

**THE
DREAM
HOUSE
BOOK**

BY

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Welcome. If you've ever considered building a dream home, here's your starting point. Visit the website for more articles, photos, and downloadable planning tools.

All photos are by the author.

And here's the disclaimer: please read and enjoy the book, but know that it's neither nice nor legal to reproduce any text or photos without the author's consent. All persons mentioned in the book are real. Only their first names have been used. Opinions and statements are those of the author. You should seek legal, financial, and engineering advice from professionals to assist you at any or all home building or renovation steps.

dreamhousebook.com

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FOREWORD

This is an A to Z explanation of all the steps involved in building or buying a dream house. Inside are well over 300 tips, ideas, inspirations, and dozens of explanatory photos I've taken over the years.

What this book is not is a do-it-yourselfer collection of money-saving tips. On the contrary, this book anticipates you have owned a few homes and are probably looking at building something over a million dollars.

This book will teach you how to think about and manage a custom home project. Following my life journey and the complete process of building a luxury home in the heart of the Colorado Rockies, I will show you how to make better decisions. Better decisions will improve the production process, add real financial value to your home, and ensure you are delighted with the result for years.

Over five decades, my wife Terry and I have owned fourteen properties, from primary residences to second homes to investment condos. Our twenty years living in the Vail Valley in Colorado took us into some of America's most dazzling and expensive homes, well over \$20 million. Spoiler alert: spending more doesn't equate to being happier.

A lifelong entrepreneur, I have built several successful companies. I never really expected to build a dream house. Heck, I was about halfway into the project when it occurred to me that I had entered into dream house territory. I have won many awards for writing and media production, have entertained and informed tens of thousands of readers, and have had over a million views of YouTube videos I've produced. Still, nothing has been as creatively satisfying as building our dream house. Nothing.

I'm neither a contractor, craftsperson, or architect. But, like in my professional career, I'm pretty good about finding talented folks to help me pursue a dream, curious enough to learn, organized enough to manage complexity, and confident enough to make an informed

bet with my checkbook. In almost anything I do, I always remind myself that I'm not the first to do it. If somebody else figured it out, I can too — and so can you. Nothing would be more satisfying than to know a tiny amount of my experience could help play a part in your success and happiness.

Don Cohen



Day Zero. We stumbled across an amazing home lot in the heart of the Colorado Rockies. On that early July afternoon, we had no idea we'd spend the next two years building a dream house here.