

Builder/Architect

Matt Morris Development

Pushing the Envelope ...
Tastefully



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By Lalaena Gonzalez-Figueroa

Highly organized, detail oriented and structured in his business endeavors, Matt Morris knows when and how to take risks. At a young age, he pushed limits in order to achieve his goals, and after over 16 years in the field of construction and development, he continues to challenge himself. Driven by a passion for excellence, he enjoys the opportunity to create homes that are distinctly unique, marked by luxury and comfort. The results are nothing short of spectacular, and he wouldn't have it any other way.

The son of a commercial developer, Morris developed a taste for building as a teenager, though his early interests were focused in the residential arena. After graduating from college with a degree in real estate and finance, he accepted a position with a Dallas-based home builder, where he learned

the business from the ground up. In 1995, he relocated to Manhattan Beach and briefly joined forces with his older brother, a local Realtor® and developer. By the age of 23, he had built his first home, an innovative mix of classical design fused with materials that hadn't been widely seen in the region's residential market. "I knew, going into the higher-end home market as a young builder, that I'd have to stand out," recalls Morris. "At the time, most spec-home builders weren't investing as much time and money as I did, but it worked." In fact, the home was purchased by the president of an interior design school, who appreciated its unique look and feel. Morris' early success fueled his passion. "I gained the courage to take bigger and bolder risks on the next home," he reveals.

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— Matt Morris



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Morris also discovered that his ideal work environment was a solo venture; in 1997 he founded Matt Morris Development, a firm specializing in high-end spec and custom homes. Though he no longer had an official partner, Morris found professional support in his wife, Jen,

whose creativity and eye for detail are uncannily in sync with her husband's. Her focus is now on raising the couple's two young daughters, though she still offers support and assistance as needed.

A builder is only as good as his finished product, and Morris'



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results speak for themselves. Thanks to a growing group of repeat and referral customers, the majority of his homes are situated within 1 square mile in Manhattan Beach. Despite his success, Morris isn't resting on his laurels.

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Design inspiration, says Morris, typically comes from traveling and firsthand experience. "I enjoy traveling, and utilize the change of scenery to take in new details and ideas," he

notes. "Driving up through Malibu, taking a trip to New York City or touring Tuscany, I find everything from unique tile designs to specialized stone work to interesting use of interior woodwork. Then I try to recreate those elements in my own way." He's not afraid to push the envelope, challenging subcontractors to incorporate unique materials and methods into their work. From 12" distressed wood floors to 100-year-old beams nestled within a modern-style

home, the Matt Morris signature is classic-meets-unconventional in a subtly elegant setting.

"Quality and comfort are essential in a home," asserts Morris. "My aim is to build a space that incorporates layers of luxury, with multiple pieces of impact throughout the structure working in harmony." He adds, "I truly believe that if you surround yourself with objects and elements of quality, you're led to a better place mentally and emotionally. My niche has been to build homes that include this theme. As beautiful as they are, they are also highly livable spaces that add value to my clients' lives."

His vision, dedication and effective communication skills have enabled Morris to develop strong collegial relationships



with subcontractors and professionals, including architects and designers. His clients, too, appreciate Morris' understanding of design and his ability to remain flexible throughout the building process. "I enjoy the opportunity to fine tune design plans

as a builder, Morris is also an experienced real estate agent who represents the purchase and sale of properties beyond his own inventory. "My work as a licensed Realtor enables me to understand the market on a different level," he says. "As a



according to my clients' lifestyle needs," he explains. "Building a house is a process, and I work to ensure that it's a great experience for everyone involved." Early on, Morris meets with clients to develop an understanding of their personalities, which he works to incorporate into their homes. "When I know someone's style, there's a natural progression during the building process," he offers. "The same design on paper can be subtly modified to reflect a more formal or casual atmosphere. It's not always obvious, but my clients appreciate the details."

In a business that's marked by challenges, Morris notes that his objective is to facilitate a positive environment throughout the build. "I like to have fun with my subcontractors," he acknowledges. "They know that I expect nothing less than excellent results, but that doesn't mean we can't enjoy the work." His proactive approach and ongoing communication ensure that potential issues are addressed before they become full-fledged problems. In the end, says Morris, he enjoys great relationships with his clients long after they've moved into their homes.

Though he's known for his prowess

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builder, I know the true value of the properties I'm developing. And as a real estate professional, I'm able to offer my clients a better understanding of the potential opportunities or issues that a given property may present. I can help find the perfect properties for my clients to build their dream homes."

His experience, attention to detail and ability to take clients from vision to finished product have enabled Morris to thrive as a builder/developer and Realtor. Combining the utmost in quality with luxurious yet livable style, Morris continues to push the envelope in high-end home building. The results are unmistakably unique: homes that are as exciting as they are inviting. He wouldn't settle for anything less. ■

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