



## Sojourning Solution

When the time came to sell their condo in Florida and find a place closer to their growing family, homeowners Frank and Lori Mercede knew that Charleston was the place for them.

With their eldest daughter and new grandson residing in Mt. Pleasant, plus another daughter attending school at the College of Charleston this fall, it was an easy decision for Frank and Lori Mercede to purchase a second home in Charleston in exchange for selling their

vacation condo in Florida. However, the daunting task of finding a home suitable for their youngest daughter, who has special physical needs, soon turned into a near-hopeless task. "Not one home in the whole Charleston area fit our needs, much less our daughter's," Frank says of the house hunt.

The couple was disheartened since the thought of building a custom, wheelchair accessible home seemed out of the question as well. "Building an ADA-compliant home is even more expensive than building a regular one," Lori explains. To overcome this hurdle, their realtor and the crew at Sea Island

Builders banded together for a solution—build a beautiful, ADA-compliant home and offset the cost by renting it to summertime vacationers.

The house has an elevated foundation with a large, custom elevator for the family's particular needs. Because the couple was building an ADA-compliant home, a few elements were necessary in the design. For example, Frank had a rail installed, which runs from the ceiling

over his daughter's bed to her attached bathroom so that she can move from one place to the other on her own. In order to accommodate the rail, the building team adjusted the door height and added moulding around the wall and ceiling joints, leaving room for the rail to travel smoothly from one room to another.

Frank and Lori were also building their home while out of town, so communication was vital. "Jason

and the team at Sea Island Builders were so helpful," Lori declares. "Not only because they stayed in constant contact with us, regardless of where we were (whether traveling or visiting the construction site when we were in town), but also because they considered all the details that a homeowner might not think about." The Sea Island Builders team, for example, suggested that the elevator should be placed directly beside their daughter's bedroom. "The ADA



features took a bit of extra planning and attentive installation, but it was more than worth the effort," notes Jason.

As a family owned and operated design-build company, Sea Island Builders pays special attention to any problems that might arise within the process of building a home. So from start to finish, the team's goal is to overlay all of

(above left) Lori wanted a special place to unwind at the end of the day, so for the master bath, she chose a light tile and a spacious bathtub. (above right) A creak backyard pool creates a fun and relaxing space for the Mercedes' whole extended family to spend time together, as they often do. (inset) Jason Fowler of Sea Island Builders with Homeowners Lori and Frank Mercede

the structural and architectural plans (especially for an ADA-compliant home) to make sure everything goes smoothly. "Jason beat our budget and the team completed everything ahead of schedule, which we learned was a big deal, considering Charleston's unpredictable weather," Frank clarifies. Lori adds, "And it's such a lovely spot, we never really want to leave." ♦

For more information, call Sea Island Builders at (843) 883-7430 or visit [seaislandbuilders.com](http://seaislandbuilders.com).

### VIDEO EXCLUSIVE

Company: Sea Island Builders  
Project Type: New Construction  
Location: Mt. Pleasant

See additional photos and watch a brief interview by scanning the code below or visiting [charlestonhomesanddesign.com](http://charlestonhomesanddesign.com).

