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Herzog
HOMES

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'Secret Sauce' for Success



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By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Looking for a new home but don’t have the time or the inclination to make the thousands of little decisions required in building a custom home? A showcase home, often referred to as a spec home, by Herzog Homes may be the answer.

David Herzog, owner, explained that homebuyers can move into one of the 8 - 12 showcase homes that he builds every year in the Oak Forest and Garden Oaks neighborhoods “without the stress.”

“We build awesome houses. The house plans we’ve designed have been value engineered and get better and better each time we build. The houses we are building now are literally some of the best homes I’ve ever built,” Herzog, who has built “a couple of thousand houses” in his 30 years of experience, stated.

Herzog Homes currently builds three floor plans, which all

have the same ingredients of David’s “secret sauce” for spec homes: enormous primary suites, custom kitchens, open concepts, dining rooms, big breakfast nooks and 4,100 - 5,500 square feet. “I think our floorplans are really close to perfect.” One of his houses typically takes eight months to build from the time stakes are put in the ground.

A self-described “scale guy,” David said proportion is key. Hallways and frequently used rooms must be the prioritized and sized proportionally. “I don’t want anyone to have to suck in their stomach to squeeze between the island and the oven or from room to room.”

He created the recipe for his perfect spec home by seeking input from designers, Realtors, and stagers and by attending a “whole bunch” of open houses in addition to tweaking the floor plans he was building. Herzog Homes also builds custom homes occasionally.



While “budget bandwidth” and floor plans are considerations for his buyers, the typical buyer has children in elementary school and wants to be in a high-quality school district and neighborhood. The buyers frequently are senior professionals in the oil and gas industry, physicians, or entrepreneurs,

Herzog Homes range from \$1.4 - \$2.5 million. He acknowledges that when people spend a million or more dollars on something, they rightfully will be discriminating. But his goal is “Raving Fans.” David wants his customers to rave about their homes, even when standing in line at the grocery.

To David and his team, quality is paramount. As a member of the Greater Houston Builders Association, he frequently attends seminars in addition to participating in the Custom Builders Council to learn of improvements and innovations in building. He also hires random third-party home inspectors to come in and “beat the hell out of us” to find any bits of unfinished work before putting a house on the market. The inspectors’ punch list is one of the last steps in Herzog Homes’ construction process. He also recommends buyers get a third-party inspection to alleviate any of their fears.

Herzog spent the first five years after high school framing houses as co-owner of a construction company in his hometown of Annapolis, Md. He considers the framing to be the most important part of the house’s structure, so he is blessed to have a great framing crew. In fact, all of his trade





partners are great, he said.

When he moved to Texas in 2018, David walked into every single house that was being built around Houston, talking to crews and examining their work while getting a feel for the local real estate market demands.

He compiled lists of plumbers, framers, electricians and more, seeking the most talented and compatible crews. “We have a ‘no jerk’ rule. I insist on a ‘jerk-free’ environment when we build or sell our homes. Our goal is to build houses without any stress on our trades, our customers or our internal team. There are plenty of trade partners out there that want to work in that environment, so this approach has resulted in very loyal crews.”

Herzog attributes the company’s success to his management team and consultancy experts, “Without Heidi Herzog, my wife and design extraordinaire, and Nick Keating, the director of construction, none of this happens. Our homes would not be as great, and our customers would not be as happy. I am really proud of our team and all the great work they do.”

During his career David has been an active member of multiple national and state industry associations. Their awards and recognition include being named by the National Association of Home Builders and Builder Magazine as America’s Best Builder. Additionally, the Better Business Bureau gave the company the Torch Award for being the most ethical business employing between 100-1,000 employees in the Washington Metro area.







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