

TINY HOUSE

FOR MICRO, TINY, SMALL, AND UNCONVENTIONAL HOUSE ENTHUSIASTS



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FEATURED

Is a Tiny House the Secret to a Stress-Free Life?

What a great question. Is living in a tiny house the cause for a stress-free life? Author Laura LaVoie answers that question for readers.

Preserving the Soul of America

Author Andrew Odom returns with an Op-Ed that explores if restoring homes can equate to restoring the soul of our nation.

Making the Most

Your home may not be tiny but it doesn't have to be huge. There are wonderful moments to be made in a house if there is love, patience, and understanding.

Five Ways To House Hack

House hacking is not a new concept but is quickly becoming a preferred way to buy a house. Christina shares 5 house hacks to get you started.

IS A TINY HOUSE THE SECRET TO A STRESS-FREE LIFE? LAURA LAVOIE ANSWERS THIS QUESTION IN HER ARTICLE THIS MONTH. Stating "Not quite. While building your tiny haven, you might actually find your stress levels spiking." However, simplifying your life in the long run will make your life less stressful.

There are many ways to live tiny and Andrew Odom's Op-Ed this month talks about the option of restoring the

homes of the early days of America we have in our towns. By not letting them be torn down and replaced by modern homes we can keep the heart and soul of America and enjoy the benefits by living more simply.

You don't have to live tiny to enjoy the benefits of living tiny in any size home. Emily Kearcher discusses how her family lives in the perfect size home for their family but still lives minimally by only keeping the items they need, organizing, and not cluttering their space. Make memories by being patient, understanding, and loving in your home.

With the current economy and the high prices of homes and interest rates, it is difficult for first-time home buyers all across the country. Even tiny homes have gone up drastically in price. Christina Nellesmann in her article this month shares five ways to house hack and by doing this make it easier to get your first home.

This and much more in the April issue of the *Tiny House Magazine*.



Kent

Kent Griswold, Editor in Chief



Written By Laura LaVoie

Is a Tiny House the Secret to a Stress-Free Life? *Let's Think Again*

As I settled into my writing nook, my editors chimed in with a bit of wisdom: April is Stress Awareness Month. And there I was, thinking, "When am I not tuned into the stress channel?" The truth hit me a couple of years back, in the whirlwind that was 2020, when I —along with seemingly everyone else—got

up close and personal with my own bundle of mental health quirks. It turns out that feeling like the odd one out because everyone else seems to cruise through life is pretty much a universal hobby. Who knew?



I've put pen to paper (or fingers to keys) about my dance with anxiety quite a bit over the past few years. It's sort of my way of decluttering the attic upstairs—if the attic were my brain and the clutter were my thoughts. This magazine has been kind enough to feature some thought declutters, so I figured, why not highlight some of those musings for Stress Awareness Month?

Tiny House, Big Anxiety?

Anxiety isn't just a fly-by visitor for me; it's more like a tenant that's overstayed its welcome. Sometimes, it throws a full-scale panic party; other times, it's just a persistent whisper of doubt. When I embarked on my tiny house adventure, anxiety was both the construction foreman and the wrecking ball. Here's the scoop:

Big decisions? I'm your person; the outcome be darned. It's the daily choices that tie me in knots. Procrastination isn't just a synonym for laziness; it's anxiety's way of saying, "Maybe later?" This revelation led me to another: avoidance is my go-to when things feel too big to tackle.

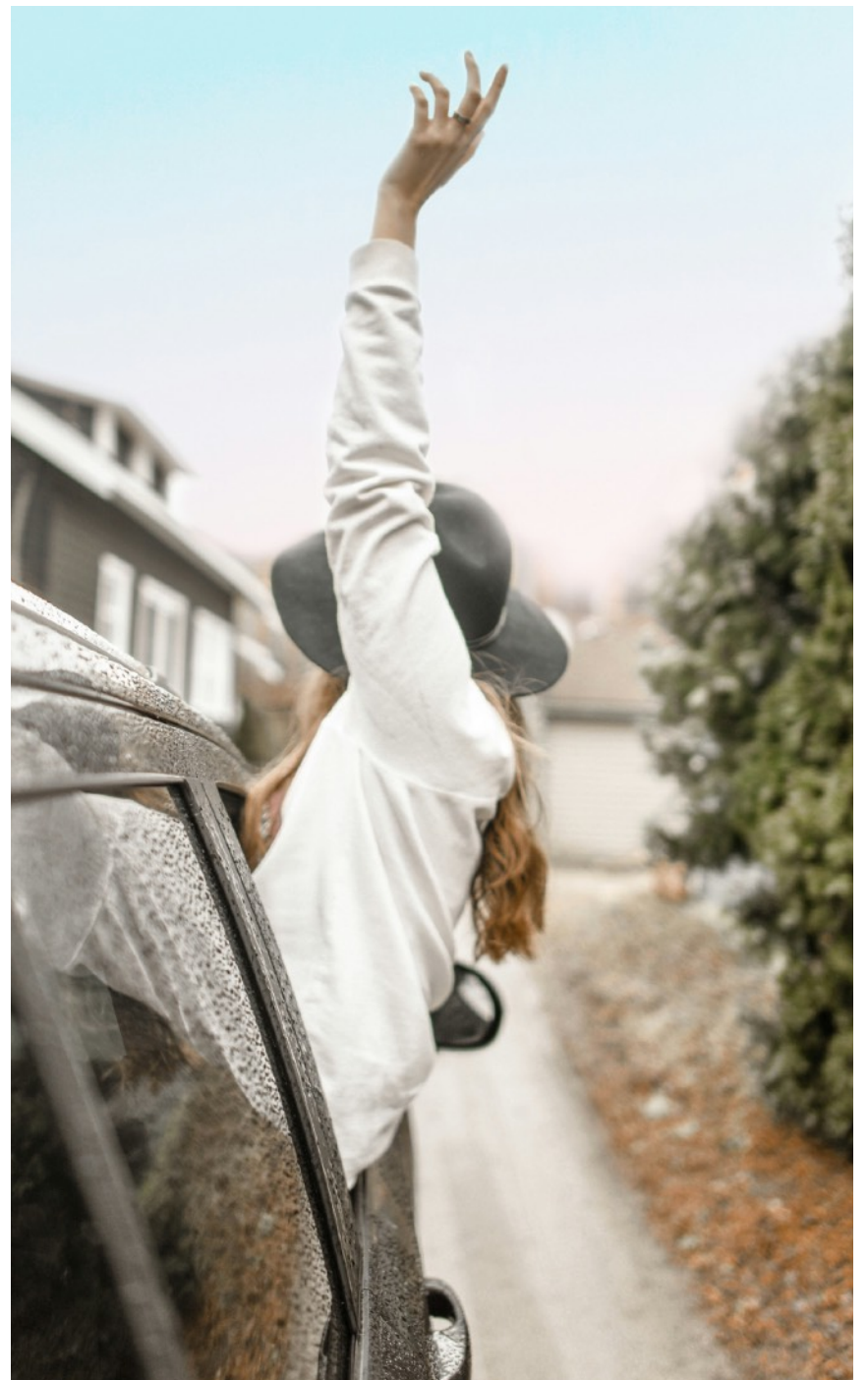
Confronting fears, though, that's where the magic happens. Like that time I was petrified to spend a night in my tiny house for reasons that now seem dramatic. But I did it, and spoiler alert: I was all the better for it. Diagnosis and therapy have taught me the power of naming fears—it's like giving them a less intimidating label and making them easier to manage.

Road Tripping with Anxiety

My next deep dive into the world of anxiety explored the joys of road-tripping. As someone who decided to downsize to travel more, you can imagine how thrilled I was to discover that being in a car could feel like a rehearsal for disaster.

The origin of this travel anxiety is a mystery to me. One day, sitting quietly in the passenger seat suddenly felt like scrolling through a catalog of potential catastrophes. Despite a few fender benders in my past, my imagination was definitely punching above its weight class.

Finding ways to dial down the stress of car trips has been a journey. Breaking the trip into bite-sized pieces and focusing on the destination has helped. In 2023, I braced myself for a year of travel, and guess what? I didn't just survive; I thrived. This year's no different, with trips already ticking off the list, including a journey to Spain to celebrate a milestone birthday. My motto? Celebrate the small victories; they're vital in managing stress.



Stress-Busting Strategies for Everyone

Everyone loves a good takeaway, especially when it's about slicing through stress like a hot knife through butter. Here are a few strategies to kickstart your stress management journey:

- **Deep Breathing:** It's like a mini vacation for your nervous system.
- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Stay in the now—it's less crowded.
- **Get Moving:** Exercise releases endorphins, nature's mood lifters.
- **Set Achievable Goals:** Bite-sized tasks for the win.
- **Watch Your Intake:** Less caffeine and sugar, more calm.

- **Sleep Well:** Your brain and body will thank you.
- **Manage Your Time:** A little planning goes a long way.
- **Connect:** Sharing is caring, especially for your mental health.
- **Seek Professional Help:** Sometimes, we all need expert guidance.

So, will a tiny house magically wash away stress? Not quite. While building your tiny haven, you might actually find your stress levels spiking. But here's what I've learned: stepping back and simplifying life, in whatever form that takes for you, is a step in the right direction towards taming the stress monster.





making the most

Written By Emily Kearcher

My house isn't tiny, in fact, it's not even all that small. It's a modest house from the 1940s with just enough space for our family of four (and an ornery cat). It doesn't have a basement or guest room, and the garage is too small even for a little car. But we love it for everything it has brought to our lives. Having a small house means we have to keep things simple. There's no room for clutter, so if something isn't getting played with or used, it's moved out. If we run out of space in the closet, we get rid of some clothes. There's no secondary holding area for stuff which forces us to be very intentional about the things we keep in our house and make sure they are loved and used frequently.

One of my favorite parts of our house is the small kitchen. When we moved to this house, it was quite a downsize from the home we were living in at the time, especially the kitchen. And although sometimes I miss having a bigger kitchen with ample counter space and extra cabinets, I find that everything I need is still right here. I can quickly move about my kitchen from sink to stove without taking more than one step. The open shelves for my dishes prevent me from overfilling them and not having storage for my pots and pans means now I just have one of each. It sure does make cleanup a breeze!





As for having space for friends and family, I find that the coziness makes everyone more comfortable. Nothing is too precious that can't be used or sat on. Everything that is visible is available and I think that eases people's nerves when they gather. We hosted Christmas this year with 20 people over and although we only have a dining room table with four chairs, we had the best time! We all ate our food with plates on our laps, sitting on the floor, or gathered in the kitchen. The small space made for constant conversation and forever memories.

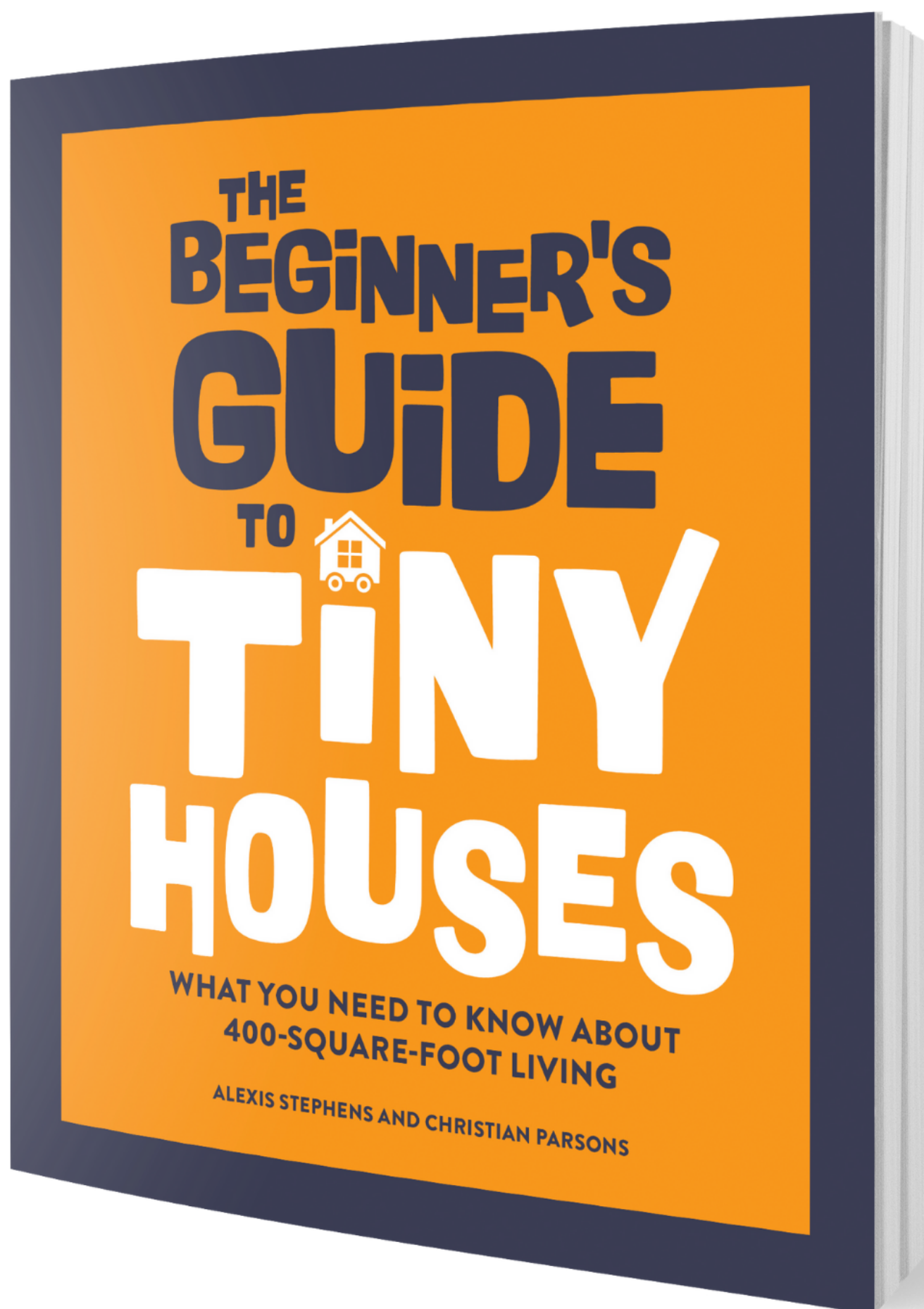
I am so grateful that this little house found us and can be the center point of our family. I love that I'm not weighed down by having to clean or decorate such a large space, and there's no pressure to keep up with current trends. I also find it so sweet that no matter where my kids are, I can always hear them laugh. Who would have thought such clarity and peace could come from a little imperfect home?





"Your thorough guide to tiny house living, full of time-tested advice from legendary tiny house dwellers and travelers."

—Ethan Waldman, host of the Tiny House Lifestyle Podcast





TinyFest

5 Years and Counting

Written By Jess Stiles

After five years, you may think that TinyFest California has run out of new things to share with attendees. However, this year's expo at the Del Mar Fairgrounds on March 16-17 showed that the Tiny Living lifestyle is growing faster than ever. With more varieties of structures to choose from than ever, including vans, renovated RVS, and even a one-bedroom tiny house with a slide-out, exhibitors brought the whole spectrum for attendees to tour. TinyFest California 2024 was a prime example of how tiny living has shifted from a grassroots movement into a fully commercial industry.

On opening day, a line formed outside the venue as visitors buzzed with excitement to see the new exhibitors. As soon as the gates opened, the tiny

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living community grew by several thousand people. With the majority of attendees interested in tiny home tours, lines formed outside each display model. Both days of the event gave people reasons



With the renewed focus on goals, new connections within the community, and armed with a ton of information about tiny living, festival goers exited the fairgrounds ready to tackle the next step on their tiny living to-do list.





to live tiny, from more financing options than ever before to a wide range of models and pricing available. Alongside the tiny homes were vendors that offered tiny living solutions that enabled minimalism and space efficiency.

As with past festivals, it was over too soon and attendees left with inspiration and ideas for how to start making a significant change in their lives to shift towards their tiny living goals. This year's theme was #TheTimeIsNow, where we encouraged attendees to think about their reasons for going tiny and how they can incorporate changes into their lives to build focus on their goals.

For many, living simply, traveling more, and creating financial stability are core motivating factors for shifting towards an alternative lifestyle. Throughout the event, speakers presented topics such as the financial opportunities in the tiny home space as well as how to navigate building codes.

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This Land Can Be... *Your Land!*



Just a bit more than a year ago when Gabe and Carrie Sealey-Morris was preparing to put their dual tiny house rental - Rosie and Rosalita, The Sisters - up for rent, we all wondered if we would ever hear again from the site in Franklin County, VA. Fortunately, after more handiwork by Chris Strathy (known to some as the Capable Carpenter) we are pleased to see the Sealey-Morrises bring This Land back to the pages of Tiny House Magazine.



Longtime THM readers definitely know Chris "The Capable Carpenter" Strathy. His "Rosie" was on the cover of THM #66, and Rosie's sister Rosalita made the cover of #118.

This Land has appeared in THM several times over the last few years, as we've built our getaway in the Virginia Foothills (#106, #108, and #118).



Chris and This Land have been collaborating since 2022, and now Chris is our official co-host! This adorable little Camp Host tiny house is the center of operations for This Land. Its an 8"x20" house built by J.P. Kirk, with a number of improvements by Chris - most notably a skylight in the loft.

This Land is at Philpott Lake in Franklin County, VA, the little sister to Smith Mountain Lake. It's a

clean, quite Army Corps of Engineers lake perfect for kayaking, canoeing, and paddle boarding.

Among the many improvements Chris has made is the outdoor shower, where guests can clean up in the open air - with no neighbors to arch their brows!



Nothing draws guests to This Land like the wood-fired cedar hot tub. It's been featured on Instagram

and YouTube, and has a special place in a lot of people's memories.



Chris also built a patio area for grilling and socializing.



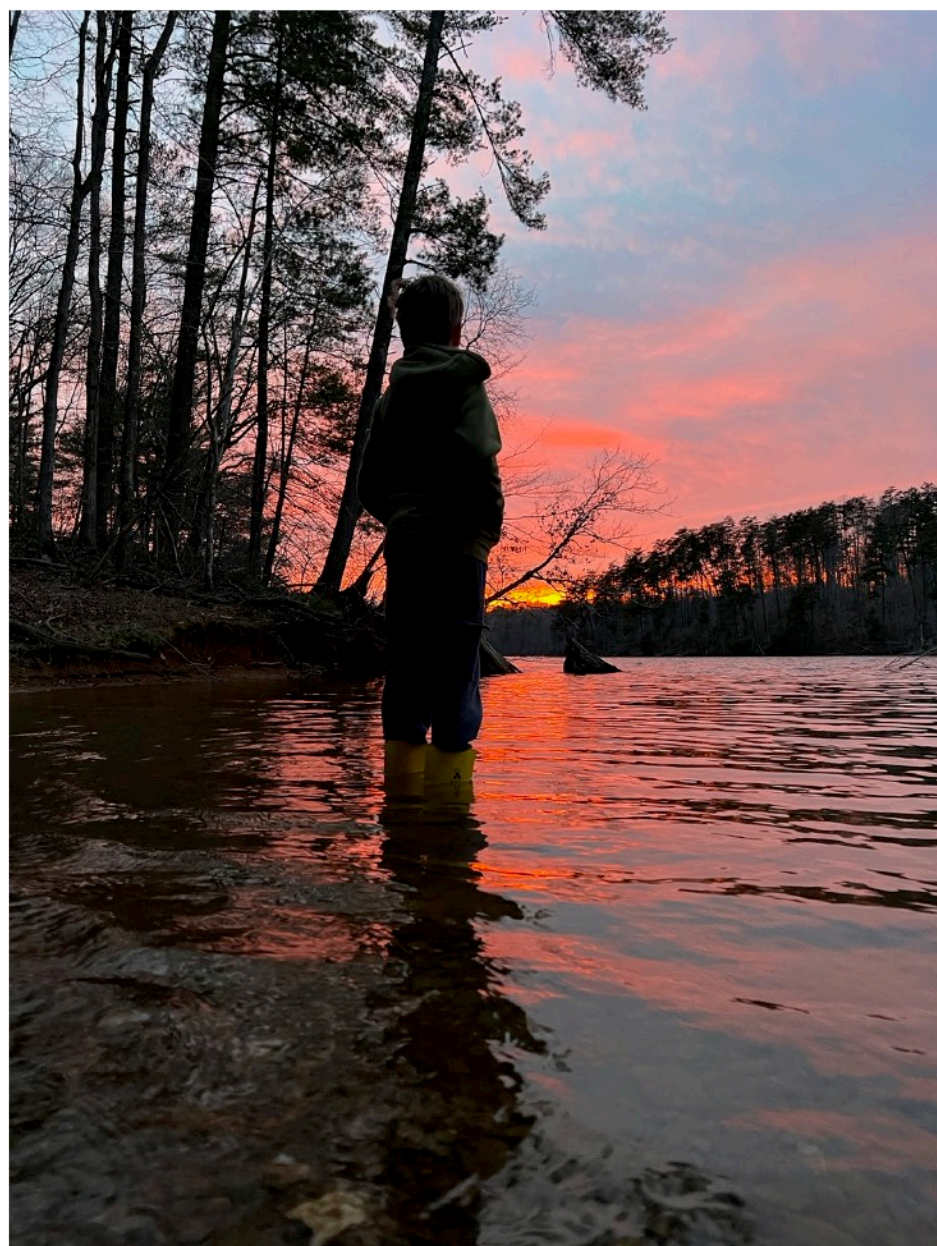
But Chris' greatest feats are just up the long driveway to Glen's Hill - the Sisters, Rosie and Rosalita!

Chris really outdid himself with the double tiny houses and the outdoor spaces of The Sisters. Guests can convene on the covered deck, or shut out the party lights and look up at the night sky - so dark out here that on clear nights you can see the Milky Way.

But there's one thing that draws people to This Land - Philpott Lake. The locals know it's the best place for fishing and boating, with thousands of serene acres to explore. Every summer the serenity fills with live bluegrass, country, and rock and roll with concerts on the floating dock at Twin Ridge Marina.

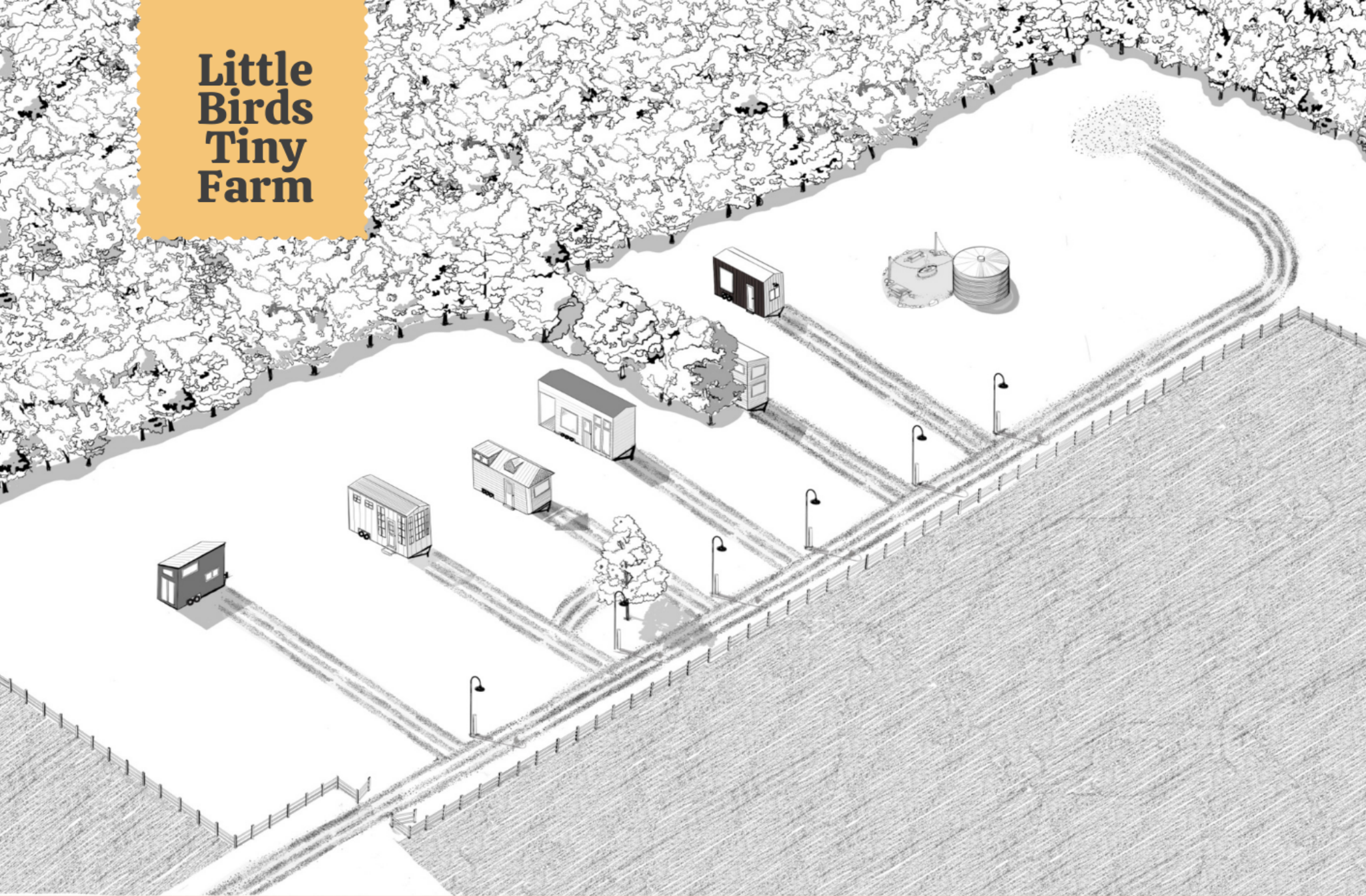
It ain't luxury. It's no mansion on the hill or lakefront chateau. But we don't want that, and the good folks who visit This Land don't want that either. This Land is about getting real - real calm, real comfy, real cozy.

Our guests say it best: "a hidden gem;" "a unique and memorable place;" "we slept better than we have in years!" That's what we like to hear!





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EXPLORING THE TINY HOUSE REVOLUTION



PRESERVING THE SOUL OF AMERICA

In recent years, a quiet revolution has been taking place across the globe. Seasoned tiny houser **Andrew Odom** explores how this revolution has challenged conventional notions of homeownership and subtly redefined the meaning of a fulfilling life.

In the relentless march of progress, the preservation of historical architecture often falls prey to the wrecking ball of development. Amidst the cacophony of urban expansion and modernization, there exists a quiet but vital battle to save the small, old houses that stand as silent sentinels to America's past. These unassuming structures, with their weathered facades and quaint charm, are not merely relics of a bygone era; they are living testaments to the rich tapestry of American history.

Statistics paint a sobering picture of the plight facing historical homes in the United States. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, it is estimated that every year, more than 30,000 historic buildings are demolished or substantially altered. This staggering loss represents not just the destruction of physical structures but the erasure of cultural heritage and collective memory.

At the heart of this crisis lies a fundamental misunderstanding of the value inherent in preserving small, old houses. Critics may argue that these homes lack the grandeur of mansions or the architectural significance of landmarks, but such a narrow perspective fails to grasp their deeper significance. Small, old houses are the embodiment of everyday life in America, serving as microcosms of the social, economic, and cultural forces that have shaped the nation.

EXPLORING THE TINY HOUSE REVOLUTION

Consider, for instance, the humble bungalow — a quintessentially American architectural style that flourished in the early 20th century. These modest dwellings, characterized by their low-pitched roofs and inviting porches, provided affordable housing for working-class families seeking the promise of homeownership. In preserving these bungalows, we preserve the aspirations and struggles of generations past, reminding us of the enduring dream of a place to call home.

Moreover, small, old houses offer invaluable insights into the evolution of American communities. From colonial cottages to Victorian row houses, each architectural style reflects the prevailing social norms, technological advancements, and economic realities of its time. By safeguarding these structures, we create opportunities for future generations to connect with their heritage and understand the forces that have shaped their world.

In addition to their cultural significance, small, old houses play a crucial role in fostering sustainable development and

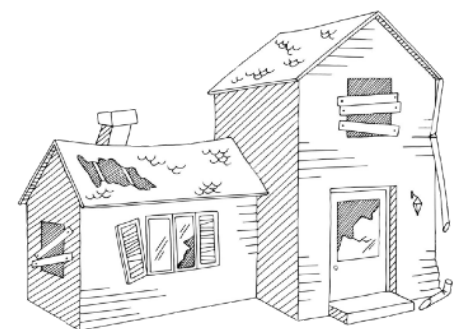
combatting urban sprawl. Adaptive reuse of historical buildings not only reduces the environmental impact of new construction but also contributes to the revitalization of neighborhoods and the preservation of community character. By breathing new life into old houses, we can create vibrant, walkable communities that honor the past while embracing the future.

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beyond mere nostalgia; it is an imperative rooted in our collective responsibility to safeguard the soul of America. As stewards of our built heritage, we have a duty to ensure that future generations inherit a landscape that reflects the depth and diversity of our shared history. To neglect the preservation of these humble abodes is to risk losing a vital piece of the American story—one that speaks not only to where we have been but also to who we are and where we are headed.

In conclusion, saving small, old houses is not just an act of architectural conservation but a testament to our commitment to preserving the essence of America. Through thoughtful preservation efforts and community engagement, we can ensure that these humble dwellings continue to stand as monuments to the enduring spirit of the nation. Let us heed the call to action and safeguard our heritage for generations to come.



foxfire meadow



Nestled among the hardwood trees on a 30-acre farm on the charming rural perimeter of the Research Triangle of central North Carolina, a new tiny home retreat is offering modern country comforts with remarkable convenience to nearby Chapel Hill, Durham, and beyond.



The **Tiny Yakisugi** can be found among the rolling hills and equestrian farms outside Hillsborough, a small town with an important history dating back to the 17th century in Colonial times, and for thousands of years before that as a home to the Occaneechi and Eno Native American tribes. The area has long been a favorite spot for food lovers and history fans, and it has maintained its character even as the Triangle has grown rapidly over the last decade.

The name Yakisugi refers to a Japanese tradition of burning or charring siding to preserve and protect it without harsh chemicals. Owners Emily and Tom Nicholson, the owners of the family farm Foxfire Meadow, felt that it was in keeping with the mission of the farm to care for the land responsibly and with as little negative impact on the environment as possible. A pleasant bonus is that the process of charring the panels produces an attractive veneer that lends a modern feel to a definitively rural setting.

This tiny home offers





ON THE COVER



leafy privacy most of the year on its wooded acre, with more sweeping views through the winter months as the leaves fall, of the surrounding horse pastures. A new Caldera salt-system hot tub, with solar lights twinkling above, provides the most luxurious spot to take in the farm sights and sounds, followed closely perhaps by the 2 person swing on the deck attached to the tiny home.

Built for the Nicholsons by [Perch and Nest](#), a family-run tiny home builder based just 70 miles down the road in Winston Salem, the Tiny Yakisugi lives up to its name, with less than 400 square feet of airy space, with tall windows letting in the light after it passes through the surrounding trees. With all new appliances, high-speed internet, and a fully functional bathroom and kitchen, the upstairs loft offers a comfortable queen bed with 270-degree farm views, and downstairs one can find a day bed that can also sleep a third person on the organic

twin mattress as well. The entire farm is fenced in, and sites at the end of a private road provide a sense of security and cohesion to the property.

The rental is also an important component of the Nicholsons' overall project on this working farm. Foxfire Meadow is embarking on an integrated, regenerative project to improve the topsoil responsibly--while planting fruit trees, collecting flowers to cut and dry, growing vegetables, inoculating tasty mushrooms on fruiting logs in the woods, and soon even starting a long-term hazelnut and black truffle operation.

Short-term rental revenue contributes to their ability to keep working to improve the health of the topsoil without resorting to quicker, easier, but less sustainable industrial methods. Without spraying herbicides or pesticides since moving their family to the farm, the owners have instead utilized no-till







methods, and composting and fertilizing with the help of their grazing equine friends. When they do clear a field of scrubby trees, they use a mulching approach to keep the carbon in place in the soil and allow the fallen saplings and roots underground to feed the meadow over years as it converts to pasture or a food plot.

The Tiny Yakisugi provides a comfortable, even luxurious take on rural tiny home living. While some guests have enjoyed meeting the quarter horses, miniature donkeys or ponies, or even the enormous friendly draft horse in the adjacent pasture, others have prioritized privacy and serenity for their stays, enjoying the careful design touches, or reclining inside during a rainy day. The owners are sure that this retreat will develop and blossom over the coming years with the rest of the meadow.



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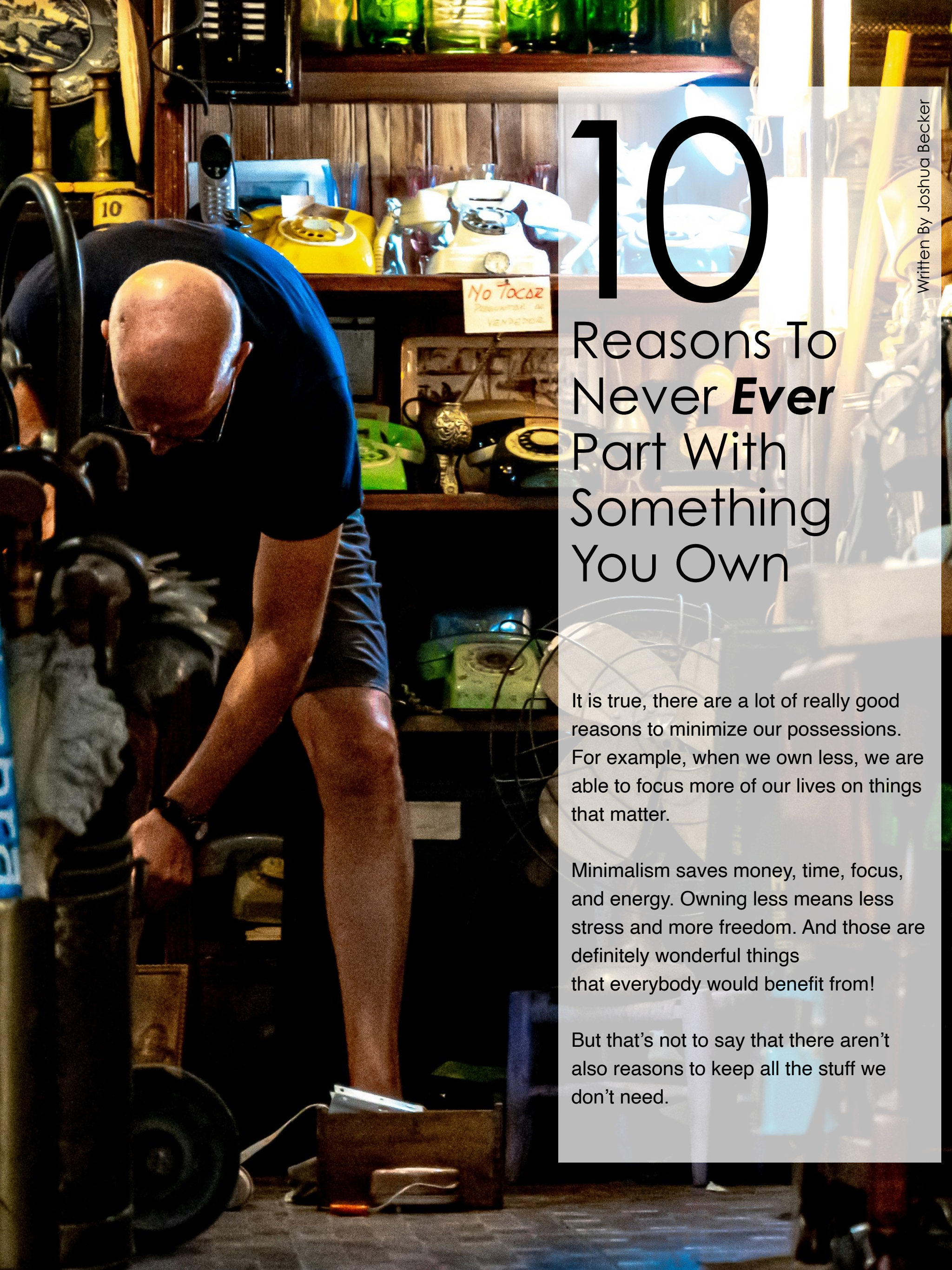


A-Frame Tiny House Plans

Alexis

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10

Reasons To Never **Ever** Part With Something You Own

It is true, there are a lot of really good reasons to minimize our possessions. For example, when we own less, we are able to focus more of our lives on things that matter.

Minimalism saves money, time, focus, and energy. Owning less means less stress and more freedom. And those are definitely wonderful things that everybody would benefit from!

But that's not to say that there aren't also reasons to keep all the stuff we don't need.

In fact, here are 20 reasons to never ever part with an item you own:

1. It Was Expensive.

Sure, keeping that item around your home makes you feel continually bad about the purchase and the wasted money. But keeping the item around, hopefully with the price tag still on it, serves as a helpful reminder of your ability to make poor financial decisions.

2. You're Going to Sell it Someday.

The more items you stockpile, the more successful that garage sale is going to be—you know, the one you've been planning for the past five years.

3. It's a Spare for Your Spare's Spare.

One can never have too many duplicates. On the off-chance you get holes in ten pairs of pants in the same week, you'll be glad you had that 11th pair in the very back of your closet.

4. Somebody Bought It For You.

And that's the thing about a gift, you're required to keep it forever! No leeway.

5. It's a Collector's Item.

Those Beanie Babies, baseball cards, and **Longaberger baskets** were supposed to be worth a lot of money by now. And even though they aren't, holding on to them is probably easier than admitting you were wrong.

6. You Might Need It Someday.

I mean, true, you don't need it now and haven't needed it for the last who-knows-how-many years. But maybe, just maybe, tomorrow will be

that day (and there will be **no other possible solutions** available to you).

7. It Could Be Fixed.

Not by you, of course, or you would have already fixed it. But one day, you'll definitely learn electronic repair, woodworking, and/or textile weaving. I mean, there must be some way to get it working again, right? Until then, your broken items are just potential projects.

8. You Might Fit Into It Again.

Those pants looked great on you in high school, no doubt. And it would be awesome to wear them again. Granted, that was before kids and 10 lbs. ago. Holding on to them is a testament to your optimism.

9. It's Part of a Set.

Or, at least, it used to be.

10. It's a Conversation Starter.

Because there's no better way to kick off a party than with the sentence, "Did you know I still own over 100 DVDs?"

11. It's Exercise Equipment.

Like that treadmill now serving as a high-end clothes rack. It's the thought that counts.

12. You Don't Know What It Does.

And if you're not sure what that kitchen tool is supposed to be used for, what lock that key fits, or what electronic item that cord is for, you can bet you'll know where to look when you need it.

13. Someone Else Can Do It For You.

There's no need to go through your own attic, basement, or garage if someone else will happily do it when you're gone. I'm sure that's exactly the way they'll want to spend their time immediately after you pass.

14. You Wore It Once.

And you might wear it again if invited to the exact same type of themed costume party.



15. It's Your "Someday" Hobby Kit.

It's been your dream for so many years. **Why give up on it now?** It's clearly a hobby you'll absolutely, definitely pick up someday.

16. Everyone Else Has One.

You know, of course, to be careful when following the masses because sometimes the "m" is silent. But not the things you've purchased over the years! You only followed the fads and trends that brought actual value into your life.

17. You Deserve It.

You worked hard, became successful, and earned the money to buy lots and lots of really nice things. Keep them all. You earned them.



18. It's a Symbol From The Past.

Cling to that decade-old concert T-shirt because it's your only proof you were once cool and those boxes of souvenirs represent all the trips you took. It's your past experiences that made you who you are today, not the physical objects from that period in your life. But who wants to just display those experiences by the way you live when you can keep the relics in a box in the basement?

19. You've Got the Space.

Rooms are meant to be filled, aren't they? If you've got room in the closet and it's not hurting anybody, you should totally, definitely keep it.

20. It's Part of Your Identity.

Without your vast collection of things, how will anyone know you're the person who keeps everything?

Reflecting on all these reasons why we convince ourselves, over and over again, to keep everything, I can't help but wonder if perhaps the real April Fools' joke is on us.

Why have human beings become so accustomed to the rationalizations we tell ourselves to fill our spaces, acquire more, and then eventually search for even more places to store our stuff?

We're better than that and **life is more important than the things that we own.**

Today, and each day forward, let's choose to live **counter-cultural**, intentional lives—filling our lives with meaning, not things.



Joshua Becker and his young family were introduced to minimalism during a short conversation with their neighbor. Since then, Joshua's story and writing have inspired millions around the world to find more life by owning fewer possessions. Today, based on his thoughtful and intentional approach to minimalism, he is one of the leading voices in the modern simplicity movement reaching over 1 million readers every month.



Tucked away in Santa Cruz, a compact 250-square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU) has been masterfully reimaged by the very talented J. Jordan Creative.

Based on the West Coast. J. Jordan Creative was founded by Jen Jordan, a creative trained in both interior architecture and design. Alongside her team, Jen specializes in space planning, kitchen and bath design, sourcing and ordering flooring and surfaces, lighting, and furniture. Unlike other decorators, she listens deeply to understand a client's goals, aesthetics, and budget and works directly with architects and contractors to ensure excellence throughout the project, which is evident in her Psychedelic Surf Shack.

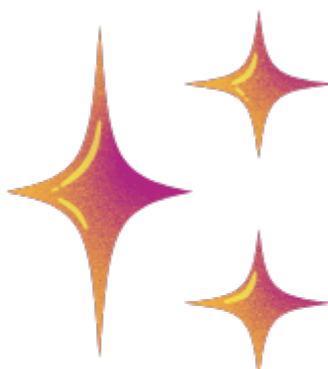
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What once was a quintessential 90's structure is now a vibrant, 70's psychedelic-themed vacation rental. This transformation was achieved through meticulous space planning, ensuring the ultimate use of the limited area.

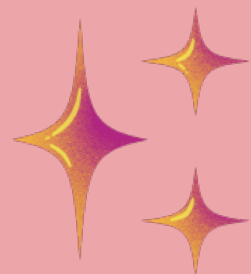
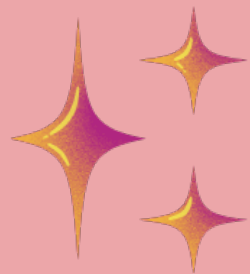


The renovated ADU now boasts a fully equipped kitchen, a cozy living room, a tranquil bedroom, a full bathroom, and a charming loft. Additional spaces have been ingeniously incorporated to cater to dining and remote working needs.

Our design inspiration was drawn from the groundbreaking works of renowned architects like Antoni Gaudi and Jeff Shelton, particularly evident in the fluidity of our wavy walls and the incorporation of organic elements. To enhance the modern yet earthy ambiance, we selected Kat + Roger tiles. Further adding to the uniqueness of this space, artworks from local Santa Cruz artists adorn the walls, adding a touch of local charm and artistic flair to this one-of-a-kind retreat.



















5 WAYS TO HOUSE HACK

By Christina Nellesmann



There is no doubt that anyone looking for a home these days is a struggle. With high mortgage rates, high demand, and the lack of affordable homes in most of the country, first-time homebuyers are [feeling the pinch](#).

This is also happening with tiny homes. The average tiny home has gone up from an average price of around \$50,000 to around \$67,000 since 2020. They are still more affordable than a traditional home but cost about [38 percent more per square footage](#) than a traditional home.

Who do you know these days that buys a home for the traditional reasons?

The two-income, two-kids, two-dogs life surrounded by a picket fence is no longer appealing when mortgage rates hover around 8 percent and home prices at half a million dollars. Most savvy buyers also know that you will probably never pay off a traditional home and will be in debt to a bank for the rest of your life.

When the typical home is no longer feasible or practical, bring on house hacking.

House hacking is not a new concept but is quickly becoming a preferred way to buy a house. In general house hacking is purchasing a property with plans to make money from it to help pay it off or pay for its expenses. Traditionally it's the practice of renting out a portion of your home or property for an additional stream of income.

The practice of house hacking has become much more creative over the past few years. Buyers are looking for homes they can share with family, friends, renters, or as a co-op or [multi-family compound](#). People are looking, not just for tiny homes, but for homes that will go the extra mile for them and their families.

House hacking is not without its share of work both before and after the home purchase. However, once the initial work and investment have been put in, the rewards can far outpace whatever the real estate market throws at you.



Kelsey Chance

1. BUY A HOME WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Over the past few months, I've run into several people who are looking for property or who have purchased property with a family member. A local woman I know is on the lookout for a house she can purchase with her sister.

Case in point, a popular YouTuber, [Wonderhussy Adventures](#), purchased a property in the California desert with her sister. The one-acre compound features a main house with a casita—each sibling living in one of each building. They also have enough land to accommodate friends who want to stay on their compound in their RVs or vans.

This option seems to be growing faster all the time. When a single person can't stretch their income enough to purchase a home, then a good plan is to split the cost with a family member. As long as you get along and you each have your own space, it makes a lot of sense. In addition, you also have a built-in caretaker for your home in case you need to take a vacation from it.

When purchasing a property with a sibling or a friend, the key is to make sure you have a good contract or operating agreement in order, especially when buying as a group. Purchasing property as an LLC is also a good idea.

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Ferdinand Asakome

2. BUY A DUPLEX AND RENT IT OUT

Another YouTuber, The Carla Project, is on the hunt for a piece of property in Los Angeles. The cost of homes in her area can start in the high \$700,000 range.

Her goal for her first home is to [purchase a duplex](#) and live in one unit while she rents out the other unit to help cover the mortgage.

This can be a bit intimidating at first if you have never been a landlord. However, living

right next door to your renter can take a load off the stress. A duplex is also much more manageable than investing in an apartment complex or being an off-site landlord.

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3. BUY A HOME AND LIVE IN THE BACKYARD OR ON THE PROPERTY

This is a very appealing option for those that want to have a traditional home, but still want to reap the benefits of rental income.

Many tiny housers start with this option. They build the tiny house in their backyard, move into it, and then rent out the main house for income. Another option is to convert an unused garage or outbuilding into a tiny house to live in.

If the code allows for it, some people even live in an RV or camper in their backyard while renting out the main house.

That's the main caveat with this option. Living in your own backyard is not allowed in many cities and jurisdictions. The laws are slowly changing, but before attempting this be sure to check with your local codes and building enforcement office.

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Andrea Davis

4. CONVERT AN EXISTING HOME INTO SEVERAL DWELLINGS

This is what we have done for years. My husband and I are the main caretakers for my elderly mother. She wanted to stay in her rather large home so we converted the daylight basement into an apartment for ourselves. She can have her space and we can have ours.

Our neighbor also does this. He added an apartment to the top of his garage for himself and he rents out the rest of the home.

This option works only if the existing home allows for it. Some homes may be too small to convert, but this is also a time for some creativity.

How about converting a master bedroom/bath into an apartment? Does the downstairs or upstairs have a separate entrance? Is there enough parking for all the residents? Is there enough kitchen and bathroom space for everyone?

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5. BUY LAND AND PUT MULTIPLE HOMES ON IT

This is a great option if you live in a rural area that allows for multiple buildings. This is also a great option for families with older children who want their own space or families who want to accommodate an elderly relative.

If you are a single person looking to get on the property ladder, you can start small with your own traditional or tiny house and then add other homes later on.

Another option would be to buy acreage that already has a home on it and then add tiny homes or cabins on other parts of the property. The existing home can also be converted to accommodate multiple people.

Having several acres is useful for creating privacy and space for all participants. Septic, water, land use, taxes, and maintenance will also need to be addressed.

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