



HOW TO CHOOSE THE

Right Home

FOR YOUR LAND—AND YOUR LIFE

A practical guide to narrowing thousands of possibilities into a confident shortlist.



BUILD WITH CLARITY FROM DAY ONE • CHARLESTON & THE LOWCOUNTRY



STEP 1

Start with your life—not square footage

A good plan supports the way you live now and stays useful as life changes. Begin with people, routines and priorities; the bedroom count comes later.

01 TODAY

Who lives here? Where do mornings bottleneck? Do you work from home, host often, cook together or need quiet separation?

02 5–10 YEARS

Could your household grow? Will parents visit longer? Might a first-floor bedroom, wider paths or flex room matter later?

03 NON-NEGOTIABLES

Choose only five: privacy, pantry, home office, porch, mudroom, split bedrooms, first-floor primary, garage, view or something else.

04 TRADE-OFFS

Name what you would exchange for what matters more: bonus room vs. porch, extra bath vs. storage, size vs. monthly comfort.

YOUR FIVE MUST-HAVES

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Quick test: if a feature does not support a real routine or future need, it may be adding cost without adding value.

STEP 2

Find your fit

Use these profiles as starting points—not boxes. Most households are a blend of two.



RIGHT-SIZED RETREAT

Efficient footprint, fewer rooms to maintain, strong storage and intentional outdoor living.

EVERYDAY RANCH

Easy circulation, one-level living, practical bedroom separation and a kitchen at the center.

GROWING FAMILY

Flexible bedrooms, durable shared spaces, drop zone, pantry and room for changing routines.

COASTAL LIVING

Elevated foundation possibilities, covered outdoor space, views, weather-aware materials and site fit.

CUSTOM VISION

Bring a plan or explore 40,000+ designs. Start broad, then filter by land, budget and must-haves.

Circle your best two: Right-sized retreat / Everyday ranch / Growing family / Coastal living / Custom vision

Then ask: Which profile best describes the home we need—not simply the home that photographs best?

STEP 3

Read a floor plan like you live in it

Trace an ordinary day through each plan. Imagine groceries, laundry, bedtime, guests, work calls, muddy shoes and furniture—not just room labels.

01 DAILY ROUTES

Front door → drop zone → kitchen. Bedrooms → bathrooms. Laundry → closets. Grill → kitchen. Short, natural routes reduce friction.

03 FURNITURE FIT

Sketch beds, sofas, dining chairs and televisions to scale. Check door swings, wall space and walking clearances.

05 STORAGE

Count usable closets, pantry shelves, linen space, utility storage and room for seasonal or coastal gear.

02 ADJACENCIES

Is the office away from noise? Is the primary bedroom separated enough? Can the pantry serve the kitchen without blocking traffic?

04 LIGHT & PRIVACY

Consider the direction of sun, street and neighbor views. Window placement on paper may feel very different on your lot.

06 FUTURE FLEXIBILITY

Can a flex room become a nursery, office or accessible bedroom? Can the home adapt without a major addition?

THE 10-MINUTE PLAN TEST

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ Morning routine feels easy | ☐ Guests have privacy | ☐ Furniture fits without compromise |
| ☐ Storage matches real belongings | ☐ Outdoor space connects naturally | ☐ One room can change over time |

STEP 4

Match the home to the land



The same plan can be simple on one parcel and impractical on another. Before falling in love with an elevation, confirm the home and site can work together.

BUILDABLE AREA

Lot dimensions, setbacks, easements and orientation determine the footprint that truly fits.

FLOOD & ELEVATION

Flood zone, required finished-floor height, foundation type and stairs can reshape the design and budget.

UTILITIES

Water, sewer or septic, power and communications may affect placement, schedule and cost.

ACCESS & DELIVERY

Road width, turns, trees, overhead lines and staging space matter for modular delivery and setting.

DRAINAGE & SOILS

Topography, drainage and soil conditions influence engineering, foundation and site work.

HOA / ARB / JURISDICTION

Architectural rules, permitting and local review can limit materials, elevations or timing.

Bring to your planning conversation: street address or parcel ID, survey if available, HOA/ARB rules, flood information, utility status and site photos.

STEP 5

Set your true comfort zone

A useful budget is a comfortable total monthly and project range—not only a house price. Impresa’s planning approach considers the full picture before detailed design work begins.

MONTHLY COMFORT

Principal + Interest + Taxes + Insurance

Use PITI—not principal and interest alone—when comparing affordability.

WHOLE-PROJECT VIEW

- Home and selected options
- Foundation and setting
- Site work and access
- Utilities and septic/sewer
- Permits, engineering and fees
- Contingency for known unknowns

WRITE YOUR WORKING RANGE

Comfortable monthly PITI:

Working total-project range:

Cash available for land / closing / reserves:

Financing conversations completed with:

Published “walk-off” pricing is an estimate. Final turnkey pricing varies by site, jurisdiction, foundation, selections and current market conditions. Verify current figures directly with Impresa.

STEP 6

Build a smart shortlist

Choose two or three plans from different size bands. Comparing a small, middle and stretch option makes trade-offs visible and helps prevent “feature creep.”



RIGHT-SIZED / VALUE

Amelia Cozy Cottage Cape — 805 sq. ft. · 1 bed · 1 bath
Live Oak — 1,208 sq. ft. · 3 beds · 2 baths



EVERYDAY / FAMILY

Caroline — 1,420 sq. ft. · 3 beds · 2 baths
Sycamore II — 1,718 sq. ft. · 3 beds · 2 baths
Cedar II — 1,825 sq. ft. · 4 beds · 2 baths



COASTAL / EXPANDED

Palm Coast — 2,270 sq. ft. · 3 beds · 2.5 baths
Center Hill — 3,084 sq. ft. · 3 beds · 2 baths
Homestead Retreat — 6,440 sq. ft. · 3 beds · 3 baths

These are starting points from the Impresa Charleston website, not a complete catalog. Details and availability may change. Explore 40,000+ designs through HousePlans.com or bring a plan you already love.

DECISION WORKSHEET

Compare your top three

Score each plan from 1 (weak) to 5 (excellent). Add notes where the plan needs a change, creates a site concern or stretches your comfort zone.

Plan name	PLAN 1	PLAN 2	PLAN 3
Lifestyle fit			
Fit for the land			
Monthly comfort			
Bedrooms + flex space			
Kitchen + daily flow			
Storage			
Privacy			
Indoor / outdoor connection			
Future flexibility			
Must-have score (of 5)			
Biggest concern			
TOTAL (of 45)			



Decision rule: a higher score is useful, but one serious site, budget or lifestyle mismatch can outweigh several minor advantages.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Are you “House-in-Hand”?

You do not need every finish selected. You are ready for a productive site-visit conversation when the big decisions are clear enough to price and test.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ I have a clear plan direction or a shortlist of 2–3 homes. | ☐ I can identify the land by address or parcel and share what I know about it. |
| ☐ I have a realistic total-project range and a comfortable monthly PITI target. | ☐ I understand my financing approach or know the next financing conversation to have. |
| ☐ I have listed my five must-haves and the trade-offs I am willing to make. | ☐ I can describe my preferred timing and the decisions that may affect it. |

THE IMPRESA CHARLESTON PATH

1	2	3	4
Clarify your goals	Confirm site fit	Develop preliminary pricing	Move forward with confidence
Plan direction, land path, budget and timing.	Review access, jurisdiction, foundation and site conditions.	Create a more complete turnkey view based on the site visit.	Refine selections, contracting and the path to construction.

READY FOR A SITE VISIT?

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Typical timelines vary by jurisdiction, weather, design decisions and client changes. Impresa notes that approximately six months from signed contract may be a useful planning benchmark, not a guarantee.