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CASA ACE STUDIO

A PRIVATE BRIEFING

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# Before you build *in Ghana.*

Five things to demand from your architect, and the questions that protect your home for decades.

**DOCUMENT**

Before You Build · Client Guide
Five principles · Fifteen questions

**DRAWING**

Street Elevation · Ink Study
Illustrative · Not to scale

**CONTACT**

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# Build well. *Live calmly.*

| | |
|---|---|
| For | Homeowners planning a high-end residence in Ghana |
| Format | Five principles, fifteen questions, one checklist |
| Reading time | About ten minutes |
| Use it | Before signing with any practice, including ours |

## “Most luxury homes in Ghana look impressive on handover day. Few still feel elevated ten years later.”

Building a high-end home here is rarely held back by budget. It is held back by friction: drawings that never anticipated the sun and rain, design leads who disappear once the PDFs are delivered, silent substitutions on site, and finishes that look beautiful in renders but tired after two rainy seasons.

This guide sets out what good looks like at every stage, the questions worth asking, and the warning signs to take seriously. Use the checklist at the end to compare every practice you are considering.

FIVE PRINCIPLES

# What to demand from your architect before a single block is laid.


Site presence, not just drawings 01

Design that answers sun, wind and rain 02

Detailing that leaves nothing to guesswork 03

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01.

# Site presence, not just drawings.

A set of drawings is a promise. Whether it is kept is decided on site, week by week, in hundreds of small decisions the drawings could never fully describe.



### WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

The design lead stays contractually engaged through construction.

Scheduled site inspections at agreed milestones, with written records.

No material or detail changes without your written approval.

Regular photo reporting you can follow from anywhere.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

01 Who from your practice will be on my site, and how often?

02 What happens when the contractor proposes a substitution?

03 How will I see progress if I am not in Accra?

**RED FLAG** A fee that ends at “drawings issued”, or supervision priced as an optional extra with no defined visits.



Deep overhangs, recessed openings and raised thresholds keep sun and driving rain off the façade.

IN THIS CLIMATE

## Shade first, glass second. Let the breeze do the work before the air conditioning does.

02.

# Design that answers sun, wind and rain.

Ghana's climate is generous and unforgiving at once. A home that ignores it becomes a glass box that fights the air conditioning all year and stains with every downpour.

### WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

- Orientation and openings set by the sun path, not only the plot.
- Deep overhangs and verandas shading glass at the hottest hours.
- Cross-ventilation designed in, so rooms stay comfortable with less cooling.
- Rain detailing for driving storms: drips, falls, gutters, protected thresholds.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK

01 How have you oriented the home on my site, and why?

02 Which rooms stay comfortable without air conditioning?

03 How will these façades look after a full rainy season?

**RED FLAG** Unshaded west-facing glass, flat parapets without proper falls, or a design copied from another climate "because it looks modern".

# Detailing that leaves nothing to guesswork.

Budget surprises live in the gaps of unclear documentation. Wherever a drawing is vague, a contractor has to guess, and guesses are rarely made in your favour.



Fig. 03 — From sketch to coordinated elevation. Every wall, opening, finish and fixture is drawn and dimensioned before tender.

## WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

- Full construction drawings and details before ground is broken.
- A finishes schedule naming products, not “tiles to client’s choice”.
- Transparent allowances, so you know where the budget can move.
- A tender review that compares contractors like-for-like.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

01 May I see construction drawings from a past project?

02 How do you keep contractor quotes comparable?

03 Where is my budget most likely to move?

**RED FLAG** Building permit drawings presented as “construction-ready”, or a firm cost estimate given before the design is properly developed.



04.

# A plan built around how you live.

The most expensive homes often fail in the everyday: guests walking through service areas, noise travelling into bedrooms, a kitchen that cannot cope with real family cooking.

**RED FLAG**

A first concept presented before anyone has asked detailed questions about your household, routines and staff.

**WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE**

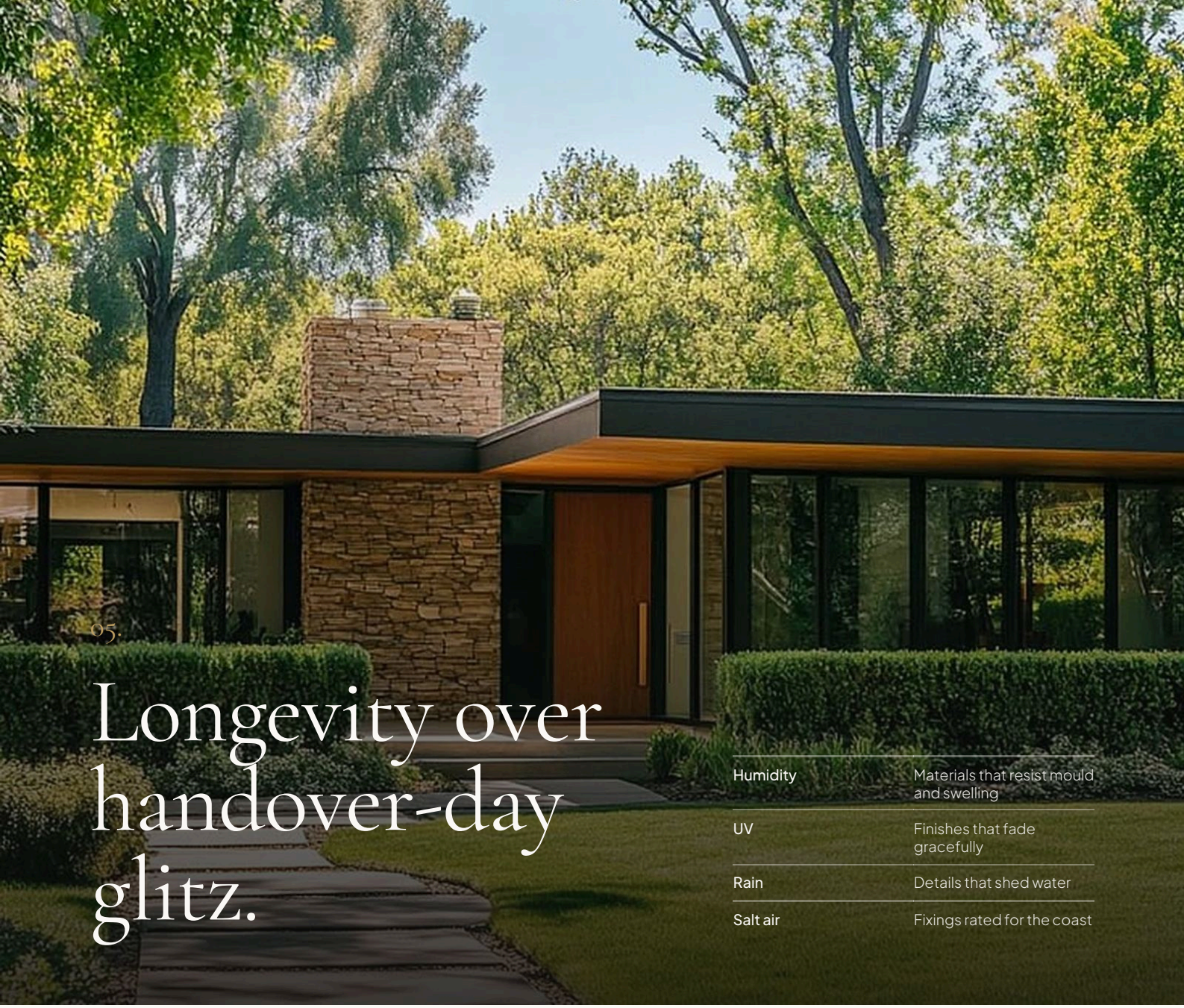
- Clear zoning between family, guest and service areas.
- Discreet staff circulation and a separated wet kitchen.
- Acoustic privacy for bedrooms and private spaces.
- Outdoor rooms you use daily, not just for show.

**QUESTIONS TO ASK**

01 How will you learn how my family lives, hosts and rests?

02 Where do staff, deliveries and guests each enter?

03 Which spaces can adapt as we grow?



05.

# Longevity over handover-day glitz.

| | |
|---|---|
| Humidity | Materials that resist mould and swelling |
| UV | Finishes that fade gracefully |
| Rain | Details that shed water |
| Salt air | Fixings rated for the coast |

True luxury improves with age. The right materials and details patinate gracefully; the wrong ones crack, fade and stain within two years of moving in.

**RED FLAG**

A portfolio of renders and handover photos, but nothing showing how those homes look today.

## WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

- Materials chosen for the climate, not only the render.
- A thorough snagging inspection before handover.
- A maintenance guide for the years ahead.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

01 How will these surfaces look after seven rainy seasons?

02 Can I visit a home you finished years ago?

03 What support follows handover?

# Calm rooms, honest materials.

Warm timber, limewashed walls, soft light and a few pieces made by hand. The feeling we design towards: rooms that are quiet on the first day and better on the thousandth.



Light, texture and proportion before ornament.





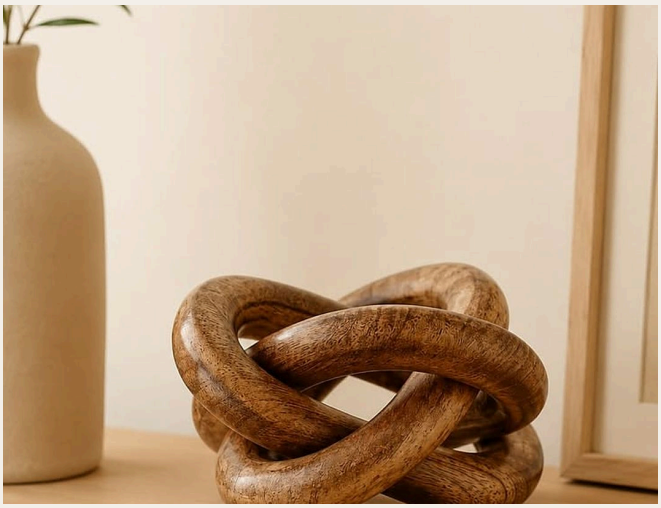
Sculptural lighting · a dining room held in warm shadow.

# Before you sign, tick every box.

Print this page and use it in every conversation with a practice you are considering. If a box stays empty, ask why.

- 01 The design lead stays on site through construction, with defined visits. ☐
- 02 Substitutions need my written approval first. ☐
- 03 I will get regular photo reporting, wherever I am. ☐
- 04 The design answers sun path, ventilation and heavy rain on my site. ☐
- 05 I have seen real construction drawings from a past project. ☐
- 06 Materials and finishes are named in a schedule. ☐
- 07 I understand where the budget can move, and how I will hear early. ☐
- 08 The practice asked detailed questions about how we live. ☐
- 09 Family, guest and service zones are clearly separated. ☐
- 10 I can visit a completed home that is several years old. ☐
- 11 Snagging, handover and after-care are written down. ☐
- 12 I know exactly who is accountable at every stage. ☐







WORK WITH US

II

# We build by these exact standards.

PATH 01

## Architecture

Design, approvals and site supervision through to handover.

EXPLORE

PATH 02

## Interiors

Interior architecture, joinery, lighting and artisan installation.

EXPLORE

PATH 03

## Signature Turnkey

One accountable team from soil test to keys in hand.

EXPLORE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 01 | Book a private consultation | casaacestudio.com |
| 02 | Email the studio | info@casaacestudio.com |
| 03 | See our design direction | casaacestudio.com/#work |

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