

TINY HOUSE

FOR MICRO, TINY, SMALL, AND UNCONVENTIONAL HOUSE ENTHUSIASTS



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ON OUR PAGES



FEATURED

Living To Read

There is no black or white when it comes to building a tiny house. In fact, one of the best parts of a small space is being able to customize it to fit your lifestyle! Check this tiny out.

Embrace Tiny. Travel Light.

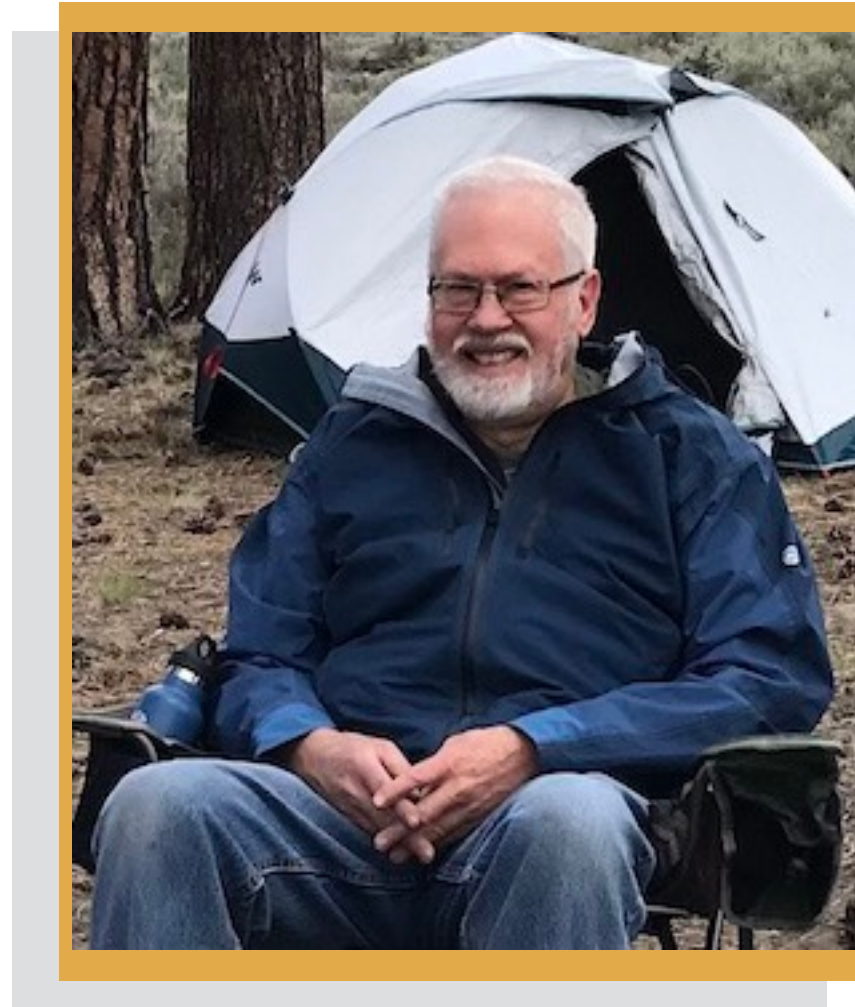
Laura LaVoie is on the road again and this time she is traveling to Barcelona. Her tips for packing light might make your next adventures that much more meaningful.

An Enduring Evolution

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.

Cover photo provided by **Maya Gingold**

THE CHOICE TO LIVE TINY HAS BEEN COMPARED TO WEIGHT LOSS. Hillary Dunbar in her experience has lost hundreds of pounds of accumulated stuff. You must downsize and live with only what you need to live in a tiny space.



To start this change Hillary started with something she felt was manageable - her clothes. It ended up being a larger challenge than she realized at first but once she accomplished it downsizing the rest of her belongings became easier.

Similar to downsizing to live in a tiny house is traveling light. In her article, Laura shares how she sized down to what was really necessary and fit it into a small backpack for a recent trip to Spain.

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.

Do you really need a large RV to go on your next adventure or even live full-time? Christina talks to Dave Jaber of Bend Teardrop, a local business where I live about how a small space like a teardrop can cover what you need on these adventures.

These articles and more in this issue.

Kent

Kent Griswold, Editor in Chief



the road to REAL weight loss

WRITTEN BY HILLARY DUNBAR



HOW MANY STEPS IS THE
TREK2TINY?





It's been asked if the Trek2Tiny is about weight loss, and while there are no recipes or exercise programs involved, I did lose hundreds of pounds, but it was shedding the weight from decades of accumulated stuff. During the frozen January of 2016 I began to wonder what was next for me. My youngest child was graduating high school, leaving me with an "empty nest" that was a very full nest! It became clear that I was ready for something very, very different.

Small spaces have always intrigued me, and I wondered how much space is enough for me to live comfortably. Paying close attention to how I moved through the rooms in my house and how I

used the spaces, I started to research and design a tiny house. After many sketches, models, and floor plans, I settled on 270 square feet of living space. With three kids and 25 years of family life behind me, there were many decisions to be made and the downsizing began in earnest.

I decided to start with something that seemed manageable - my clothing. Having resided in North Idaho for three decades, weathering all four seasons, my clothing collection reflected this journey. Being ensnared by the allure of cheap, trendy seasonal items from popular department stores and online shops, I realized I was a casualty of the fast fashion industry. With only a coat closet,

a small hanging closet, and a handful of storage baskets in the tiny house, a minimalist wardrobe was a necessity.

Dumping all my closets and drawers onto the living room floor revealed a surprising amount of clothing! Sorting through the heaps, I kept only the items I cherished and regularly wore. I remember the feeling of lightness I had when that first closet was completely empty, it motivated me to keep going. I wanted more space, less stuff. I made a promise not to purchase any more clothes while working on building my house. During construction, I delved into the Japanese art of Sashiko and visible mending. Sashiko reignited my passion for embroidery and sewing, while also prolonging the life of my most worn and beloved garments.

Constructing my own house presented significant learning challenges yet residing there full-time since 2018 has brought forth additional insights from the small space. Embracing the Slow Fashion movement, I have radically reduced my consumption by creating, thrifting, or repairing clothing items. My view on textiles has broadened to encompass wider sustainability principles, considering the origins of clothing and what happens to them after we discard or donate them.





Throughout the years, embracing a minimalist lifestyle has reshaped my priorities and artistic vision. I view thrifted items as opportunities for creativity, like blank canvases, and have fun teaching others the beauty of Sashiko and mending. By cultivating mindfulness, we can find creative opportunities with patches, embroidery, Sashiko patterns, plant-based dyes, and upcycling. My favorite art is wildly inspired, often using repurposed materials.

I'll leave you with words of wisdom from the great Cat Stevens.

*They will vanish away like your dads' best jeans
Denim blue, faded up to the sky
And though you want them to last forever
You know they never will
You know they never will
And the patches make the goodbye harder still*



ATTINY BOCHORD

'You could have been if we had waited a little longer,' Claire told her. 'All the parkourists joined us when supper was served.'

'That dreadful strong tea,' Mrs. Lingford shuddered, 'and all those indigestible crummy cakes.

Building my tiny house was a dream come true, and I knew from the start that I wanted it to be a personal library and reading area. As an avid reader and book lover, I wanted a space that would allow me to surround myself with my favorite books and get lost in the stories they tell.

First, I designed the layout of the tiny house to maximize storage and comfort. I opted for a cozy, open-plan living area with a built-in sofa bed and a large window that lets in plenty of natural light. The walls are lined with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, made from reclaimed wood to give the space a warm, rustic feel.

Next, I curated my book collection, selecting only my favorite titles and authors to fill the shelves. I organized them by genre, with fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and classics each having their own designated section. I also included a few comfortable reading nooks, complete with plush pillows and soft blankets, to make getting lost in a good book the ultimate indulgence.

*I added some lush greenery, like
a peace lily and a snake plant, to
bring in a touch of nature and
purify the air.*

To create a peaceful and calming atmosphere, I chose a soothing color palette of soft greens, blues, and neutral tones. The walls are painted a gentle sage green, while the bookshelves and furniture are a warm, honey-brown wood. I added some lush greenery, like a peace lily and a snake plant, to bring in a touch of nature and purify the air.

Lighting was also crucial in creating the perfect reading environment. I installed soft, warm LED lights that can be adjusted to different levels, depending on the time of day and my reading preferences. I also added a few table lamps and floor lamps to provide focused lighting for reading and writing.

In addition to the physical space, I wanted to incorporate technology to enhance my reading experience. I installed a state-of-the-art sound system, allowing me to listen to audiobooks and podcasts while I read or relax. I also set up a comfortable writing desk and chair, perfect for jotting down notes, writing book reviews, or working on my own writing projects.

The final touch was adding some personal touches and decorative elements to make the space truly feel like my own. I hung a few favorite pieces of art and prints, including a vintage map of the world and a quote from my favorite author. I also displayed a few cherished book-related mementos, like a vintage typewriter and a collection of bookmarks from special places I've traveled.

Now, my tiny house library is my happy place, where I can escape the world and get lost in the stories and knowledge that fill the shelves. It's a space that inspires me to read, write, and dream, and I feel grateful every day to have this little slice of heaven to call my own.

Sonoma Shanty Plans

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EMBRACE TINY

Travel Light

Written By Laura LaVoie



As Matt and I walked through the Atlanta Airport through customs and security to our next flight, I was hit with inspiration for this article.

“Where are you coming from,” the gate security agent asked.

“Madrid,” we said.

“How long were you there?” he asked.

“10 days,” we answered.

“You don’t have more bags than just those backpacks?” the agent asked, pointing to the international baggage claim area.

“Nope, just these.” He nodded, impressed, and waved us through.

In total, the time we spent from landing in Atlanta to getting through customs and security was one hour, including taxiing and getting off the plane. (We also utilized the Mobile Passport Control, which we highly recommend, but that is a different travel tip article.) That is directly attributed to packing light and carrying only backpacks.

This is how learning to embrace the tiny life allows us to pack everything we need for 10 days in a backpack without cutting corners.



Our Trip to Spain

We loved exploring architecture long before Matt and I started building a tiny home together. When he saw an article in the 90s about Gaudi’s unfinished masterpiece, the Sagrada Familia, he wanted to see it in person. And I am so glad we did. Of course, a massive unfinished basilica can’t be compared to a tiny home in any fashion, but the draw to good architecture can come in many forms.

While the beginning of our trip centered on the sites of Barcelona, we didn’t stop there.

We took a train to Valencia, where we sat on the beach by the Mediterranean Sea and ate traditional paella. Once we explored the labyrinthine streets of that city, we hopped on another train to visit the international metropolitan hub of Madrid before finally flying home. And because we were staying in the city center in all three places and traveling by train and plane, we wanted to be as efficient as possible when packing, just like we had to be deliberate when moving into a 120-square-foot home.



My Tiny Packing Tips

1. Choose the Right Backpack

Select a comfortable, durable backpack within the carry-on size limits for most airlines. Look for one with multiple compartments to help organize your items effectively. I have an Osprey Ozone 46 that is exceptionally roomy and comes with me on every trip, whether we're driving or flying.

2. Pack Versatile Clothing

Focus on versatile and layerable clothing that can be mixed and matched to create different outfits. Opt for neutral colors that go well together, and consider lightweight, quick-drying, and wrinkle-resistant fabrics. My usual uniform at home is jeans, t-shirts, and sneakers. I decided to skip those for this trip. I packed lightweight slacks and cute tops and wore comfortable Sketchers zip-up ankle boots instead.

3. Use bags and organizers

Packing cubes are all the rage, but I haven't yet taken the leap. Instead, I use one bag (incidentally, an NC Tiny House Street Festival bag) to



pack my socks and underwear so they are contained. I pack a mesh laundry bag to keep clean and dirty clothes separate. I also have a hanging toiletries organizer.

4. Pack toiletries and shoes carefully: I originally titled this section “limit toiletries and shoes,” but I don’t. On this trip, I brought an extra pair of booties (same style and brand, just a different color) and sandals for the beach. I would usually suggest putting shoes in a bag, but my backpack has a small zipper compartment where they fit. I also take as much as I need for toiletries. I prefer my shampoo, conditioner, and soap, but I have small TSA-compliant containers to refill. I also have plenty of medication, sunscreen, Band-Aids, hair ties, and more.

5. Roll Your Clothes: Anything not in a bag is rolled. I had two pairs of PJs, four pants, and ten shirts. Rolling your clothes instead of folding them can save space and reduce wrinkling. This method also makes it easier to fit more items into your backpack. (As a tiny house or small space tip, I also roll my clothes to store at home so I don’t need a huge dresser or closet.)

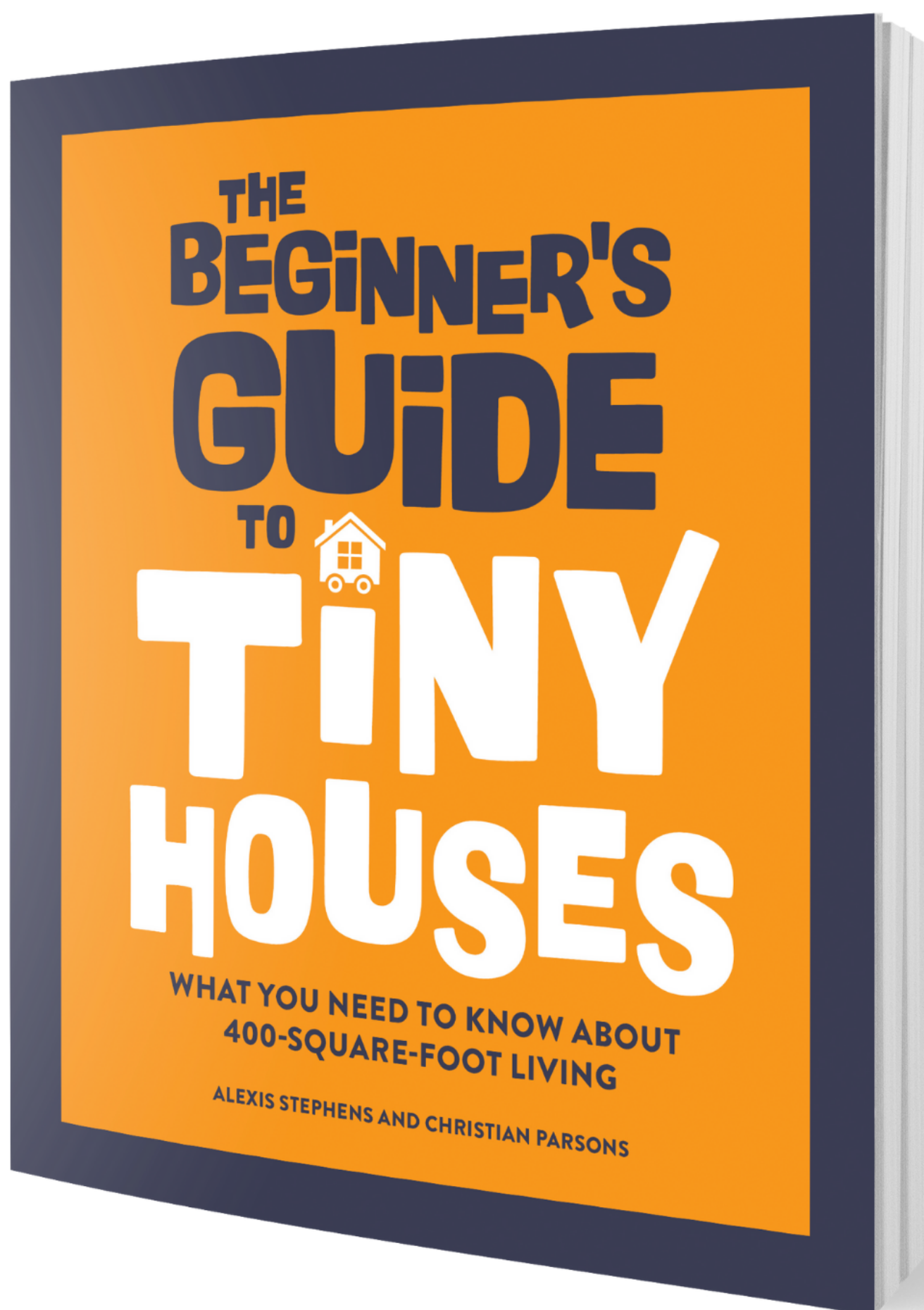
Bonus tip: I also sort out and roll up all the clothes in my laundry bag at the end of the trip because they’ll take up less space than when they’re all wadded up.

I love to travel but hate to roll a suitcase or check a bag. Even at...nearly 50...I would still rather carry a backpack than deal with all the extra steps or roll a bag on historic cobblestone streets. Next year, I turn 50, and we have a big trip (though stateside) planned already. I can’t wait.



"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





The Wealth We Have Communally: Coram Houses, Topher Thomas, and the (Tiny) Future of Affordable Housing

Written By Dr. Gabriel S Sealey-Morris



It's not often that you meet an actual visionary.

Yeah, they throw that word around all the time in the tech industry. Every tech bro with a big enough ego gets called a “visionary.” But most of those “visionaries” are just slick salesmen, shameless hucksters, and old-fashioned con artists dressed up like something new.

A real visionary? That's somebody who sees how the world can be better, and then goes out and does it.

Topher Thomas, of Durham, NC, is one of them.

My wife Carrie and I learned about Topher through local tiny

house forums on Facebook, where he was promoting his business, Coram Houses. Coram is a labor of love that has turned into a full-time job. Last year,

Topher left his teaching career and now leads an incredible crew building ADUs for affordable housing in the Triangle area of North Carolina.

We own a small, 900-square-foot house in Hillsborough, NC that we bought as an investment property, knowing that the large backyard provided plenty of space for an ADU in the future. But once we talked to Topher and heard his story, we knew we wanted Coram to build it.

Topher is, hands down, one of the most inspiring people we've ever met. I interviewed him in April 2024 to learn more about Coram and his missions, and his enthusiasm for housing justice is infectious.

He comes by it honestly: "My parents are Haitian immigrants. And they cultivated in both me and my sister this sense and idea of community, that our front door's open, our home is open to other people." He remembers the "cognitive dissonance" when he first began to realize that not all families felt the same way. "So many people are living counter to that, right? Wanting to accumulate, wanting to gather and keep for themselves," he discovered. "It works the psyche, it works in little weird ways."

But it was when he found himself teaching history - especially the history of race and housing in America, that Topher realized there was a different way to think about life and home. He describes the book *The Color of Law* as "pivotal": "Redlining, racial covenants, even the origins of HOAs, so much of that was just a

way to separate the races and separate socioeconomic classes."

But in the system that already existed, there was so much opportunity for change. The opportunity of the single-family lot, "where somebody bought something and said this is mine, we can add something here. That's an opportunity for that family to share with other people." And he did it first in his own backyard in 2019.

And in 2020 the city made him tear it down because it wasn't up to code.

And that's what separates a visionary from the rest of us. 9 out of 10 people would have given up right there. You can't fight City Hall. Forget it, Jake, it's Chinatown.

Topher didn't give up. Topher dug into the codes and ordinances, learned how to build the right way, and most importantly, found collaborators and investors.

It wasn't about making money: "If we can find those people who have accumulated and partner them with folks who don't have access to capital or to resources, and then I can come in with the construction knowledge, then we can potentially make a system by which all of this wealth is spread around and redistributed in really sensitive, positive, and interesting ways."

That was the birth of Coram Houses.

Coram came out of an "existential crisis": "Once the imagination kicks in an idea about how to push back against these forces of separation and property and exploitation it's like, Okay, I have to do this. I can't sleep at night, knowing that I have an idea that could push back and not do it."

The Coram philosophy boils down, he says, to "How can we recognize the wealth that we have communally, and then recognize where there are gaps and fill those gaps."

As Topher describes it, Coram wasn't "a grand scheme. It wasn't architected." He explains, "I would take a step. And then with that next step would appear something there. And then I'd step into that."

Of course, Topher has run up against all of the hassles that anyone who wants to build a tiny house has encountered. He jokes, "I actually have a list, a Google doc, it's called 'bureaucratic issues' that just lists all these different things." He's forged ahead by becoming a regular presence at city council meetings, local advocacy groups, and SCAD, Simplifying Code for Affordable Development.

And with a lot of persuasion, he's seen real change

happen in Durham. There have been tangible changes to zoning rules. “Now in Durham we can do a duplex,” he says. “We can do up to 1200 square foot ADU. We don't have to do driveways anymore if there's street parking.” He's helping do away with “all those things that push prices up” without really improving lives.

And, as his surveyor told him, “You know, you really just need to get ready to run for city council.”

That's not an announcement. Topher has no interest in becoming a politician. He'd rather lead from the front, by example. He's particularly proud of inspiring a local elder, a 1960s civil rights activist, who reopened her shuttered beauty shop and turned it into a youth center when she saw the work Topher was doing in the neighborhood.

As Topher tells it, she said, “I was

done. But then I see you doing this work, I'm like, Man, I'm not done. I still got energy.”

Topher would be the first to tell you it's not a one-man show. He depends on his A-Team, Donesha Thompson, Ryan Stokes, Mike Raszmann, and a slew of top-notch subcontractors.

On our lot in Hillsborough, Coram built a lovely 450 sq ft tiny house that will now be home to a senior citizen with mobility issues.

We got a design from a local architect, David Cates, that would meet the stringent standards of the Historic District Commission. Our 1951 property is on the last street of the Hillsborough Historic District - cross the street, not historic. Go figure.

It's a simple, efficient design, single-story because the ADU cannot be taller than the main house: a living room, galley

kitchen, full bath, and bedroom, along with a screened-in porch. The porch is absolutely the magic touch - it doesn't add to the square footage on paper, but when the French doors are opened, it feels like the living room is twice as big.

High ceilings and lots of windows make the rooms feel open and spacious, even elegant. But the space was also built with North Carolina's unpredictable seasons in mind. Polished concrete floors will keep cooler from the bottom up, and the high ceilings will allow warm air to rise. Plenty of sunlight will keep the winter blues away.

The beautiful thing about Topher's vision is the simple, human power behind it: “Our world was architected and imagined by people. The imagination is what built the world that we live in. And so if we want a different world, our imagination is what can do that.”





VANLIFE CONVERTED

Written By Chris Strathy

If you know me you know my love of vans. I've had a few (old) Chevy G series that I've loved dearly including my current "daily driver", VANilla ice. Despite my love of vans, I've kept a full-sized truck in my fleet to do the towing and heavy hauling. I simply couldn't find a van that could do what my trucks could do or go where four-wheel drive is required.

Back in November 2023, my Dually (with 400k miles) required a lot of work and I made the choice to part it out. I spent 5 months searching for a reliable used replacement and even looked

into buying a NEW vehicle! The insane price tags and my indifference to the used trucks I'd shopped kept me looking.

Then in March 2024, IT happened! And by "IT" I mean locating and purchasing the unicorn I've been searching for... a 2001 GMC Savannah 3500 with a Quigley 4x4 conversion. The van was mint, local, and one owner... almost too good to be true. For the non-car folks this van could go wherever and tow whatever my trucks could.

While VANilla ice has everything I need to work



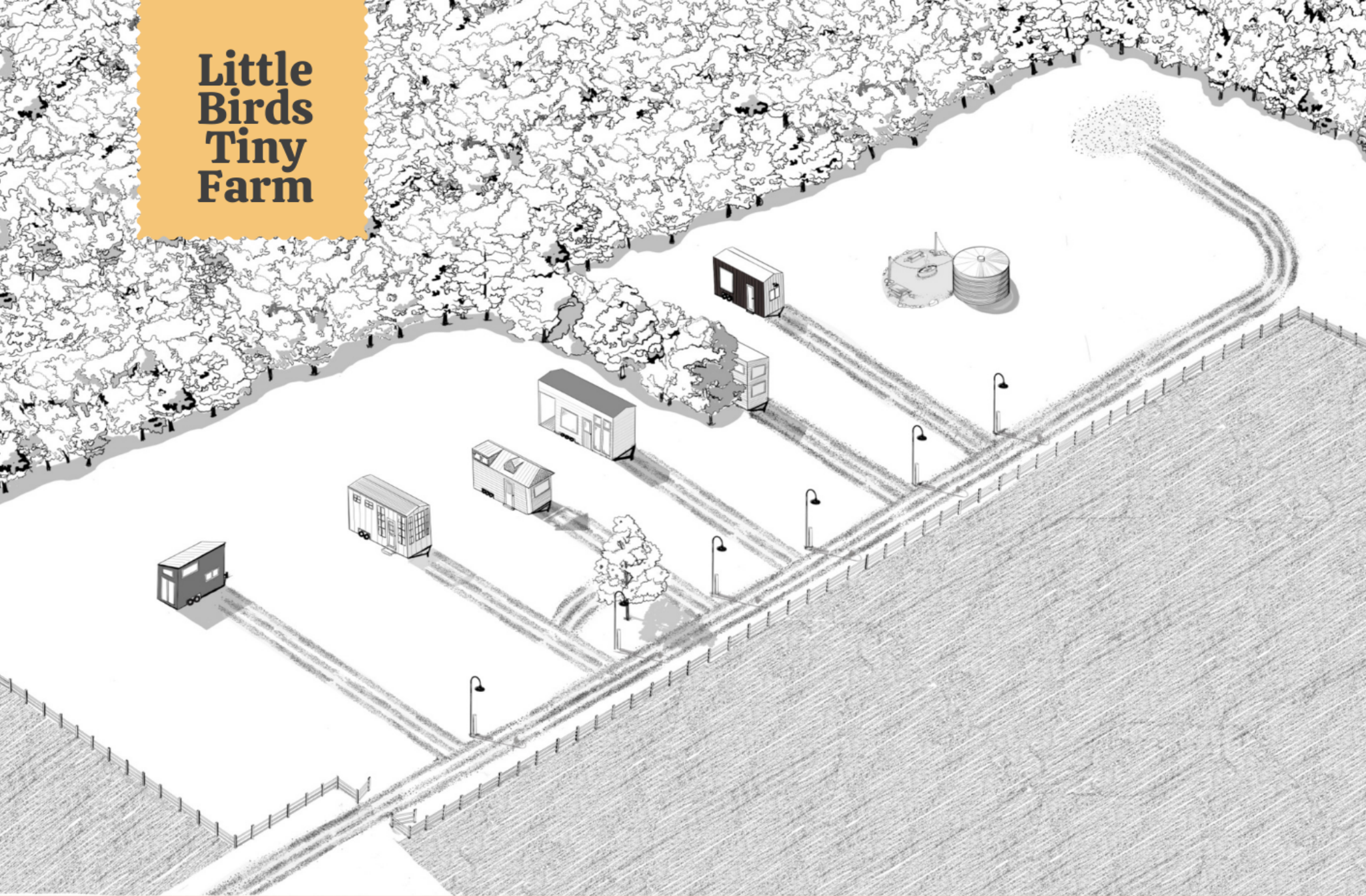
and live inside, BIG RED will be a blast towing the Doghouse (my mobile workshop) to remote spots.

It made its maiden voyage to The Carolina Tiny House festival in Charlotte last month and was a big hit among fellow van lovers!

Tiny house building just got even more fun!



Little Birds Tiny Farm



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- 30 minutes to Greensboro, Winston Salem, + Martinsville
- Month-to-Month and Annual Leases Available

PACIFICA TINY HOMES

STYLISH, AFFORDABLE, CUSTOM

Crystal and Josue, the owners of Pacifica Tiny Homes, have been together since they were teenagers, and have had many adventures together through the years.

Most recently the couple lived in Michoacán, Mexico, where they began their journey into innovation and creativity. While there, they tried different things, such as growing corn, raising pigs, selling meat, and making carnitas. Josue learned about the construction process while working with his uncle in Mexico, and saw how arduous labor can be without all the technology we are used to here stateside. If anything it helped the two appreciate the simple things even more.

Although Crystal and Josue come from Mexican families, it wasn't until they were living in Mexico as adults that they could make more sense of the destitute conditions around them and figure out ways to help.



A few years ago, Crystal and Josue decided to create a tiny house. They bought a trailer and started figuring out where they were going to build. Josue began his design and hired his father to begin building it on his property in Los Angeles. His father was a bit skeptical in the beginning about how it was all going to come together, as most people probably do when they first start one, but the two had the vision. Once the process started, it took exactly 6 months to complete, by working mainly on the weekends.



Since Crystal and Josue own property in different places, their initial goal was to build tiny houses to put on their property and rent them out. Almost immediately people expressed interest in wanting their own tiny house either for themselves, family, or as an additional source of income. Due to the high interest and need, they decided to begin constructing and selling tiny houses.

Their goal is to use their knowledge and resources to provide something that people can call their own, or they can rent to help themselves economically.

Pacifica Tiny Homes includes the essentials that everyone needs to live a comfortable lifestyle, while also making it affordable and accessible for working-class people. For whatever purpose you want or need, Pacifica is available to help.

As a result of the high demand for tiny homes, their company went from a side project, where they thought we were going to be building 2-3 homes a year, to now building an average of 10 tiny homes per month. One of those tiny homes is the Tiny Victorian 2.0.





Pacifica's new 2.0 models are certainly getting some buzz! Whether you have a larger family, want room for guests, would like some privacy, or don't want to deal with sleeping in a loft, this model is a perfect fit! They are more spacious, more family-friendly, and filled with top-grade materials.

These models come with a downstairs bedroom, a main loft, and a 2nd loft for additional sleeping and/or storage space, as well as a propane tankless water heater. A 30ft. model (363 sq.ft.) runs about \$82,900 with a main loft and second loft.

The **Tiny Victorian 2.0** is constructed with 2x4 wooden framing and 4x8 headers. The gorgeous interiors are shiplap or blue pine and the windows throughout the home are panoramic tempered insulated glass.





FEATURES INCLUDE

Living room:

- 32 in smart TV with wall mount
- 4-in-1 Mini-Split (AC/Heating, dehumidifier, fan and turbo function)
- Pull-out solar
- Stairs with closet/storage
- Stair railing
- Chandelier or ceiling fan of choice

Bathroom:

- 36" x 36" Shower
- Dual flush toilet
- Bathroom sink and faucet
- Medicine cabinet
- Barn door
- Rainfall shower head
- Ceiling bathroom fan/vent
- Propane tankless water heater

Bedroom/Loft:

- 3-way switch to main loft
- 7'-7" x 8' main bedroom loft
- 7'-7" x 6' second loft
- Egress window emergency exits

Kitchen:

- Humidity Sensor
- Over 20 different countertop options
- Kitchen sink with spring swivel faucet
- Refrigerator 10.1 cu. ft.
- 2 burner electric induction cooktop
- Fire extinguisher
- smoke/carbon monoxide alarm
- Kitchen cabinets (Hampton Bay)
- Range hood fan
- 7.5 in. LED color changing flat panel lights

Exterior:

- RV ready hookups (drain and electrical)
- Exterior outlets



- Exterior hose bib
- Exterior lighting
- Emergency front and back brake lights
- TruWood reversible composite trim throughout
- TruWood composite wood lap siding
- Water/Weatherproofing roof application

Pacifica Tiny Homes works with all customers, whether you're paying cash or need tiny house financing. They deliver nationwide and have an inventory of already completed homes. If you're interested in getting in touch, contact David in Sales by calling 650-484-8587 or by submitting a quick form on [their website homepage](#).



If you're interested in living in the custom Tiny Victorian on the cover you can visit the listing on [Furnished Finder](#) or you can email TinyLumaHome@gmail.com for rental inquiries. There is a 1 month minimum stay on the home and it is located in Petaluma, CA.



A-Frame Tiny House Plans

Alexis

[Click Here](#)



**W
A
NEED
T**

How to Distinguish Between....



Maybe one of the most underrated skills in our world today is the ability to distinguish between wants and needs. Think about it: When was the last time you sat down to actually distinguish between the two?
I'm not even sure most of us could accomplish it if we tried.

Learning to be content living with just the things we need is even more difficult, but I'm not even talking about that. I'm just talking about even being able to distinguish the difference.

Some of this difficulty, no doubt, is human nature. **Hedonic Adaptation** is a good example of how quickly we can conflate needs and wants—not just as individuals but as a society.

To make it even harder, the distinction between want and need becomes even more difficult in a world where advertisements constantly blur the lines. Many products we consider needs today were luxuries not that long ago. In fact, this seems to be the progression of most new products on the market. At first, they appear as *luxuries*. But through marketing, they slowly become *wants* and then eventually *needs*.

The distinction becomes more and more difficult.

My goal here is not to diminish the fact that our human-ingrained drive to improve our existence has led to some pretty amazing inventions along the way. Ambition, **in the right places**, is a worthy pursuit.

But there are some wonderful benefits available to those who can hone the skill of distinguishing between want and need.

This ability would free us up in many ways. It would save us stress and worry. Contentment would be easier to discover. The skill would help us more clearly identify when we are about to potentially waste money. It would help us clear clutter from our home. And perhaps, most importantly, it would enable us to devote more of our time, energy, and money to what truly matters.

Understanding the difference between wants and needs frees us from unnecessary burdens and begins to align our lives with more lasting fulfillment.

I think there is great benefit in *owning* only what we need as it allows us to more fully enjoy the benefits above. But I also think there is benefit to be found in just knowing the difference.

For example, consider this list of just a few everyday expenditures and how identifying the difference between want and need could dramatically impact your life and bank account:

Transportation: You need a car, but you don't NEED a **\$650/month car payment**.

Shelter: You need a place to live, but you don't NEED **2,522 square feet**.

Dining: You need to eat, but you don't NEED to spend **\$250/month eating out**.

Clothing: You need clothes to wear, but you don't NEED to own **150 different articles of clothing** — especially considering **we only wear half of them**.

Technology: You need a way to communicate with others, but you don't NEED to **upgrade your phone every three years**.

Travel: Vacations can be helpful, but you don't NEED to **spend \$10,000/year on travel**.

Furniture: You need a place to sit at home, but you don't NEED to **spend \$31,000 furnishing your home**.

It is true of course that some people's income is barely enough to cover legitimate needs. But for a large majority of us, we feel financially underwater because we've begun to confuse our needs with our wants and have overspent in the process.

Taking a step back to evaluate our lives, spending, and expectations is a powerfully helpful exercise.

To help, here are a series of self-reflective questions to evaluate our expectations and spending and ultimately better distinguish our needs from wants.

1. Are there other people living joyful lives with less than I have?

Observing those who thrive with less can inspire us to reevaluate our own definitions of necessity. If someone is living a joy-filled life (maybe even more joyful than mine) with less, this should immediately help us redefine our understanding of need.

2. What exactly are the minimum requirements for a purposeful life in my context?

Understanding what is essential in your own life, in your unique circumstance (family size, career, living area) can help clarify your needs.

3. What could I give up today that wouldn't affect my daily life?

This question helps us identify some of the non-essentials that currently clutter our lives.

4. Where do my current spending habits not reflect my core values?

Quickly identifying those areas of life where our spending *doesn't* align with our values can be a good indication that we're mistaking wants for needs.



5. Am I discontent with what I have because I truly need more, or because I desire what someone else possesses?

Envy often disguises itself as need.

6. If I had to move tomorrow, what would I choose to not take with me?

This helpful question can help us identify objects and items in our home that really aren't needed.

7. What is the emotional drive behind most of my purchases?

Understanding the emotional motivations (such as joy, security, or status) can help reveal whether an item is a true need or simply a want.

8. Is this purchase to replace a necessity, or is it an upgrade I can do without?

Differentiating between replacing worn-out essentials and upgrading for the sake of newness can clarify needs versus wants.

9. Is there a less expensive alternative that would serve the same function?

Identifying more cost-effective alternatives can help fulfill a need without indulgence in expensive wants.

10. Does this purchase bring me closer to the person I aspire to be?

Items that align with your personal or professional growth are likely needs. It doesn't look like our consumeristic society is going to change any time soon. Because of that, the ability to distinguish between wants and needs will continue to get more and more difficult.

But it is an important skill. Not only is it likely a financial imperative in your life (or may become one in your future), but knowing the difference helps pave the way for greater peace, joy, meaning, and purpose.

By regularly questioning our motives and the necessity of our purchases, we create space and margin in our lives for those pursuits and purchases that truly enrich us.

Because of that, we would all be wise to sit down occasionally and reevaluate the difference between wants and needs.

You need to live a meaningful life, but you DON'T need to spend a lot of money to achieve it.



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.



EXPLORING THE TINY HOUSE REVOLUTION



AN ENDURING EVOLUTION

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 tapestry of architectural evolution, few threads have woven as complex a pattern as the tiny house movement. Once the darling of alternative living enthusiasts, this phenomenon has transcended its initial novelty to leave an indelible mark on the American housing landscape. While it may have receded from the limelight, its impact endures, reshaping perspectives on homeownership and sustainability in profound ways.

At its core, the tiny house movement represents a

rebellion against the status quo of excessive consumption and sprawling living spaces. By embracing the ethos of minimalism, proponents of tiny living have challenged the deeply ingrained notion that bigger is always better. In doing so, they have sparked a reevaluation of the very concept of home, prompting individuals to question whether square footage correlates with happiness and fulfillment.

The allure of tiny homes lies not only in their diminutive size but also in their innovative design solutions and emphasis

on sustainability. From clever space-saving features to eco-friendly materials, tiny homes epitomize efficiency in both form and function. By demonstrating that comfortable living can be achieved within a compact footprint, they have inspired a generation to prioritize quality over quantity and to reconsider the environmental impact of their housing choices.

Moreover, the tiny house movement has catalyzed a broader cultural shift towards mindful living and conscious

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consumption. In an age characterized by rampant consumerism and environmental degradation, the principles espoused by Tiny Living have struck a chord with individuals seeking a more meaningful and sustainable way of life. This newfound awareness has manifested in a variety of ways, from the growing popularity of decluttering and minimalist lifestyles to increased demand for eco-conscious housing options.

While the initial enthusiasm for tiny homes may have waned, their influence on the architectural landscape persists. Architects and developers, attuned to shifting preferences and market demands, are increasingly incorporating elements of tiny house design into mainstream housing projects. This trend towards smaller, more efficient dwellings reflects a broader cultural shift towards simplicity and sustainability in the built environment.

Furthermore, the tiny house movement has prompted a reevaluation of zoning regulations and building codes to accommodate alternative housing models. Recognizing

the changing needs and desires of homeowners, policymakers and urban planners are exploring new approaches to housing regulation, paving the way for increased diversity and innovation in the housing market.

Beyond its tangible impact on the architectural and regulatory realms, the tiny house movement has sparked a deeper conversation about the meaning of home. In a society increasingly defined by materialism and social isolation, tiny homes offer a compelling alternative—a return to the fundamentals of shelter and community. By prioritizing experiences over possessions and fostering connections with both people and nature, Tiny Living embodies a vision of home that is as enriching as it is sustainable.

In conclusion, while the tiny house movement may no longer dominate headlines, its legacy endures as a testament to the power of innovation and imagination in shaping the built environment. From challenging conventional notions of homeownership to inspiring a cultural shift towards mindful living, tiny homes have left an indelible mark on the American

housing landscape. As we continue to grapple with the challenges of an increasingly urbanized and environmentally conscious world, the principles championed by the tiny house movement serve as a guiding light, illuminating a path toward a more sustainable, equitable, and fulfilling future.

In a society increasingly defined by materialism and social isolation, tiny homes offer a compelling alternative—a return to the fundamentals of shelter and community.

UNVEILING THE IMPACT OF INTERIOR ARCHITECTS ON TINY HOUSE DESIGN

Written By Sarah Kenzer



Exterior Perspective Rendering of a 22' tiny house designed by author

In the ever-evolving landscape of architecture and design, a quiet revolution is underway, transforming the way we perceive and inhabit our living spaces. Enter the world of tiny house design, where every square inch is a canvas for creativity and innovation. At the heart of this movement lies an untapped asset: interior architects, whose expertise transcends mere aesthetics, shaping the very essence of tiny house living.

While tiny house owners recognize the importance of sustainable, minimalist living, an interior architect can navigate the delicate balance between form and function with precision and finesse. Tiny houses present a unique set of challenges and

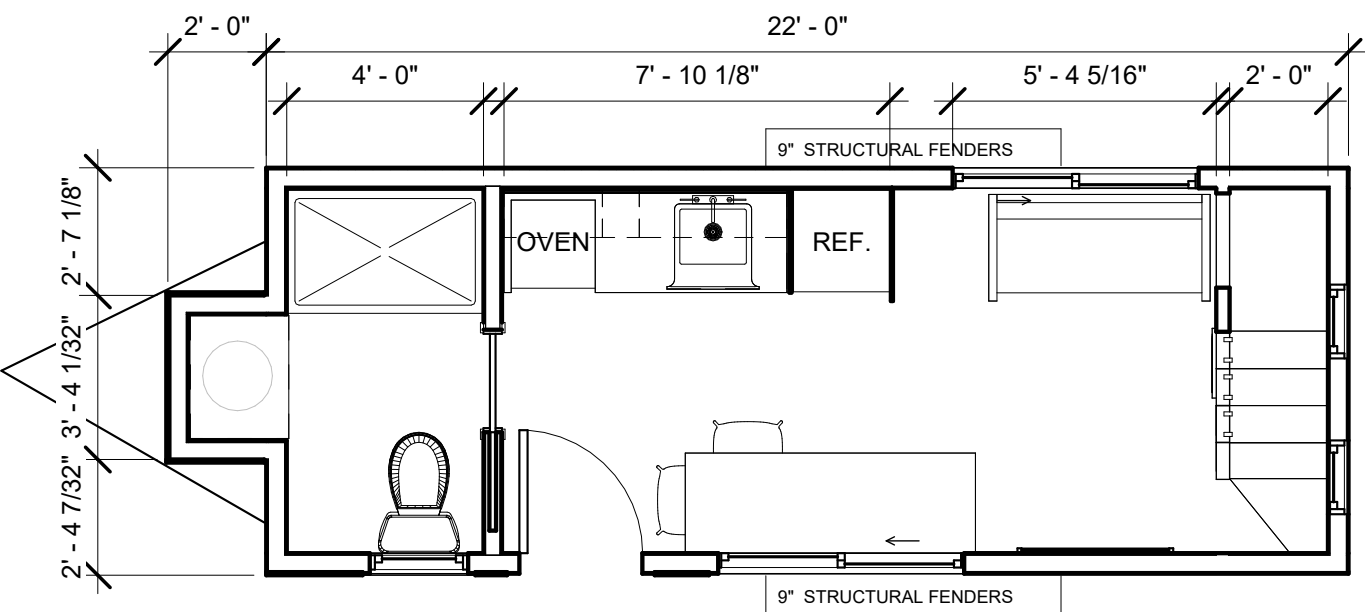
opportunities, every inch counts, and an interior architect can help to maximize both utility and beauty. The role of an interior architect extends far beyond mere decoration. From space planning to material selection, from lighting design to sustainability considerations, every decision is deliberate, every detail meticulously crafted.

Interior architects have the ability to bring dreams to life through collaboration with clients. However, many modern tiny house builders neglect to offer 3D renderings of their plans. This is where an interior architect proficient in computer rendering programs like Enscape, Twinmotion, and Sketchup can make a difference. These visualizations not

only allow clients to envision their tiny house but also enable builders to enhance sales with professional design proposals.

This past summer, I participated in pivotal client meetings involving design development. In one instance, a client proposed customizations, and I promptly incorporated them into the renderings, providing immediate visual feedback. This real-time interaction led to the client's enthusiastic decision to proceed with our services, culminating in an instant contract signing. Moreover, presenting accurate renderings of customizations early in the process can potentially streamline the construction phase, saving both time and money.

Employing an interior architect offers another valuable asset: comprehensive knowledge of codes and construction documents. Throughout my education and internship, I dedicated significant time to studying tiny house regulations and the prerequisites for various



Floor plan of a 22' tiny house designed by the author



Rendered floor and loft plans of the 22' tiny house



certifications. During my internship, I was entrusted with the task of meticulously redrawing floor plans to scale, complete with detailed dimensions. This initiative facilitated the construction process by providing the crew with reliable drawings to reference.

In any construction endeavor, errors are inevitable, but with proper preparation, many can be mitigated, saving the company valuable time and resources. Some avoidable mistakes I've observed include poorly placed circuit boxes, non-compliance with railing and ladder codes, and inadequate clearances.

I see myself as a facilitator of dreams, my job is to empower my clients—to help them envision the possibilities and guide them through the design process. Additionally, an interior architect can provide a range of ideas from ingenious storage solutions to multifunctional furniture, from

sustainable materials to energy-efficient design strategies.

As the tiny house movement continues to gain momentum, the role of interior architects will only become more vital. With their blend of creativity, expertise, and passion, they are not just designing spaces—they are shaping lifestyles, redefining the way we live, and leaving an indelible mark on the world of design, all while effectively economizing builders' time and resources.



As a recent graduate from Indiana State University, Sarah Kenzer brings a fresh perspective to the world of interior architecture, with a keen focus on tiny house design. Armed with a degree in Interior Architecture and minors in Environmental Sciences and Sustainability, Sarah's journey began with a passion for maximizing space and ensuring client satisfaction.

Drawing from her internship experience at a leading tiny house builder, Sarah has honed her skills in Revit and Enscape programs, paving her way as a proficient designer. Her arsenal includes not only technical prowess but also exceptional organization, communication, problem-solving, and time-management skills.

Throughout her university tenure, Sarah immersed herself in a diverse array of courses, ranging from Hand Drafting to Sustainable Practices in Design. Each class served as a stepping stone, enriching her design acumen and nurturing her collaborative spirit.

Sarah is currently looking for employment opportunities in tiny house design as she begins her professional career. You can reach her at sarahkenzer45@gmail.com or connect with her on [LinkedIn](#).



CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE



By Christina Nellemann / Photos Courtesy of Bend Teardrop



While the choices of teardrop trailers have grown exponentially over the years, some of the simplicity has been lost. The original teardrop trailer design was meant to be a minimal way to sleep up off the ground and have a place to do some cooking.

One Oregon-based company is bringing that original simplicity back with the option to add on more amenities as needed.

Bend Teardrop is a family-run business in Bend Oregon. CEO and Founder, Dave Jaber,

was so kind to give us more information on this small business that is quickly growing to include not only traditional teardrops but a stand-in trailer as well as [mobile saunas](#).

The company got its start in 2015 when Jaber built a prototype teardrop in his garage to carry kayaking and whitewater gear and took it to the Bend Whitewater Park. People started asking him to build them one and the company slowly took off with an initial 4x8 model.



Jaber says the trailers have been growing as his family grows, but he still prefers the minimal teardrop style.

“I like small and simple,” Jaber says. “We come from a rafting and backpacking background where you camp more simplistically and you don’t bring a lot of bells and whistles. You are more nimble, mobile, and light.”

Jaber says he prefers to cook outside and loves that teardrops can be moved by hand and towed by a smaller vehicle with better gas mileage. Bend Teardrop has also remedied the storage issue in teardrops by including or offering an impressive number of shelves, drawers, cubbies, and tongue boxes.

“We try to use every bit of space that is available,” Jaber says. “There is no wasted space in our teardrops so you have plenty of room to put your stuff.”

The company currently offers four models.

The 5x8 Typical model comes in at only 950 lb. and features a queen mattress, a simple galley kitchen, and all lighting. The 5x10 Family model has bunks for small children and an additional two feet of interior length. The 6x12 Double Family features a California king mattress, storage cubbies, and a pass-through storage compartment.



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The latest model stands out on its own because you can stand up in it.

The Tallboy is 6x12 and has over six feet of headroom. It features two bunks that can be converted into a couch and a queen bed. The company can also build a couple's configuration with a queen bed and dinette table booth.

"It fits a family of four and you can stand up inside of it, but there is still an outdoor kitchen," Jaber says. "It also comes in at under 2,000 lb."

The Tallboy kitchen is still in the traditional teardrop galley style and includes LED lighting, USB and 12v charging ports, AC shore power with battery charger, and even a spice rack and three-bottle wine or oil rack. The "speakeasy" passthrough door to the interior is a nice touch.

The Tallboy is also an affordable option compared to other larger campers and starts at only \$20,995. In fact, the Bend Teardrop base model only comes in at \$11,995.





What sets Bend Teardrop apart from other manufacturers is that Jaber and his team offer several minimalist, bare-bones camping trailers but the custom options can be added on ala carte as needed.

“Then you are not stuck with what you don’t want like a microwave or TV,” Jaber says.

Bend Teardrop has over 35 custom options for their teardrop build. Some of the most popular are the rooftop solar panels, [Propex](#) heaters, porthole and stargazer windows, and roof racks and awnings.

What the company does not include are what many manufacturers are doing: overbuilding. Jaber says that so many teardrops have gone the way of the overland style and while they may be able to rock crawl, they are out of most people’s price range.

“Our main customers are families and young couples,” Jaber says. The main draw is a small, lightweight camper that is easy to move around, easy to tow, and is comfortable, functional, and affordable.”



Visit the [Bend Teardrop website](#) for pricing, ordering information, and customizations. Their website also features a blog, video tours, and merchandise.

In addition, Bend Teardrop offers several of their [teardrops for rent](#) so you can try them before you buy.



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