

BROCK SMITH

CUSTOM HOMES, L.L.C.

Brock Smith Custom Homes: Process and Passion

Brock Smith's story is the story of someone who's followed his passion.

"I get up every morning excited about building custom homes," says Brock. "I love working with my clients to create their vision of a home for their family and friends—on time and on budget."

The son and grandson of builders, Brock grew up in Washington, and knew what he wanted to do early on. After graduating from Washington State University, Brock moved back to Seattle and started working for Burnstead Homes, working his way up from the bottom; he started as an assistant in the purchasing department, getting to know every vendor and product needed to build houses from plumbing pipes to travertine tile.

"I worked my way up from the bottom, and it has been a fantastic learning experience," he says. "Twenty years later, I'm using all that experience and knowledge to follow my own vision for building the best houses in the Northwest."

After two decades working side by side with Steve Burnstead, eventually becoming Vice President in charge of day-to-day operations, Brock embarked on a new project on his own. In 2007 he formed Brock Smith Custom Homes, and began building high-end custom homes in the Suncadia Resort, completing about 20 houses in Suncadia and Tumble Creek while working with and transitioning from Burnstead, with several others pending now through his new venture.

"I've decided to take what I've learned about processes over the years and concentrate on being a professional custom home building company," he says. "I'm using all the technological tools available to make each and every project go smoothly, such as Microsoft Project to manage the myriad details of this very complex process."

Working on five to ten houses a year takes an incredible amount of coordination of vendors from framers and drywallers to stonemasons to plumbers, with dozens of line items for each project. Take that times ten, and you can see why some builders have problems coordinating all the jobs that need to be done, resulting in slow completion of a job, not to mention budget problems.

Brock Smith, on the other hand, makes the managing of details a priority. "Anyone can build a house, but we work hard every day to stay on the leading edge with our process, looking for the best new products and focusing on the design plan from the beginning to make sure the client gets what they want, within the budget they have set."

"I really like to be involved with clients, creating a personal relationship with them and their project," Brock says. "It is my job to make my clients aware of all the options available to them."

For instance, he built a 2,600 square foot home that was a very involved and complex process, partially because it involved cutting-edge architecture and design that had to be translated into the built environment. Brock has also built three- and four-star environmentally friendly homes, "not to just put a sticker on them," but to create an economically efficient and energy-saving home—with up to 30 percent utility bill savings—that is also comfortable and beautiful.

He also focuses on a "clean-air" construction process of protecting the air filter and heating vents and using a hepi-filter system while building is being completed, keeping air pollution to a minimum for his workers and for the eventual homeowners.

But more than all the efficient project scheduling, cost-analysis and vendor relations, Brock's passion focuses on the desires and needs of the client and their family. He sees his role as a facilitator to create beautiful, functional homes that "will last for a hundred years," bringing family members of different generations together and building new family memories that will last a lifetime.