



Tiny Homes: Simple Shelter

Lloyd Kahn (Photographs)

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There's a grassroots movement in tiny homes these days. The real estate collapse, the economic downturn, burning out on 12-hour workdays – many people are rethinking their ideas about shelter – seeking an alternative to high rents, or a lifelong mortgage debt to a bank on an overpriced home. Homes on land, homes on wheels, homes on the road, homes on water, even homes in the trees. There are also studios, saunas, garden sheds, and greenhouses.

There are 1,300 photos, showing a rich variety of small homemade shelters, and there are stories (and thoughts and inspirations) of the owner-builders who are on the forefront of this new trend in downsizing and self-sufficiency. You can buy a ready-made tiny home, build your own, get a kit or pre-fab, or live in a bus, houseboat, or other movable shelter. Some cities have special ordinances for building "in-law" or "granny flats" in the back yard. There are innovative solutions in cities, such as the "capsules" in Tokyo.

If you're thinking of scaling back, you'll find plenty of inspiration shown by builders, designers, architects, dreamers, artists, road gypsies, and water dwellers who've achieved a measure of freedom and independence by taking shelter into their own hands.

Tiny Homes: Simple Shelter Details

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From Reader Review Tiny Homes: Simple Shelter for online ebook

Meredith Holley says

I LOVE TINY HOUSES!! Look:

snowboarder tiny house:

Lighthouse tiny house:

hobbit tiny house:

I don't even LIKE hobbits, but I would so live in that house if it's as cool on the inside as it looks on the outside. And if it has hot running water.

This book is pretty fucking cool. It has a bunch of rad tiny houses and floor plans for them. It has a house made out of wood pallets! WHAT?! And instructions on how to make a house like that. It has a bunch of adobe houses with hay bales for insulation. So, that seems like a major fire hazard, until they tell you it's adobe. Still, don't play with matches in that house.

It turns out, though, that I am not as big a fan of tiny *homes* as I am of tiny houses. Homes, it turns out, includes people who built geodesic domes on top of their cars, and people who drive around with a log cabin on the back of their truck like in *Arrested Development*. And BOATS! I mean, come on. I love boats, but I want my tiny house books to have tiny houses in them, not boats! I am a tiny house purist.

I will admit that I hadn't realized before this particular tiny *home* book how the whole tiny house phenomenon has a pretty serious hippie and hillbilly element. But there is even some unexpected full-frontal hippie nudity in here. And I'm not gonna lie, if I was as hot as that girl, you'd probably see me posing nude in more tiny house books. More than none.

Rated R? Can you rate something PG-13 with full frontal nudity?

When I worked at Barnes and Noble, I used to stop by the art and architecture section sometimes and look at the tiny house books (and there weren't even naked people back in ye olde tiny-house-book days). Mostly they seemed like freakishly cool Japanese and Swedish inventions that sparkled from the inside and had amazing nooks and crannies to put books in. But, now I see how they can be made to look like barns and geodesic domes. Thanks a lot, America. But, that is okay, too. My love of tiny houses continues. I have a tiny house myself, and I love how everything fits together in it and there is no wasted space. Tiny houses rule.

I downloaded a copy of this book from NetGalley, and I get to keep it for 55 days, which is exciting and

weird at the same time! But, if you download one for yourself, make sure you have a way to look at it in color because it's mostly about the pretty and weird pictures. (If you're just going for the naked girl, though, those are in black and white anyway, so don't put too much effort into the color download.) Helpful tips.

Online Eccentric Librarian says

More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>

This is a comprehensive book on small spaces - really more than homes since it includes studios and sauna buildings.

As the author notes, this book is in response to/inspired by the subprime mortgage crisis begun in 2008 - when so many were buying large homes beyond their means or needs. Author Kahn envisioned "an antidote to the overblown single-family houses of recent decades."

The book is really written by the home owners - each of whom contributed their stories/images/drawings/designs/memories. As such, this is leagues away from a glossy Home Magazine with perfectly set up images. Instead, we have snapshots from the owners from many decades. Not all of the dwellings survived - fire, boat wrecks, storms, etc. mean that many are sadly gone.

The book is quite thorough. Buildings from across the world using all kinds of building materials are included. From cob/adobe to wood, stone metal, etc. (I would have loved to see plastic homes such as the Futuro included though). As well, the buildings could be on land, wheels, in a lake, or floating down a river. Architect designed or ad hoc built, fully assembled or custom built, inexpensive or surprisingly expensive, in the middle of Tokyo's crowded Shinjuku District or out in the middle of Africa. It's amazing the breadth and reach of the fans of author Kahn and his fans.

Of note, though, is that homes these sizes are really ideal for a family or even year round living (many are vacation buildings, for example). Those owners with children were often single. So ideally this is for single or married couples due to the tight spaces involved. Also keep in mind that plumbing and water isn't a high priority on a lot of these and tend to be in the outdoor 'compost toilet' variety.

In all, the book is a really good, comprehensive, inspirational type guide to small houses under 500 square meters.

Provided as an ARC from the publisher.

Bayneeta says

I originally intended to browse the wonderful photos and be done, but I ended up reading the accompanying info mostly written the builders and or owners. Only quibble: I'd love to see actual floorplans. Lots of dreaming and fantasizing. This was put together by Lloyd Kahn of Whole Earth fame. What a treat!

Maureen says

Hippies, hippies everywhere.

Tonya Hardin says

Informational but could use more. I was intrigued of all the different ways to live. Plus the size too! I love the images of the outside and inside plus the floor plans on some. I enjoy reading the stories to of the creators.

Slee says

Written as a collaborative work featuring the homes and space, written by the people who built them, Tiny Homes is a great source of inspiration for smaller more sustainable living. Many of the homes and spaces (studios, saunas, offices) were built using salvaged materials, opening up the readers options, not only in size, but also in economy.

Covering a great number of less-than-conventional but earth and pocketbook friendly construction methods, like straw bale, cobb, and palate, and including an article on the basic municipal planning and building approval process, Tiny Homes: Simple Shelter is a valuable resource for people dreaming tiny.

After reading this book, I look around my ridiculously oversized spaces filled with too much stuff and feel compelled to pare down the clutter and live with more of the things I use and less of the things that just take up space.

What makes this book special, beyond the valuable information, is the peak into the lives of the diverse people who have decided to live somewhere tiny and sometimes hand built for very different reasons and in very different places. I also like that tiny home builders featured throughout the book are easy to find and contact because the inclusion of website information from the contributors. All in all, it's a great resource filled with beautiful pictures sure to plant the seeds of a plan in readers' minds.

Heidi says

Whatever Kahn's intended purpose was with this book, it did not mesh with what I was looking for. I am just beginning to explore the idea that I may possibly one day choose to live in a tiny home. I appreciated the different varieties of homes profiled in this book, but could have used much more detail about them. It seems that the owners of each one just sent some photographs to be published along with their letters saying they'd love to be featured in the book and a couple interesting details about their home. I was looking for some more practical information, like floor plans, how people have chosen to balance trade-offs between, say, a bit more storage space and designated eating nook. I wanted to hear whether people who have chosen ladders to sleeping lofts rather than committing enough space to a staircase are happy with that decision after living with it for a while. I was also hoping for some answers about whether and how people successfully combine tiny house living with true homesteading (e.g., space to preserve food and store it, space for sewing projects and supplies, etc.). But never mind homesteading, some of these places don't even have space for a kitchen

of whatever kind. Is it really a home if you can't cook in it? It must not be an all-the-time home. And to each his own, but I also fail to see the value of making a home for yourself that is so small that you have to have a separate outhouse, or in one case even, an outhouse, a bath house, and an entirely separate structure that is the bedroom, i.e., a shack just large enough for you to crawl onto your mattress.

Also, why are things like backyard sheds and a little covered bridge featured in a book about tiny homes? As much as I'm interested in simplicity, living ecologically, and living well within my financial means, comparing people's homes with tool sheds, potting sheds, and a covered bridge area is not making me more enthusiastic about the prospects of tiny home living.

I guess if you're reading through this book as an art/architecture book it may be fine. Or if you're just mildly curious about what this alternative lifestyle might look like on the surface, cool. I was hoping for something a little more helpful, I guess, and I will have to keep looking.

Brian Haddad says

I love this book. It really gets you thinking about what your living space means, what you need, and what you want from life.

Daniel says

Enjoyable. Good photos. Lots of interesting themes and ideas for home spaces.

Amber says

A little part of me would like to build a tiny house off the grid and not tell anybody where it is, yes.

Gardavson says

I've recently become intrigued by the idea of small space living. We had our own "purging" in our house, getting rid of truckloads of extraneous "stuff" that we had acquired over the years. Initially a bit daunting, I came to find the process quite cathartic. Since then I've been intrigued with these small homes, wondering if I could take it to this extreme.

This book was so enjoyable, with all the different concepts of small space design and lots of pictures glorifying it. Plus all the homeowners' tales of their happiness with the change, the positive changes it made in their lives, it makes me want to take the plunge, sell my home, and live big living small!

Andee says

I've seen a lot of the houses in this book before online, featured in magazine articles, on youtube or in alternative builder books, but it is nice to have them all in one place. I would have liked it better if there had been interior shots and a floor plan for each one, but as it is the book is full of eye candy for those interested in exploring the living small options. This book covers most of them, cob, stone, prefab, modular, tree houses, bus conversions, yurts, vardos, adobe, straw bale, and tiny homes on wheels. Missing was an example of a shipping container home, or if there was one I blew by it.

I am a fan of Mr Kahn's books, and the layout of this one is great, the photos are wonderful but did he take it to the next level? No. As gorgeous as it is, it offers more inspiration than useful info, so it is not the holy grail go-to source for reliable info on the ins and outs of tiny home building/living that I was hoping it would be, and I'm a bit sad it isn't. That OMG, this is IT book still needs to be written by someone, until then I'll be surfing yahoo groups, and tiny house blogs, and forums gathering info on how wide and tall can it be and still be mobile, pros and cons of different construction types, how to figure your house weight to trailer ratios, how to set up viable and affordable off grid power options, heating and cooling options, pros and cons of stick built, metal frame or SIP construction, how to build and vent a composting toilet in a tiny home, storage tricks, info on tiny house friendly parking options and problems, or what to look out for when buying land to build on. Basic code info would be helpful for stationary tiny homes, like minimum size, foundation options, etc. I also want to hear from people who tried it and are either struggling to stay tiny or they went back to larger living. I want them to explain what went wrong for them in living tiny. I guess I want meaty info so I can decide if this is truly a viable housing option for me. I do not want to wind up with a costly albatross on a trailer, nowhere to live in it and feeling the burden of an unhappy financial investment that I find I regret making. A lot of us are sitting on the fence, someone needs to answer the hard questions and address the pitfalls.

What is clear from the pics in this book is the sad fact that very few tiny house designers are laying out floor plan designs that would make tiny home living even marginally comfortable or long term viable. Maybe more women need to start designing them. Personally, in rainy Oregon I need more than a sleeping loft, 5 ft of kitchen and 2 chairs and table if I am going to do this long term, and I don't consider myself space greedy. I have downsized my life from a 2400sqft house to life in under 300sqft over the last 3 years, I am ready to make the jump both mentally and emotionally but I need reliable info that is still hard to gather and this book doesn't provide much of the info I was looking for, but it is indeed lovely to browse through...

Skyler Friedman says

Tiny Homes: Simple Shelter is a highly detailed book on the construction, ideas, and fundamental concepts behind Tiny Houses. Every page has a new story of the tiny house constructed by one person. The book describes a wide range of tiny houses- from tiny house cars to tiny house trees. Although the book doesn't contain a plot, each page develops its own short story on how each tiny house came to be. I highly recommend this book for those who take an interest in living small.

Patricia says

I want to take a road trip to see the wonderful, whimsical, and occasionally weird houses Lloyd Kahn profiles profiled in this fun and inspirational book. Then I want to build one or two or six. (Although I

suspect that building six tiny homes defeats Kahn's purpose, which is to show us how to live large by building small.) Kahn features more than 150 builders who construct amazing wee spaces—under 500 square feet—from straw bales; recycled tin, boards, and bricks, adobe, sticks and logs; prefab backyard sheds; and, basically, whatever.

The book is a wild barrage of color photos, illustrations, and house plans of mountain retreats, offices, potting sheds, treehouses, mobile homes, and just about anything imaginable. The styles range from Victorian to contemporary to sort of crazy. But all are intriguing. Kahn lets the homeowners tell their own stories, which makes this a fun and personable read in addition to being an excellent thumb-through.

Some of the builders featured in this book specialize in selling small structures; others built their homes just for themselves. Many were inspired by Kahn's 1973 book, *Shelter*, and by the Whole Earth Catalog, where Kahn was the shelter editor.

So, if you have been dreaming of a tiny retreat in the backwoods or the backyard, check out *Tiny Homes*. You'll find yourself coming back to it for ideas, and for just plain fun. And let me know if you're interested in that road trip.

jess says

Lloyd Kahn is back with another collection of handcrafted, unique and special homes. Each page photographs structures, interviews builders, and creates a portfolio of sorts of each builder or home. "Tiny homes" in this book are defined as under 500 sq feet. I enjoyed Lloyd's book *Builders of the Pacific Coast* and I love tiny houses, so checking this out was a no-brainer for me. The book includes chapters about tiny homes on foundations, tiny homes on wheels, tiny homes by architects, prefabs & kits, earthy materials, treehouses, on the road, and on the water. A lot of things I wrote about *Builders* apply here. This book is better than most of the other "tiny house" books I've read; it shows more diversity in living spaces, builders and building materials. There is a lot of food for thought here for people who are interested in simplifying and streamlining life. One note: there are no apartments in this book, everything is a free-standing house, so it represents a particular segment of the people opting into "tiny living."

Here's one of the houses profiled in this book: The ProtoHaus (<http://www.protohaus.moonfruit.com/#/...>) provides 192 sq feet of modern off-grid living. The mobile, light-weight version is the ProtoStoga is a hybrid of the Conestoga wagon, the Romani vardo, the shepherd hut & the classic American Airstream - <http://www.protohaus.moonfruit.com/#/...>

My only complaint was that some of the photos are blurry or pixelated. I can only imagine that they accepted submissions of photos and some people sent lo-res crappy pics. The bad photos were not the majority, but they did take away from my experience of reading the book.
