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Success Is Black and White
for Thakkar & Co

Thakkar & Co. | Houston, Texas



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By Kathy Bowen Stolz

If you're dazzled by a two-story white house with black trim, look to Thakkar & Co. to deliver your dream house.

Its most popular design is a "transitional" or "contemporary-transitional" house between 4,500 and 5,500 sq. ft. with prominent gables and plenty of windows on the front façade that "pop" out of the white walls, thanks to that contrasting trim. The white theme continues in the interior with most of its clients requesting white kitchens and white primary bathrooms with natural stone and white oak accents.

However, Thakkar & Co. does not limit itself to the

current trends. Clients often bring inspiration pictures from social media and other sources. "Our focus is on creating lifestyles. We strive to create residences which are elegant and beautiful but welcoming and cozy at the same time. We consider how space within each room will be used, with form and function equally represented. We're building all shapes and sizes in all locations across the greater metro area. We focus on the luxury market with homes in the \$1 million to \$2.5 million being our most popular," Ravi Thakkar, president of Thakkar & Co., said.

He offers a turnkey operation to his clients from lot



acquisition to design and through construction. His team of 10 employees, which includes a technical staff and an operations staff, is able provide the full range of services to the 90 percent of clients who do not have plans in hand. Clients work with his architect/design team to fulfill their vision of a dream home.

His “highly educated” clients are often “mid-experience” in life, ranging in age between their mid-30s to mid-50s and seeking to upgrade their housing, according to Thakkar. Most of them want to be close to their work or their children’s schools, which often puts them in the “coveted” Houston neighborhoods of River Oaks, West University and the Villages “where lots are becoming more and more scarce” with tear-downs of existing houses being the standard procedure. “We are respectful of the neighborhood; we keep the community in mind,” he added.

Thakkar & Co. is also respectful of its clients. “We are really passionate about the communication process with our clients. We have a virtual workspace for our clients to have direct communication with their build team. We require timely responses to any questions that come through. Our staff is required to respond within 24 hours,” Ravi stated.

The company had built five to seven houses (including two or three speculative houses) a year in the past but now has 16 custom houses under contract for next year! “The demand in the Greater Houston market is just incredible,” Ravi commented. “We had a spec house in River Oaks that didn’t sell immediately, so we unexpectedly had two





months of open houses. That led to a lot of the contracts. We're staffing up our operations and spacing out the builds to meet the demand." With a custom home taking 9½ months to build on average, the project team is "doing a lot of up-front planning, creating a 'recipe book' for each home" to streamline the construction process. He hopes to build two spec homes during the next year also, but they may have to be delayed. "It's very fluid."

The Thakkars market their homes on social media ("Instagram has done us very well.") in addition to the traditional marketing route of having signs on the build sites.

Both having worked in the energy industry, Ravi and his wife Rachana, the company CEO, realized that adopting the concept of using one vendor – with several others to fill in the gaps – for as many materials as possible would make their purchasing more efficient. However, with the current volatility in the pricing and supply chain of materials, they find it hard to plan. With so many houses under contract, they are placing orders for materials much earlier than in the past. What took two or three months previously is now taking a year to obtain. But placing those early orders for multiples of appliances, garage doors and other materials means having to put money down at the time of order – another challenge.

They are evaluating getting a storage facility, but Houston's high humidity is a consideration. They don't want to be in a position where they have a lot of materials exposed to the humid temperatures in the Houston area, Ravi said.

He expects a little bit of a slowdown in building during the next few years, thanks to a combination of rising interest rates, smaller numbers of tradespeople and uncertainties in the supply chain. However, he sees the long-term future of the building industry to be "very, very positive."

Like many Houstonites, the Thakkars came to town through a job transfer. Both Ravi and Rachana, a Chicago native, were working in the energy industry in his hometown of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, "the Texas of the north." They "were very excited" to move south in 2011 to escape the cold weather. "I would rather battle heat than cold," he declared.

Always interested in construction, Ravi started investing in the Houston real estate market. "As an engineer it always fascinated me to see something on paper come to life." He built his first spec house in 2017 because he saw an opportunity to bring a different style of architecture to Houston, a style that he continues to use.

The Thakkars' first client asked them to design and build a similar white house with black trim in a different



neighborhood. That same client, a physician who relocated to Dallas, sold his home within 24 hours, proving the continuing popularity of the style.

For Thakkar & Co., success is as simple as black and white.

To contact Thakkar & Co., call 281-318-1515, email info@thakkarandcompany.com, or visit www.thakkarandcompany.com. The office is located at 550 Westcott St., Suite 449, Houston, TX 77007.

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