</p> <p>Pools with integrated spas</p>	<p>WORTH THE SPLURGE</p> <p>A pool house with a real bath</p>	<p>OFTEN OVERLOOKED</p> <p>Utility sleeves under hardscape</p>

VISION TIP

Run conduit and sleeves under drives, walks, and terraces before they're poured. It costs little during construction and saves cutting stone later.

THE DESIGN GUIDE · 05

Envelope & Systems: the house behind the house.

The most expensive mistakes in a custom home are invisible: the envelope that keeps water and heat where they belong, and the systems that run the house. In new construction, all of it can be designed rather than retrofitted.



EVERY SYSTEM, CONNECTED AND CONTROLLED FROM ONE APP

WHAT SERIOUS CUSTOM BUILDS INCLUDE

A tight, well-built envelope

Continuous air and water barriers, careful flashing, and insulation specified for Southeast heat and humidity.

Zoned HVAC with humidity control

Room-level comfort and dehumidification, critical for wine, art, and wellness rooms.

Whole-home standby power

A generator sized for the full house, with the transfer switch and gas service planned in.

Structured wiring & water protection

Low-voltage backbone run during framing, plus filtration, leak detection, and automatic shutoff.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

✗
Electrical service sized for today, not the pool, EV chargers, or additions to come.

✗
Oversized HVAC that cools quickly but leaves the air damp.

✗
Foundation waterproofing treated as optional on a sloping lot.

MOST REQUESTED

Whole-home standby generators

WORTH THE SPLURGE

Envelope details & window flashing

OFTEN OVERLOOKED

Humidity control, not just cooling

VISION TIP

Size electrical service, gas, and conduit for the house you might grow into. Each is inexpensive during construction and costly to add later.



THE PART MOST BUILDERS LEAVE TO YOU

“We love the plans. *But can we afford to build it?*”
That’s where most custom homes stall. It’s
where ours start.

We’ve built a panel of construction lenders who work alongside the builder, not around them. When the money question comes up, we don’t hand you a phone book. We make an introduction.

01 Construction-to-Permanent

One closing funds the lot, the build, and converts to your mortgage at completion. Interest-only while we build.

02 Jumbo & Portfolio Builds

Portfolio banks for homes above conforming limits, with underwriting that flexes for a proven builder.

03 Land & Lot Financing

Buying the lot first? Lot loans bridge the gap, and equity in land you already own can often count toward your down payment.

04 Private-Bank Options

Already working with a wealth advisor? Often the cleanest path is a line against your own portfolio. We’re happy to coordinate.

BEFORE YOUR FIRST LENDER CONVERSATION

01

Know whether you own the lot, have one under contract, or are still looking.

02

A rough budget range for the house, even before plans are drawn

03

A sense of timeline: when you’d want to break ground

04

Whether you’re relying on a construction loan or outside capital



BEFORE YOU HIRE

Ten questions worth asking any custom builder.

Not a sales pitch, a checklist. Ask these of anyone bidding on your home, us included. The answers tell you more than the portfolio does.

01

Is my crew actually yours?

Or does it change with every subcontractor's availability that month?

03

How do you work with my architect?

From the first sketches, or only once drawings are done and it's time to bid?

05

What happens if a permit or inspection stalls?

Whose timeline slips, and who tells you first.

07

What does the draw schedule look like?

Transparent and tied to milestones, or opaque until you ask?

09

What's in your warranty?

In writing, and who responds when something needs attention after move-in?

02

Who owns this project, start to finish?

A single project manager from start to finish, or a rotating cast as it moves through phases?

04

How are allowances and change orders handled?

Selections priced up front, or allowances that quietly grow?

06

Is there a lender relationship?

Which construction lenders already approve you as a builder?

08

How do you manage the site?

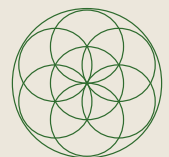
Grading, drainage, tree protection, and neighbors, from the first day of clearing.

10

Who signs off at final walkthrough?

And what's the process if something's missed on the punch list?

A note on this list: every question here is one we expect to answer ourselves, on the record, before you sign anything. Vision is built to be a turnkey solution for the homeowner: design, permitting, construction, interior design, technology and smart systems, and experiential amenities, all under one roof. If a builder bristles at any of these questions, that's an answer too.





START THE CONVERSATION

Tell us about the house you've been imagining.

Every custom home starts the same way: a piece of land, and a vision for
what it could become.

CALL

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A division of Vision Development & Construction. 35 years building in the Southeast.

CRAFT · DISCRETION · ONE TEAM, START TO FINISH