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# THE MAKING OF ORIGINALS

FINDING YOUR VOICE. PROTECTING THE VISION.  
CREATING WORK THAT ENDURES.

*written by* **SHELBY SINCLAIR**

**I**n a design landscape saturated with imagery, inspiration, and influence, developing an authentic voice has become one of the most defining—and challenging—acts of creative leadership. For this Expert Advice feature, we invited interior designers, architects, and builders to explore what it truly means to create work that is original, intentional, and enduring.

From the design perspective, interior designers and architects address the question of Finding Your Voice in a Saturated Design World—sharing how clarity, restraint, and deep listening shape a point of view that feels personal rather than derivative. Their insights reveal that originality is not a formula or a trend, but a thoughtful evolution grounded in experience, intuition, and a genuine understanding of how people live.

Running parallel is a conversation with builders who approach originality from a different, yet equally critical, vantage point. Often positioned as the executors of vision, today's most respected builders reveal a more nuanced role—one where building itself becomes a creative act. Through judgment, material knowledge, and an intimate understanding of craft, they act as stewards of design intent, protecting architectural clarity from dilution as ideas move from paper to physical form.

Within the Icons & Originals theme, these combined perspectives underscore a shared truth: original work doesn't happen by accident. It is the result of intention, collaboration, and trust—when designers, architects, and builders move in alignment to create homes that feel cohesive, timeless, and deeply considered.



Lyndsey Davis Nicklas



Joyce Owens



Timothy Riehm



Luke Fredrickson



Jeffrey Fisher



Tim Dupre



Nan Wright



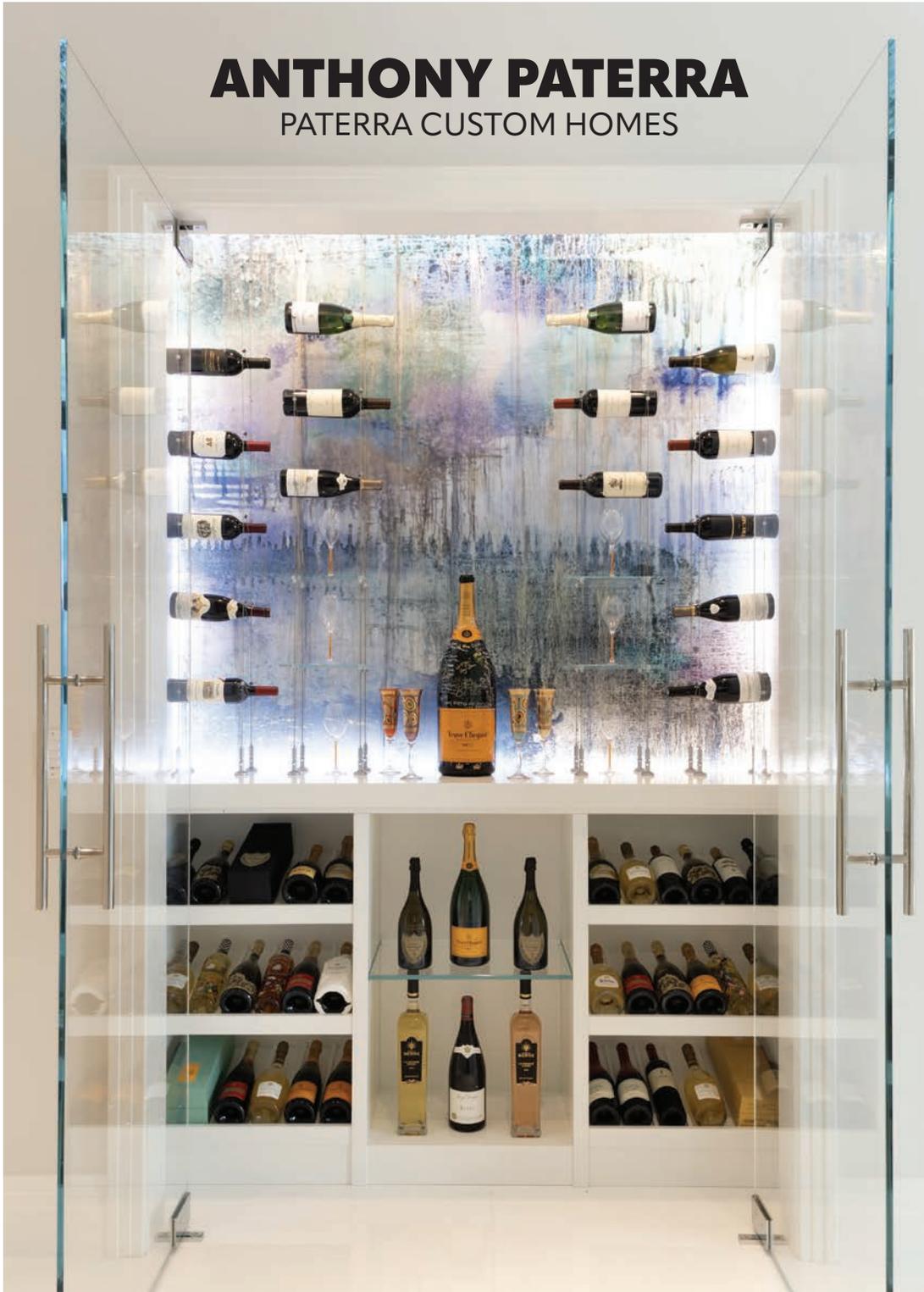
Michael King



Anthony Paterra

# ANTHONY PATERRA

PATERRA CUSTOM HOMES



**P**aterra Custom Homes is a luxury residential builder founded by Anthony Paterra, rooted in the belief that the process of building a home should be just as inspiring as the life lived inside it. With more than 30 years of hands-on experience in high-end construction, Anthony brings a master craftsman's perspective to every project—shaped by deep expertise in carpentry, masonry, and material execution.

What sets Paterra Custom Homes apart is its owner-led approach. Anthony is personally involved from concept through completion, guiding design decisions, overseeing construction in the field, and remain-



ing a trusted resource long after the home is finished. This level of care and accountability has fostered lasting relationships with clients—many of whom become lifelong friends and advocates. At its core, Paterra Custom Homes is about craft, connection, and creating residences built to hold meaning for generations.

#### **Q&A with Anthony Paterra**

**D+D: At what point does building move beyond execution and become a creative act in its own right?**

**Anthony:** It happens the moment you stop just following plans and start really seeing the house. You're standing there with a piece of rare wood and suddenly realize the grain needs to wrap around a corner in a way the drawings never anticipated. Or the morning light hits a wall, and you understand the plaster texture needs adjusting to make it perfect. That's when building becomes art. It lives in those micro-decisions—where your hands, material knowledge, and understanding of how people actually live come together. The blueprints give us the guide, but we're the ones creating the magic.



**D+D: How do you protect thoughtful design decisions throughout the build so shortcuts or trends don't dilute them?**

**Anthony:** It starts with understanding the why behind every decision. When challenges arise—as they always do—we can problem-solve in a way that honors the original vision. We've worked with materials long enough to know what will age beautifully and what's simply a trend that won't stand the test of time. When someone suggests swapping a carefully specified limestone for something 'basically the same,' we explain exactly what would be lost—how it feels underfoot, how it ages, even the temperature it holds. Good design is protected when everyone understands what makes it good in the first place.



**D+D: What common philosophy is shared among the homes that truly endure from the beginning?**

**Anthony:** The homes that last are built on listening—real listening. The architect hears what the client isn't saying, the designer understands how the family moves through their day, and we're thinking three steps ahead about how to make it all work in the real world. There's a beautiful balance between honoring timeless craftsmanship and being brave enough to try something new. When trust exists, the client trusts us to push them, and we trust them to keep us grounded. You're not just building a house—you're creating something that will hold a family's story for generations. ♦

**Resource: Builder:** Paterra Custom Homes; Anthony Paterra, Founder; Naples, FL; 239.331.7816; paterracustomhomes.com. **Photographer:** Lori Hamilton