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BUILDER IN 5

Real Talk with a Coastal South Carolina Builder on Resilience, Risk, and the Art of Custom Craft

BUILDER IN 5: Five questions with Brandon Edwards of Element Construction on navigating coastal challenges, building with integrity, and why bold ideas demand careful execution

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Builder in 5 is our ongoing interview series spotlighting the professionals behind exceptional custom homes. In just five focused questions, we dig into how they think, how they work, and what they've learned about process, pressure, and the art of building.

Up Next: Brandon Edwards. As partner of operations at [Element Construction](#), Edwards helps lead a boutique building firm rooted in the distinct character of South Carolina's coastal Lowcountry. From classic regionally inspired homes to striking, ultra-modern builds, the projects span styles, but share a common thread: ambitious design. Edwards serves a global clientele that includes second or third homeowners, retired couples building their “forever home” and families investing in vacation “compounds.”

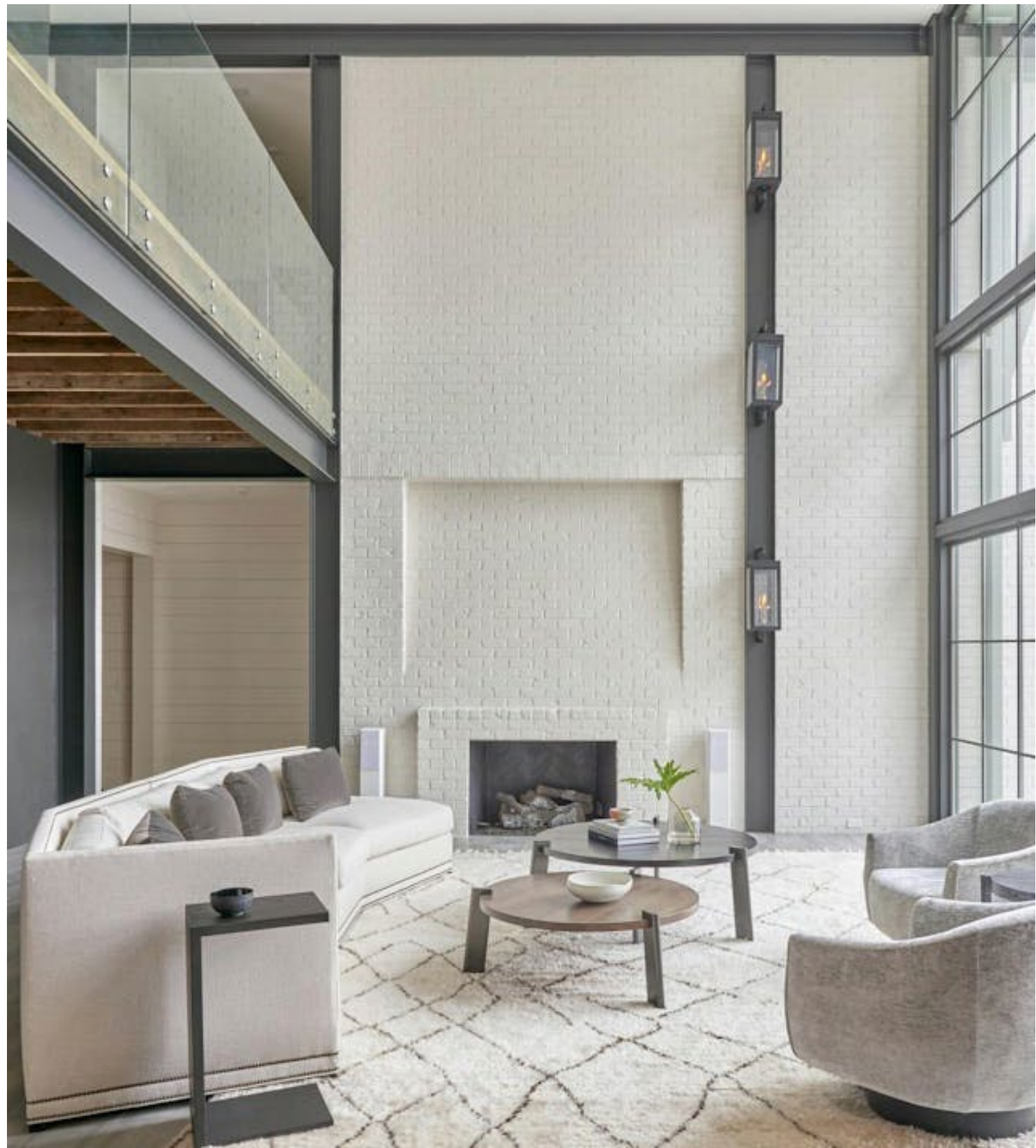


1. What's one decision you've made that defines how you build?

Brandon Edwards: At the heart of our work is a commitment to honest craftsmanship. We believe that when you build with integrity and the right methods, you not only exceed client expectations but also create a legacy of quality that lets you rest easy at night. Our approach is grounded in the idea that every decision—from material selection to construction technique—must be made with the utmost care. This foundation of trust is something we're incredibly proud to have built with our clients over the years.

2. Tell us about a time you took a risk on a project—and it paid off.

Edwards: Innovation is a key ingredient in our projects. Recently, we had the opportunity to work on a home that featured a dramatic two-story sitting room overlooking the river and the client's pool—an area anchored by exposed structural steel. To add a subtle yet striking visual accent to a floor-to-ceiling brick fireplace wall, I introduced three vertical gas lanterns integrated into the I-beams. This kind of design twist isn't common locally, and it was important for me to push boundaries while ensuring safety. We even integrated a remote exhaust fan that automatically activates when the lanterns are lit, providing both safety and ventilation. Such inventive techniques underscore our commitment to staying ahead of the curve.



Three gas lanterns integrated into the I-beams and paired with a hidden exhaust fan brings a bold and innovative solution to the fireplace wall.

3. How has your background in architecture influenced the way you oversee projects?

Edwards: Many clients find it challenging to transform a 2D plan into a vivid, tangible concept. With my background in architecture, I take pride in bridging that gap. I sit down with clients and walk them through each

detail of their plans, helping them visualize how every element will come together once constructed. This dialogue not only reassures them but also enables richer conversations with architects and designers, ensuring that the intended design translates seamlessly into the craftsmanship on site. Our collaborative approach guarantees that the final product truly reflects our clients' visions.

“*“When you build with integrity and the right methods ... that lets you rest easy at night.”*”

- Brandon Edwards, Element Construction

4. What's one lesson from building in the Lowcountry that more builders elsewhere should borrow—and why?

Edwards: Building in coastal regions comes with its set of challenges—from sudden summer storms, high humidity, and extreme heat, to the more daunting presence of hurricanes. Every day on the job is a lesson in adapting to nature's changing moods. We continuously update our building techniques and operating procedures to comply with evolving local regulations that safeguard against environmental extremes. This commitment to resilience ensures that every structure we build is both beautiful and durable—an essential balance when working in such dynamic climates.

“*Every day on the job is a lesson in adapting to nature's changing moods.*”

- Brandon Edwards, Element Construction

5. How are you building smarter today—through process, materials or mindset—that reflects where luxury homes are headed?

Edwards: The custom home building industry is ever-evolving, and staying current is crucial. My business partner and I are dedicated to continuous learning. We attend events like the [International Builder Show](#) and maintain close relationships with our vendors to access the latest in building technology and design trends. Our proactive approach means that when a client dreams big, we're already exploring innovative ways to bring that dream to life—ensuring that each home not only meets but exceeds expectations, all while standing strong against the environmental challenges unique to our region.

For more insights from the field, read our earlier [Builder in 5 interviews](#), and [reach out](#) with suggestions on who we should interview next.
