



Luxury Architect Kurt Krueger

Local design-build firm takes it from vision through construction

BY ALINA GONZAQUE

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“I really enjoy working on a home that people will be living in,” Kurt Krueger begins. The Top 100 North American Luxury Architect, repeat Design Excellence awardee and three-time Best of Houzz award-winner details what sets his architecture and design company apart from other businesses in the industry. Passion for each project is a must, of course, but where his company excels is seeing the project through from beginning to end without losing anything in translation. According to Kurt, architecture speaks one dialect, and construction another. Sometimes the blueprint doesn’t account for the invisible hiccups inherent in nearly all building operations, and it often falls on the contractor to reinterpret the design to fit the reality. Kurt is both designer and builder on his projects, which allows him, as he phrases it, “to creatively see the vision and dream” from beginning to end.

“I’ve always liked the ability to create and collaborate with people to see their dream come true,” Kurt says, “whether they’re homeowners or business owners.” As an architect-

led design-build firm, Kurt Krueger Architects protects the client vision from being chipped away by unexpected pitfalls and costs. “If you’ve ever been involved in any kind of con-

struction,” Kurt says, “you know that things never happen seamlessly, no matter how well you plan. If the architect isn’t intimately involved in construction, those things are left to be solved by the general contractor — or worse, they don’t get figured out at all. It becomes a noticeable detraction from the overall project.”

When creating beautiful buildings, Kurt seeks to fully understand his clients’ vision, and to identify ways to best incorporate the natural features of the area. He explains, “One of the things we try to do is respond to aspects that are particular to the site, like how does the light move, what are the wind patterns, what are local trades or materials that we can tap into. We try to craft something that is creative and different each time.” These considerations come into play while maintaining the integrity of the client’s original aesthetic and vision.

Combining design and construction comes naturally to Kurt. He was artistic in high school, and geometry clicked for him; visualizing lines and angles as solid buildings was easy. He studied architecture and design at Kansas State University and then designed for the award-winning Rockhill and Associates in Lawrence, Kansas. When he relocated to Los Angeles, he worked on high profile projects for Marmol Radziner & Associates and ARYA Group before establishing Kurt Krueger Architects, Inc. — to bridge the gap he saw between design and final construction.

One of the greatest payoffs for the work is seeing the plans take shape. “The design stage can take a while,” Kurt says, “so seeing





the building going up is exhilarating." It's also important to the firm that buildings that go up, stay up. The best way to ensure they stand the test of time is to make them, well, timeless. "Buildings must be designed well," Kurt says. "Not just on-trend." Not only is it a better use of resources to construct homes that are "concerned with space and light, context and place, texture and detail," it also ensures the project will be valued and bring joy to the community for decades to come.

"We see ourselves as architects to the community, and Brentwood in particular," Kurt says. "I'm on the Brentwood Design Review Board, my office is here and many of my clients are here. We're invested in the

Village." He and his wife, Violet, participate in community events and the Brentwood Community Council. They and their two dogs — one a Great Pyrenees and the other a large Samusky — typically like to visit new places in LA. Kurt, unsurprisingly, is drawn to historical sites and architectural gems. "I enjoy seeing the beauty of SoCal, hiking or road-tripping to the outskirts of LA, old nearby towns... You could spend a lifetime here and just scratch the surface," he says. "Being able to explore has always been a great joy."



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That adventurous spirit was fostered in his hometown in Missouri, growing up on his parents' farm. He watched his mother and father return to college while raising four children and took from them the lesson that hard work and dirty hands achieve more than simple luck. He remains close to them and his siblings, visiting Missouri at least once a year, and his parents are one of his greatest influences. "Even as far away as we are," he says, "the set of values they instilled in me is manifested in the decisions I make and the way I see things."

Though his roots are in Missouri, his heart is in Brentwood, according to Kurt. He says each project is not just a one-off, but an investment in his neighbors and hometown, and he sums up his goal this way: "I want to see Brentwood as gorgeous as it can be. We craft beautiful homes and buildings to try to create a better community — now, and for future generations."