

# CREUZOT HOMES & CONSTRUCTION LTD.

*Prince George's first Built Green company dives deeper into the sustainable custom-home market*

BY ZACH BALIVA

## AT A GLANCE

LOCATION:  
PRINCE GEORGE, BC

FOUNDED:  
1995

EMPLOYEES:  
5

AREA OF SPECIALTY:  
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

ALLEN CREUZOT'S FAMILY HAS BUILT IN BRITISH Columbia for a long time. Today, he is the owner and president of Creuzot Homes & Construction, based in Prince George, British Columbia, but he can remember a time when his job wasn't so glamorous. "When I told my dad I wanted to learn the business, he got a shovel out of the back of his truck and told me to go learn from the ground up," Creuzot recalls.

In taking his father's advice to learn at all levels of construction, Creuzot believes he acquired unique experience and traits that set his current company apart from other builders. As a young man, he worked on job sites while in high school before immediately starting an apprenticeship. He then started his current company in 1995. "Construc-

tion is in my blood," he says. "Our family and name are well known in this region. The reputation is important."

Creuzot Homes & Construction is primarily known for the quality it brings to custom-home projects. Quality requires capital, but Creuzot wants potential clients to know that his durable products are worth the investment. "People might think they can't afford us, but better things cost a little more money," he says. "My price is likely to be a bit higher than another contractor's, but it's the difference between a Pinto and a Cadillac."

When working with a client, Creuzot focuses on materials and trade selections to ensure quality craftsmanship. "We spend the time to do things with the right people and right materials so the customer gets exactly what they want," he says. A quality paint job up front, for example, eliminates the need to repaint in the first or second year of home ownership. And unlike spec builders who use OSB, laminate, and carpet, the company specifies plywood, tile, and hardwood.

Lately, Creuzot has noticed a few trends appearing in and around Prince George. As younger professionals buy more custom homes, they are often requesting emphasis on three main areas: kitchens, master bedrooms, and garages. Modern clients, Creuzot says, want open kitchens with function designs and extras like granite countertops, built-in pantries, and cooktops. Master bedrooms with vaulted ceilings, double vanities, and soak tubs are also popular, as are triple-car garages with workshops.

To accommodate these trends, the company and its employees constantly seek to learn new methods. Today, Creuzot Homes is a certified Built Green builder, and, as a repeat president of the local home builders' association, Creuzot is passionate about educational opportunities for builders. "I take as many courses as I can to keep up with new methods," he says. "Our association has networking events and seminars, which allow us to interact and learn from bigger companies."

After receiving its Built Green certification, Creuzot Homes completed the first Built Green home in Prince

*The living room of Creuzot's Sommerville project, the firm's first Built Green home.*



**FEATURED PROJECT:**



**Emmy Place**

Creuzot Homes' forte lies in custom homes, but the company found a property in 2008 that was too appealing to pass up. Creuzot purchased the lot and built Emmy Place, a modestly sized spec home with unmatched views of the Salmon Valley. Creuzot says the charming home offers country-style living just five minutes from downtown.

- Location:** Prince George, BC
- Neighbourhood:** Glenview Point
- Size:** 2,000 square feet
- Bedrooms:** 3
- Bathrooms:** 2.5
- Year completed:** 2009
- Sustainable elements:** Rinnai tankless water heater, 95% efficient gas furnace, air-source heat pump, low-flow faucets, and dual-flush toilets
- Custom Features:** Hickory cabinets, laminate flooring
- Amenities:** RV Parking
- Awards:** 2009 HBA award - Best Single Family Detached Home

George. The home, known as the Sommerville project, was done for a client from the mainland who was familiar with sustainable methodology. "The educated client requested specific efficiencies, and our experience allowed us to build him the exact house he wanted," Creuzot says. Such well-educated clients are not the norm. Creuzot finds himself providing information 75 percent of the time, but he always offers green features.

At Sommerville, his company provided sustainable items like an efficient heat pump, a heat-recovery ventilator, and a high-efficiency furnace, combined with good windows and insulation. The 1,450-square-foot home has a full basement with a suite for guests and picturesque mountain views. Success at Sommerville brought many accolades, and Creuzot was named the Built Green Builder of the Year for 2010.

Another project, Emmy Place, was also built with sustainability in mind (and is rapidly becoming Creuzot Homes' baseline). An electronic-ignition fireplace, tankless hot-water system, high-efficiency gas furnace, low-flow water fixtures, and an air-source heat pump combine to give the structure a rating of 81. One of the home's best features is its protected location—Emmy Place is at the end of a desirable cul-de-sac on designated green space with views of an entire valley that will never be interrupted.

Creuzot has indeed come a long way since helping his father on build sites as an optimistic student. The experience of those early days helps him understand the factors of quality construction well. By focusing on durability, sustainability, and customization, he is able to give clients beautiful dream homes that will last a lifetime. **CBQ**

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