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Preview Our *Spec-tacular* 2023 Project House!

A stunning speculative home filled with traditional details and whimsical twists is the focus of our Project House 2023. Join the journey to see this home go from rendering to move-in ready.

BY AUTUMN KRAUSE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY SALAZAR AND SCOTT DAVIS



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ABOVE, LEFT | TILE WITH STYLE. Gleaming black-and-white tiles will make a stunning statement. The aesthetic is inspired by the classical feel of old homes from the 1800s. "Tiles like these evoke a timeless feeling," Cara says.
ABOVE, RIGHT | HAPPY MEALS. One of the warm and charming details of the home will be a built-in pizza oven. "Brick pizza ovens are so much fun to have indoors," Cara says.

Welcome to Project House Utah!

Our expert hosts this year are Cara and Tom Fox of The Fox Group, a full-service residential design and construction firm. They have invited us to follow along as they bring a modern colonial speculative house to life in Salt Lake City, Utah, from detailed renderings to complete incarnation.

Project House *Part 1*



| ABOVE, LEFT | FRAME GAME. The framing was just finished and took about six weeks. It's a big step because it's the first time the home moves from renderings and blueprints into existence.

| RIGHT | STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN. "These stairs are very unique," Cara says. "I've always wanted to do a stair hall and long view from the entry toward it." It's different yet still practical with the floor plan and layout.

"The purpose of a spec home is to build a place for a family needing something move-in ready," Cara says. "I enjoy it because we use out-of-the-box ideas that most people need to see in person to understand. This home is the embodiment of classicism with fresh twists and modern convenience." It will have five bedrooms and its spirit will be very traditional but with pops of whimsy and charm.

The couple own The Fox Group. Cara is the lead designer and Tom is the manager. They met in college and discovered they have a shared passion: homes. A typical pastime would find the two of them driving around their favorite neighborhoods, soaking up the local architecture and pointing out the features they loved. "We started out by building our own home and the homes of family and friends," Cara says. "Once we did spec houses—which would sell before we even listed them—we realized we were in the right industry and opened The Fox Group." That was 17 years ago. Now, the business employs 30 architects, designers and a full construction crew. It designs for clients all around the world, with a specialization in classic architecture and New England traditional design.



PHOTOS BY THE FOX GROUP

"This home is the embodiment of CLASSICISM with *fresh twists* and MODERN CONVENIENCE."



POWER COUPLE. Cara and Tom are a dynamic team. Cara is an intuitive creative, while Tom has a keen eye for detail and composition. "Together, we strive to make homes that are havens for the soul," Cara says.



PHOTO BY LINDSAY SALAZAR

Parts of the *Process*

Cara and Tom are experts at walking through the custom and speculative build process. Here's a behind-the-scenes look at the steps that lead from an empty lot to a home sweet home.

- **Discoverable.** The first phase is fun and inspiring! Cara calls it Discovery. It's when all the expectations and dreams for the new home are laid out and the design and architectural teams envision how it will be lived in.
- **Art Project.** Next come the conceptual drawings. These are the initial drawings of the project. They are exciting to see because it's the first tangible look at the home.
- **Fit the Mold.** Architectural plans and fitting the home to the lot is next. During this phase, everything is scaled and drawn—down to the last doorstep!
- **Creative Construction.** The construction crew gets to work building the house in layers, from first framing to final finish.
- **Design Details.** Now the details finally fill the home. Through the entire process, Cara says follow-through and learning to embrace changes for the build, if necessary, are vital.

Project House *Part 1*



PHOTO BY LINDSAY SALAZAR

Another branch of the company blossomed after Cara wanted to expand on her love for curating one-of-a-kind design pieces and collaborating with artists near and far. "I thought it would be a dream to have them in a shop of our own," she says. So, the brick-and-mortar and digital doors of The Fox Shop opened, featuring clients' décor pieces and custom furnishings.

Just as the company has grown, so has the Fox family. Cara and Tom have five children and a menagerie of dogs, cats and horses, meaning they have full plates and equally full hearts.

Currently, the spec house has just finished framing and rough electrical/plumbing and HVAC. Its outline is the shape of things to come. "Some of my favorite details are the front porch, which is a nod to the past; the side front door, which makes the exterior balanced and pleasing; and the inviting foyer and entertaining spaces like the dining room and back-porch fireplace," Cara says. It will also feature a pool, indoor brick pizza oven and a black-and-white tile foyer.

Join us for the journey as this project moves through every phase of the building cycle and turns into a house waiting to be filled with life, love and laughter. **CB**

[RIGHT] EYE FOR DESIGN. A Fox Group home immediately draws you in. Cara has traveled extensively throughout the world and her adventures have honed her style, particularly her time spent in the English countryside and the East Coast. Tom is an expert at creating historically accurate homes. Every Fox Group home beautifully intersects an Old World aesthetic and a vibrant interpretation.



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