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## Nouveau Luxury Builders Focuses on the New

Nouveau Luxury Builders | Houston, Texas



# Nouveau Luxury Builders Focuses on the New

**By Kathy Bowen Stolz**

It's no wonder that Nouveau Luxury Builders' owner John Liu chose to include "nouveau" (French for new) in his company's name, for his vision for building focuses on the new -- new style, new ideas, new concepts, new technology -- innovation with a creative flair.

"Custom homes should be different from other homes. I want my homes to stand out. A lot of so-called custom home builders still do cookie-cutter homes. You have to spend a lot of extra time walking in untested waters to build the unique, luxury custom homes that I build. But I like to take that challenge. We are the one for those who want to build trendy and timeless homes sporting new designs and new techniques," Liu stated.

A builder with 20 years of experience, Liu uses speculative homes to showcase his creative designs, trendy style and quality craftsmanship. "I use a spec home as an identity.

With a spec home, the customer can see, can touch our work." His 2017 spec home was sold at \$7.8 million and his 2021 spec home was sold at \$8.7 million; both were recognized as the most expensive new home of the year by Houston Business Journal.

"The design of a house is like a fashion. It changes over time. Starting a few years ago, the trend is turning to a clean, modern, minimalist style."

To achieve a minimalist look in the interiors, Nouveau Luxury Builders eliminates crown mouldings, baseboards and window and door casings. "A lot of time trims and mouldings are used to cover imperfections. To get rid of trims, the workmanship must be perfect," he continued. "I always encourage my subs to try new things and expand their skill set," he added.

Many elements of this minimalist style came from Europe,



where Liu loves to travel to pick up ideas for design, materials and technology. One of his innovations was emulating the white mortar that encases the brick and stone exterior of the Design Museum Denmark in Copenhagen, which he visited with his family in 2013. “People here admire European chic. With Instagram and Pinterest you can see a lot of stuff without traveling.”

Inspired by the exterior of Design Museum Denmark, in 2016 he built a spec house with a white exterior that looks like stucco but it is actually brick fully sacked with mortar. It is a traditional home but has a modern, clean feel, he said. A few clients have hired him to build custom homes for them because they liked the look of that particular house and wanted a finish just like it. Now that look is everywhere in Houston, Liu noted.

He tries very hard to generate unparalleled design using different materials and colors. He puts special emphasis on kitchens, bars and master baths because those areas are highly visible and frequently used. They need to be uniquely stylish and have practical function, in his opinion. In addition, he pays special attention to powder rooms because they can trigger compliments from the guests on the owner’s style and taste. “Extra time and money invested in these areas are highly perceived.” Liu said.

“I’m not a typical builder by any means. I stumbled into this business by chance,” Liu said with a chuckle. While





working as a finance professor at the University of Houston and Our Lady of the Lake University, he got involved in commercial real estate development through consulting. He found that he liked the construction and design aspects of the consulting. He started learning home building and became a full-time residential builder in 2002 with Joy Homes, a small production homes company that developed subdivisions and built homes in the \$150,000-\$250,000 market.

The economic meltdown in 2008, however made him turn from building track homes to custom homes because “when the market is crashing, the value of luxury homes in prestigious neighborhoods sustain well.” He changed the company name to Nouveau Luxury Homes to reflect its new focus. “It’s not a big company, and I don’t really want to get bigger, just want to get better. I’m personally involved in every project.”

John’s primary functions in Nouveau Luxury Builders are in marketing, customer development and design. He is assisted by two project managers who focus more on building process, scheduling and supervision of workmanship and material control. Each of them handles no more than three projects at a time to maintain the quality of each.

Nouveau Luxury Builders constructs 4 to 6 houses each year in the \$2 to 9 million value range. Their size is usually 5,500 to 14,000 sq. ft. Although the company will build

in other neighborhoods, the company currently focuses on the Memorial and West University areas of Houston where the real estate is not impacted by economic downturns, according to Liu, who was a banker at one time with the San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C.

Building a custom home is “highly individualized” to each client and each builder. It’s important for the customer to have a “click” with the builder, this native of China stated. “We cater to discriminating customers who desire to build their style and value into their homes and who want to let their home make a statement of their taste and lifestyle. We are where inspired design meets with unrivaled craftsmanship.

“My clients all want to upgrade their homes, to bring everything to a higher level. They want to build something better than their previous homes, something more trendy and more comfortable,” he continued. His clients typically are business owners, executives or medical professionals between the ages of 40 to 65 who are building their second or third custom home.

The company motto of Integrity, Quality and Reliability sets Nouveau Luxury Builders apart from other contractors, according to its owner, who emphasizes honesty and transparency with his clients. He said he and his staff are perfectionists and certainly try to avoid mistakes, but they will admit and correct mistakes. Quality, to them, means



good building process, good workmanship, good materials and good style.

“A good builder needs to watch the back of the customer,” Liu stated. “We always try to save every possible dollar for our customers while adhering to the highest quality standard. We also pledge to deliver on-time and on-budget during construction and provide unwavering warranty service after closing.”

***To contact Nouveau Luxury Builders, call John Liu at 713-410-3927 or email [john.nlbuilders@gmail.com](mailto:john.nlbuilders@gmail.com) or visit [www.nlbuilders.com](http://www.nlbuilders.com).***

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