

10 QUESTIONS WITH *Allison Grafton* ROCKWOOD CUSTOM HOMES

by HEATHER RYAN



Allison Grafton is the owner of Rockwood Custom Homes with partner Grainger Nimmo. The company was founded in 2009 after seeing a need for an exclusive, boutique custom home renovation and construction company that worked closely with discerning clients to deliver exceptional results. They're committed to delivering beautiful, unique custom homes on time, on budget, and involving clients in the process every step of the way.

What do you love most about Calgary?

The deep-rooted entrepreneurial spirit of this city and its citizens. This is a place where people believe they can, and so they do – and I fit right into that culture.

How did you get started in the construction industry?

Having gone through 12 home builds and renovations over a span of 15 years, it became clear that that I had a true passion for building and design. I was constantly learning new things and loved the connections I made with the people who were constructing my homes. I knew that I had the ability to build a company that would reduce stress, increase quality and efficiencies, and have strong financial oversight all while creating peoples dream homes.



What's on trend right now for design and decor?

Light, bright spacious kitchens at the heart of the home and mixing cabinetry details, e.g., slab with a shaker; and mixing finishes on millwork, and mixing metals.

What is the biggest construction project you've completed?

One of our larger undertakings was approximately three years ago, a 20,000-plus-sq.-ft. home on a stunning piece of acreage property in the Springbank area. This epic home defies conventional design; it's warm yet contemporary, sleek and streamlined, spacious and modern. The design and build process was incredibly detailed – a critical aspect for a project of this size and scope.

On the lighter side, what do you prefer – a book or a movie?

I'm addicted to both! To my husband's displeasure, I read for about an hour every night before bed, however, when I have time, watching movies is one of my favourite pastimes.

What do you do for fun?

Honestly, work is fun for me! I truly enjoy what I do and working with the Rockwood team is truly a rewarding experience. However, outside of that, I have an amazing group of girlfriends with whom I have many adventures. I travel, my husband and I entertain, we have three amazing kids and we are constantly surrounded by the people we love.

I also have a large extended family with whom I'm very close; every year we do an annual camping trip on the West Coast that is always the highlight of the year.

What's your favourite vacation spot and why?

Maui! Honestly, I have travelled to many places around the world, and Maui always beckons me back. My heart and soul is on that island.



What's it like as a woman to break into the construction industry and what challenges did you face?

Entering into the construction business as a female inevitably meant breaking down some barriers ... I was lucky in that I not only had considerable business experience in the also male-dominated investment banking industry, but I was also somewhat knowledgeable about what went into building a home based on past experiences. I saw that there was a real need to build better, more beautiful homes – to take a more sophisticated approach to the homebuilding business on all levels: Customer service, financial management and protection and efficiency. In addition, I was able to attract a partner, Grainger Nimmo, who is best in class. We share the same vision, integrity and values, and we've built a remarkable business, despite some initial hurdles.

What's the most unique item or feature that Rockwood has ever put in a home?

A classic wine room that is truly one of a kind. Having a large window that looks into the home's outdoor swimming pool, it casts the wine room in a beautiful, ethereal light and the room features rich woods accented with burnished metals. A spectacular chandelier catches the light from the pool and completes the "Atlantis" effect of this truly original space.

What is the most popular item or feature that homebuyers want in their custom or renovated home?

Right now, we're seeing a real demand for custom-built, thoughtfully lit wine walls that double as functional wine storage as well as beautiful pieces of craftsmanship/art.