



*Mulas*  
CUSTOM HOMES

# MULAS CUSTOM HOMES

## Chip Mulas Creates Dreams One Detail at a Time

by Dale West

Like many custom home contractors, Chip Mulas absorbed much of his expertise from his father, a master stonemason who brought his son to construction sites at an early age, building on a family tradition of over thirty-five years. Under his father's guidance, Chip Mulas became a

stonemason in his own right, a craft he still practices from time to time to keep his skills honed.

The most valuable lesson Chip acquired from this visits to building sites came from observing the tradesmen, especially the way they worked as a team under the guidance of the contractor.

"It's not about yelling or giving orders. It's about choosing the best, most reliable trades people, treating them as friends, explaining what you expect from them, and trusting them to do the job to your own high standards. Building a custom home isn't a one-man job. It takes a whole team of people, including the architect, the trades, the client and a contractor who knows how to take charge," says Chip Mulas.

In the case of Mulas Custom Homes, it takes another special person as well: Chip's wife Daniella. After earning her degree in economics she pursued a teaching career before retiring to work with Chip and spend time with their three children.

"I'm the prime contact with clients," Daniella explains. "I keep track of the progress and answer any questions or deal with any suggestions that clients may have. Chip is right – we really do create dreams for our clients so we have to work closely with them at every stage."

Mulas Custom Homes teams with Edwards Custom Design for interior décor work. Chip and Daniella admire the artistry of Mark and Wendy Edwards in choosing colours, tile designs and patterns, and other elements to reflect the client's taste. "They just have a knack for pulling things together in a unique way that our clients love," Daniella notes.

Many of the design details Chip Mulas employs in his homes are invisible to the client but essential to Chip's goal of creating an unusually solid structure free of problems. To achieve this, he employs construction techniques rarely encountered in residential homes, including 10-inch thick poured concrete foundations with steel reinforcing bars and 2-by-





10 inch floor joists for extra strength. He also insists on custom windows from a long-term supplier who knows his high standards and, more important, knows how to meet them. "I could save a substantial amount on

each house with less expensive windows," Chip comments, "and the client wouldn't notice a thing for the first few years. But over time, I'd rather use better windows that save energy and will look and function just

as well ten or twenty years from now as they do when I install them."

Chip Mulas refuses to compromise on his high quality standards. "There are an abundance of upgrades in a Mulas Custom Home that we are proud to say is standard," he points out.

Surprisingly, this does not translate into higher price levels in most cases. With Chip and Daniella performing all the management duties overhead costs are cut to the bone, and by maintaining close long-term working relationships with its suppliers, Mulas can negotiate fair and substantial discounts. All the savings are passed on to the client.

During construction, Chip remains on-site as much as possible. In many ways his presence fills the role of the client, assessing details with the same sharp eyes that he expects his clients to have when they move in. He is



especially concerned about cleanliness. After the home's heating and air conditioning system is installed, for example, the unit is not turned on no matter how hot or cold the outside air may be until cleaning is complete. In frigid weather, electric heating units are used to warm the interior. "A forced-air system will circulate and deposit dust and dirt all through a house," Chip notes, "and I don't want my clients entering their home unless it's impeccable."



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Such attention to detail and concern for client satisfaction can't be achieved on a massive level, which is why Chip and Daniella limit the number of custom home projects they assume each year. And it doesn't go unappreciated. "We truly know

how lucky we are to have had Chip build our home," one client wrote in an unsolicited letter. From another client: "We really appreciate the commitment Chip and his tradesmen have when it comes to building a new home... we can

honestly say that we have enjoyed every minute of the process – (it was stress-free!" Another client, held a Barbeque for all the trades who worked on the home and to further show their appreciation created a "I love my Mulas Home Banner".





Chip and Daniella turn clients into friends by building homes in the company of other

friends – the trades people Chip has dealt with for many years.



And what can Mulas Custom Homes and potential clients look forward to in the future? The first phase of twenty-two lots in Ancaster will be available in the Summer of 2008.

In a world where it often seems only the selfish and belligerent succeed, it's reassuring to discover that success can be achieved by people who place warmth, integrity and skill above other concerns.



*Chip Mulas and Daniella Mercanti Mulas*

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THE STANDARD IN LUXURY LIVING

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