



*ABOVE: Austin (background) and De. BELOW: A recent build in Copper Mill.*



# Heirloom Homes: Crafting Custom Homes for Generations

BY JEN GENNARO

**F**or more than 24 years, De Hunt has been the man with the plan—house plan, that is. Armed with an architecture degree from LSU and long history in Zachary, he began drawing

custom blueprints for clients in 2000, and has been steady in his work ever since. His passion for architectural refinement led to the creation of Heirloom Homes, built on craftsmanship and family legacy. Partnering with his son Austin, a licensed general contractor, the duo founded Heirloom Homes in 2018, envisioning homes not as mere structures but as legacies to be passed down through generations.

Customization is at the heart of what they do, urging clients to imbue their homes with personal touches. Hidden safe rooms, equipped to withstand natural disasters, dog washing stations, and media rooms with tiered seating represent just a few of the unique requests fulfilled by the firm. Each home reflects the client's personality, ensuring it reflects their individuality. And since the homes are built with future needs in mind, there are features like space and wiring for a future generator, or oversized hallways and door frames for ADA accessibility, says Austin.

"Building custom is a completely different animal than building a spec house to sell," De explains. "Our process is very client-centric." Unlike traditional builders, Heirloom Homes offers a comprehensive "design-build" service as opposed to a finished product. The customization process at Heirloom Homes begins with understanding the client's vision and budget. De crafts multiple drafts, tailoring each to maximize space and functionality based on the client's desires. It's a collaborative effort, where clients have the freedom to cherry-pick features from various designs until the perfect blueprint emerges.

Once past the design phase and on to build, Austin emphasizes the importance of communication throughout the process, guiding clients through the myriad decisions involved in building a custom home. There are hundreds of decisions that need to be made when building a custom home—from large choices like location of the utility room and choice of cabinet style, down to the minutiae of the best way to maximize every single nook and cranny. For this reason, he says, he talks to his homeowners "multiple times a day," and is present at each site daily.



*A truly custom home in Clairmont—note the kidney bean-shaped island.*

With a hands-on approach, the team manages every aspect of design and construction, ensuring attention to detail and quality craftsmanship from start to finish. This can't be achieved by a builder who is disengaged and not on your job daily, they explain.

"We formed this company based on the principle that reputation supersedes all things," De says. "We've turned down jobs before due to workload. We wouldn't feel comfortable building a home if we were concerned it wouldn't get the attention it deserved."

Heirloom Homes won't be the cheapest option on the table due to their quality standards for subcontractors and materials, but they won't be the most expensive, either. "We pass down our builders' discounts to clients, and we have a very transparent contract. There are no hidden fees, and no contractor markups. The contractor fee is plainly stated. We're committed to striking the best balance between quality craftsmanship and cost for our clients of all budgets," De says.

As a local, family-owned business, De and Austin embody the principles of integrity and reliability. With a focus on personalized service and timeless design, their commitment to excellence is evident in every meticulously crafted home, setting a benchmark for custom home builders in the region.



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*De, Austin and the homeowners often work closely with Storm Lantrip to design interior colors and finishes.*