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Small Eco Houses: Living Green In Style



Synopsis

Fresh perspectives on how good design can create stylish yet ecologically sound living spaces in small-scale homes. Anyone who has faced the challenges of limited living space will find inspiration in this survey of the latest trends in environmentally sensitive, small-scale residential designs. More than fifty residential spaces are profiled—•from woodsy houses and repurposed barns to cool apartments and urban lofts—•both inside and out. Most of the projects were designed by up-and-coming architects, and each design proves that small-scale efficiency as well as beautiful, thoughtful design can overcome the apparent constraints of a small setting. Environmental impact is a growing concern, so each project was chosen because of its ecological sensitivity. Each case history describes the challenges confronting the designer and the solutions. Creating color schemes to enhance the feeling of openness, taking advantage of high ceilings to make multiple levels, and using collapsible furniture and sliding doors to maximize space are some of the design solutions that can be applied in any situation. Filled with beautiful color photographs and helpful floorplans, this book is a remarkable showcase of how good design can transform any small space into a comfortable, modern—•and environmentally sensitive—•home.

Book Information

Paperback: 420 pages

Publisher: Universe (November 2, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0789320959

ISBN-13: 978-0789320957

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 1.3 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 30 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #271,269 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > Small Homes & Cottages](#) #113 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Sustainability & Green Design](#) #278 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Buildings > Residential](#)

Customer Reviews

Cristina Paredes Benítez has degrees in fine arts and in information science. She is an editor specializing in illustrated books and she has collaborated with several publishers and photo agencies. Alex Sánchez Vidiella earned a degree in art history, specializing in

contemporary art, baroque art, and entertainment art (cinema), from the University of Barcelona. He has worked as an art history teacher and as an editor and graphic editor for various publishing houses specializing in art, architecture, geographic atlases, and scientific encyclopedia. He is currently a writer and editor, working mostly on books on architecture.

I was really looking forward to this book. The small house concept really intrigues me. But as others have mentioned, half of this book is houses over 1500 sq ft. Some of the houses are not houses at all, but 800 or 100 sq ft additions. I would have also liked to see more pictures of the design detail that addresses small house challenges such as storage. There are very few closets shown or explained. In all I enjoyed the first half of the book.

Forty-two houses are profiled in this book, ranging in size from 6.5 sq. m./ 70 sq. ft. to 294 sq. m./3,165 sq. ft. More than half the houses are over 120 sq. m./1,300 sq. ft., so they aren't necessarily small. They are architect designed in the minimalist style, mostly boxes with flat roofs, but a few dare to step out of the box with gabled or shed or v-shaped roofs. There are houses for every budget, from low cost prefabs to luxurious, custom built houses. Each profile gives an almost too brief description of the house followed by icons with reasons why it is an eco house, floor plans and/or elevations, and color pictures of the interiors and exteriors with views of breathtakingly beautiful landscapes. Here are a few examples of the variety of houses in this book: The Joshua Tree house is a gabled roof prefab, on wheels for transport, with two bedrooms and a long, skinny bathroom with a toilet and sink on each end and a shower in the middle, all in a tiny 36 sq. m./387.5 sq. ft. space. The Float houses are low cost prefabs in New Orleans for people who lost their homes during Hurricane Katrina. They are narrow, shot gun houses that resemble mobile homes but they have unusual design innovations. They are built to withstand another hurricane and are on a chassis that will float like a raft during a flood. The roof is v-shaped with a groove to capture rain water. The Casa Pulmo house is a two story house with an outdoor wheelchair ramp connecting the levels. Half of the house in Geres, Portugal, featured on the cover, juts out over a cliff. It has a low environmental impact because part of it hovers in mid air! There are houses in Norway and Iceland specially designed to withstand a sub-arctic winter. The landscapes had no trees and little vegetation.

This is a good "ideas" book for visual concepts of a finished house and floor plans, but there are only short details on the eco features for each house. I have added it to the library next to books

with more technical detail on eco ideas and implementation - they will complement each other.

We should all live in such style and harmony with our surroundings, great photos but a little light on the actual details.

Wonderful book! This book is excellent for projects eco houses! The product is an excellent quality for students and architects.

Very nicely presented coffee table book for anyone who, like me, enjoys looking at really good & varied examples of modern architecture on a small, liveable scale. My only question ... why can't many more houses be built like some of these?...

This book has excellent photos and many interesting houses. Some of the houses are small vacation type properties, while others are for normal small family living - so interesting my mother-in-law ordered her own copy!

Of the several books on the subject, this one is about average. Better than some but not as good as others. It had a few really unique items in it that were nice, but not nice enough to justify the price over other choices.

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