

David C. Peterson Construction Company

*Building Success with Adobe Homes of
“Uncompromising Quality”*



*Brick floors add to the Southwestern flair in an open kitchen.
Photo by Norman Johnson Photography*

“Stuck in the mud” is highly complimentary when it is applied to David Peterson; builder of some of New Mexico’s most sought after custom adobe homes. That’s because Peterson combines one of the oldest Southwestern building techniques with the technology of today to create houses with traditional grace and 21st century materials.

A Silver City, New Mexico native, David turned a college part time job into a career over twenty years ago. He learned the secrets of adobe building from craftsmen and artisans who taught the age-old adobe builder’s philosophy of attention to detail and of building beautiful, lasting homes “one adobe at a time.” In fact, the motto of David’s company is “Uncompromising Quality.”

Peterson started at the bottom, mixing and understanding mud. He points out, “All I’ve ever done is adobe, I made adobes first then owned and operated an adobe yard in Silver City before getting my contractor’s license.”

Much of his early training came from well-known Albuquerque adobe builder-designer, Nat Kaplan as an apprentice in the mid 1970’s. He explains his move to the Albuquerque area, “Albuquerque was the Mecca of adobe construction in New Mexico, and New Mexico was the largest center for adobe construction in the country.”

Most recently, Peterson's homes have been in the Placitas area and prior to that in Santa Fe. The homes range to nearly 6000 square feet and are priced from \$350,000 to over a million dollars. Customers are mainly working or retired professional families and new comers who have relocated from the East.

There are two strong hallmarks of homes built by David. The first is respect for the heritage of adobe buildings and the faithfulness to the New Mexico style. The second is his extreme attention to detail. He says, "I build every home as if it were to be the last home I'll ever build. If I cut a corner, I feel as if I'm compromising the home."

A Placitas owner of a Peterson adobe said:

"...The emergent structure is a beauty. Your ingenuity in recognizing and resolving problems has been wondrous; you learn as you go and always keep in mind the architectural integrity of the home. It has given me much satisfaction to work with you and enjoy your patience with my involvement."

C. S. – Placitas

Adobe architecture in New Mexico is a blend of Indian and Spanish cultures over 2000 years old. The composition and production of the sun-dried, 40-pound adobe today remains almost unchanged through the centuries. Except for a few additives to make the adobe more water resistant and enduring, adobe is the same material used by some of the earliest inhabitants of the Southwest.

Four architectural styles are commonly associated with adobe homes. They are the Pueblo; the style most identified with New Mexico; the Territorial, which is more formal; the Northern New Mexico, featuring pitched tin roofs; and the Spanish Mission, with tile roofs. All offer the same advantage of adobe construction which are extreme quiet, a comfortable blend with the environment, and properly designed, very, very high energy efficiency.



*Plaster cove ceilings, graceful arched doorways and hard plastered walls mark the entrance to the family room.
Photo-Norman Johnson Photography*

To illustrate energy savings of adobe construction, David relates a client's experience. The owner of a 3300 square foot adobe home boasts a gas bill which averages \$28 a month, including hot water. The home was designed to retain the heat from the winter sun by storing it in the mass of the adobe walls.

"I build every home as if it were the last home I'll ever build."

Although David is a builder of all four adobe styles, he has a special affinity for the free flowing designs of the native New Mexico Pueblo style. Peterson believes no other form of Architecture allows such soft, comfortable living spaces. By combining the advantages of the material with historically inspired

designs. Peterson's homes have become well known for beauty, comfort and value.

In some of his homes. David includes a vaulted brick ceiling as a unique design feature. Like adobe; these ceilings called Bovidias in Mexico, rely on long standing building and design techniques. The arched or domed brick ceilings require special skills for laying the bricks overhead and of course time and patience.

Tradition is carried through by using other features associated with the New Mexico pueblo style. Kiva Fireplaces, Viga and latilla ceilings are all part of the design. But, David enhances his homes by using modern materials too. Highly efficient windows with new glazing technologies, and now El Rey Krak-Master stucco for greater durability. Rigid foam insulation that is applied to the exterior of the adobe walls, and heating is provided by radiant heat.

David's clients are demanding, and the attention he pays to detail is synonymous with the homes he builds.



*Exposed adobe walls are a feature of this Great Room.
Photo by Norman Johnson*

*The Saltillo Tile floors enhance the wide entrance gallery, a traditional feature of New Mexico Style homes.
Photo by Norman Johnson*

David spends much of his time personally supervising his sub-contractors in order to create a perfectly finished home. He tells of spending days overseeing painting contractors as they move from room to room to apply the stain to the woodwork. He wants to make certain the stain coloration is perfectly matched in each room. He explains this extreme care by saying, "My clients may live in here for years and then move on. But the home will always be a Peterson home." One client of Peterson's a Santa Fe attorney, volunteered the following;

*"David Peterson built a custom adobe home for my wife and me...We were completely satisfied with the project during the entire construction process. During construction, we were usually in daily contact with David. He gave the project his highest priority. He was very conscientious in all aspects of construction and exhibited thorough knowledge and skill in his profession."
J.E.T. – Santa Fe*

Another method David uses to assure quality is working with a stable construction crew. He says, "Everyone is a laborer and everyone is a master craftsman. My crew does



all the adobe and the finish work and were busy all the time. I know what to expect from them and they know what to expect from me, and the finished home is better."

Attention to detail and truth to the material and design has made David Peterson one of New Mexico's premier adobe builders.