

LIVING *Sims*

The Sims magazine for more style

Interviews:
The LivingSims Staff
fakehousesrealawesome
JodelieJodelie
Aquilifer

Brave Colors Contest
Wayward Winds Orphanage
Tiny Franklin Dream
Worlds Collide

Challenge Features:
10x10 4.0
Apartment Living
Scandinavian Modern

Editorial

Better late than never?

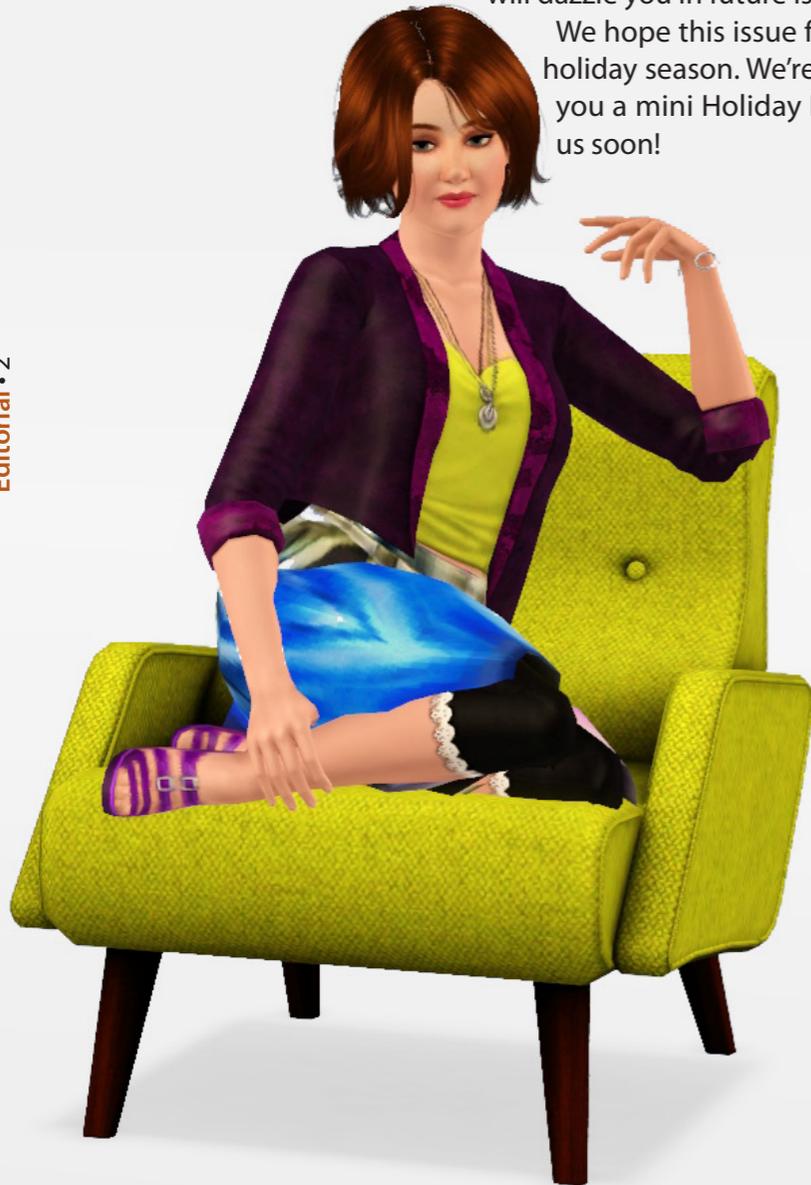
It's been more difficult than usual to get this issue out to you. We've had one of our most dedicated staffers have to take a step back due to an intensely personal loss. He'll be missed, and we send our best wishes and good thoughts to him and his family.

This issue wouldn't have come around if it weren't for two new staffers who stepped up for whatever we asked of them. A huge welcome to Allears and SeleronoSims! We look forward to working with you under less stressful circumstances in the future.

We'd also like to welcome Zingaro to the staff. Zingaro is a long-time forum member and a truly talented designer. We are thrilled to welcome him to the LivingSims team. We're sure that his magic with Sims 4 design will dazzle you in future issues.

We hope this issue finds you well as we head into the holiday season. We're going to work very hard to bring you a mini Holiday Issue before year-end, so look for us soon!

All the best
Kitkat & macthekat



The SIMS 4



HOW DO YOU PLAY?

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Assistant Chief Editor: kitkat

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NB all finds have a direct link to the website where you can download the object



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Hot & New



ADD VIBE TO YOUR HOME WITH PAISLEY AVENUE

paisleyavenuedux.tumblr.com



Plants and Leaves
mustlucvatz



Happy Hallows Set
spacehatter

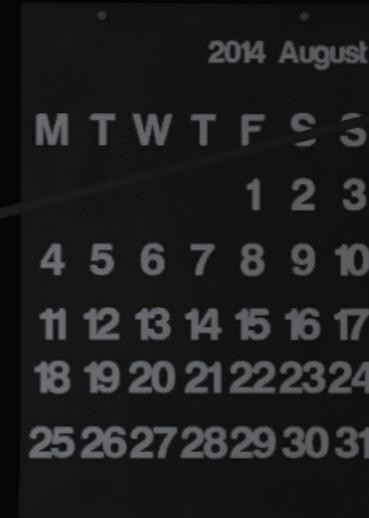
Misc. Set
paisleyavenueredux



Wondymoon's Tungsten and Zinc Sets
3to2 conversions by moxxa



Paper Gift Bags
recolours by Riekus13



MegHewlett's Random Objects Set
4to2 conversion by cordelia-haze



CuriousB's Washstand
recolours by ZeroDark



Screen Of Secrets
4to2 conversion by deessims



Botanical Frames
recolours by simsbox



MS91 Dover Bedroom
3to2 conversion by droolworthysims

Dipped Endtable
recolours by Caro @ Domicile-Interior

Ask

Handy Andy

Handy Andy is here to help with all your remodeling questions. In this issue, Andy helps a grieving widower get closure with a new master bedroom, redecorates a bathroom in need of rescuing, and creates a Zen yoga retreat.

If you have any questions for Andy send them to us via the forum.

Article by Bridelyn, kitkat
Photographs by Bridelyn, SelaronoSlms, kitkat



Dear Handy Andy,

I lost my wife a few years ago, and she always had free rein over the decorating. Over time, I have made changes to most of the house; however, I have never touched the master bedroom she loved so much.

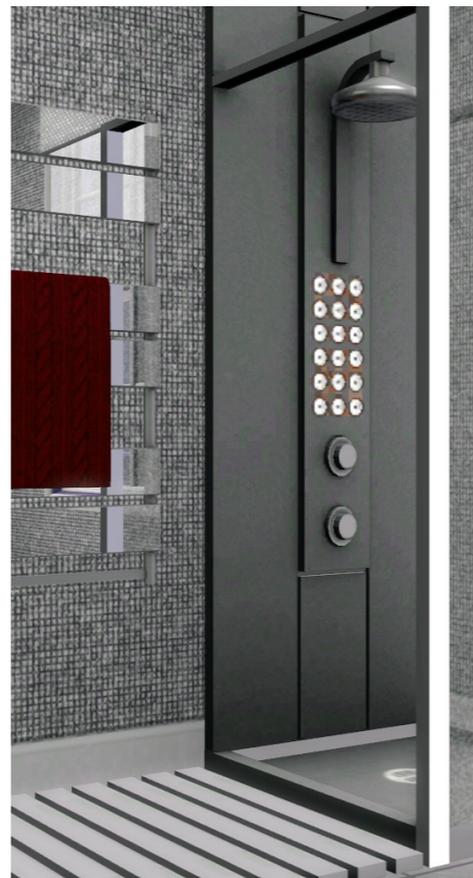
But now I have met someone new. Although marriage isn't a consideration yet, I have started to think it is time to make the master bedroom mine.

Blue was my wife's favourite colour, and it shows in the master bedroom - she would always smile when she entered the room. However, I must confess, it is a little much for me. I would like something more masculine and subtle. Also, I really don't like the windows, as I always feel I am on display for the neighbourhood, even with the curtains.

The bathroom was my wife's favorite retreat in the house. She would soak in that tub for hours. I seldom use the ensuite bathroom as it just isn't functional for me. I would love one of those new modern showers. Again, the windows are way too much for me, and I would like something more private for the bathroom.

One thing you should know - I may want to sell the house in the future, so any changes should take that into consideration. Do you think you can help?

Widowed Too Soon



Dear Widowed Too Soon,

I am so sorry to hear about your loss, but happy to see that you are moving forward. I can certainly see where you are coming from when you talk about your bedroom! But I can definitely help.

When decorating your room, keep it simple. You want to stay away from the stereotypical bachelor pad and go for something more tasteful. Choose a neutral colour like white, black or grey for most of your furnishings and textiles. Try to avoid clutter as much as possible, and stick with only the necessities like a bed, night stand, dresser and a desk.

Once you decide on the colour and furnishings for your room, select comfortable bedding, pillows and rugs. A plush rug on a hardwood floor is a must. Lighting is also important. Don't simply rely on a ceiling light. Get a floor lamp or wall sconces to achieve your desired glow.

Now that you have the basic elements of your room, it's time to add a personal touch. Your special framed photos can be placed on your night stand, or side-by-side on the wall. Be sure to mix the sizes of the frames. You might also want to invest in a piece of artwork that reflects your personality. But if you prefer to keep your walls bare, perhaps a boldly coloured throw or pillow is all you need.

When looking at your bedroom I noticed there was no closet, and every master bedroom needs a walk-in closet. Not only is it good for resale value, but it also can keep you organized and hide any clutter.

You mentioned that you didn't like all the windows in the room as you felt it took away from your privacy. I really liked all that natural light; however, smaller windows can achieve both the privacy you crave and the natural light that buyers want.

Being a shower guy myself, I can definitely understand why you don't use your ensuite bathroom. The tub is beautiful and every woman's dream. However, for us males, it just doesn't do the trick.

I reconfigured your bathroom to include a more functional shower. I also added double sinks which are an absolute must for potential buyers. To add a little flair, and make your bedroom stand out to potential buyers, I added a sliding door for the ensuite. The reclaimed wood adds much-needed texture, and it will really catch the buyer's eye.

I hope I was able to give you some ideas to work with. Change isn't easy, but it sounds to me like you are on the right track. Good luck!

Andy





Tip:

When I came home a couple of weeks ago, Tessa had turned the kids bedroom loft into a yoga studio. While I applaud her new-found Zen attitude, nephews and yoga equipment just don't mix. I had to save the boys from a summer of incense and "ohms."

My solution - scrap the old jungle gym in the back yard and turn it into a lovely gazebo that any yogi would be proud to meditate in. A healthy dose of bamboo gives privacy while still feeling open. It has the added bonus of growing, literally, like a weed. Plant a couple of shoots, and in a few weeks you'll have fully-screened privacy. Just be careful to use pots or it will take over your yard.

I included a water wall for extra relaxation. In a couple of months, if the yoga craze wears off, we'll have a nice outdoor relaxation spot. I'm hoping a hot tub may be in my future.



Dear Handy Andy,

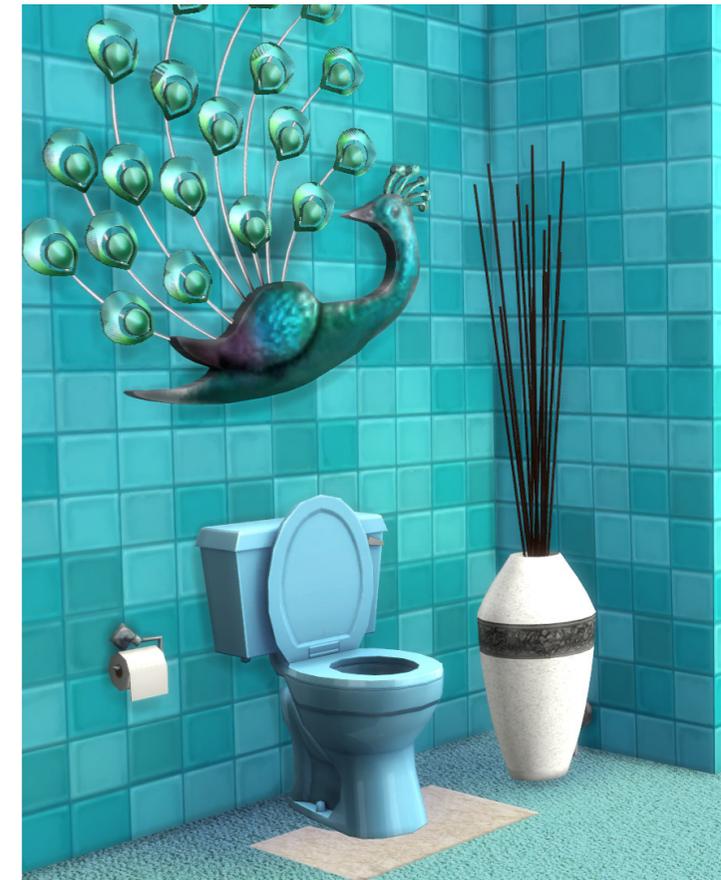
My husband and I recently bought the most beautiful American foursquare home. We're renovating bit by bit, and we're finally ready to do one of the show pieces of the upstairs -- the full bathroom.

Of course, the original 1910 fixtures and finishings are long gone, and what we're currently stuck with is a tragic 1980s renovation using blue tile and a spa tub that just doesn't fit the space or our current needs.

How can we bring back some of the room's original, classic style while updating and modernizing this bath? It's going to get tons of use by our two kids as well as by our guests when we have overnight company.

Thanks for any advice you can provide.

Retro Reno Regrets





Dear Retro,

Wow, somebody sure liked blue, didn't they? This won't be an easy fix, but it is do-able with a little patience and a lot of new tile. First thing, every bit of that horrible blue tile has to come out. You can easily do the demolition yourself and save a little money. You'll want to take the bathroom down to the studs anyway to make sure the new shower area is properly sealed.

Subway tile is currently all the rage, and it is period appropriate for your bathroom. To modernize a bit, you can mix in some colorful tiles with the traditional white. It won't look like 1910, but it will give you a nice blend of old and new.

Next, get rid of the old, closed-in shower and tub enclosure and open things up. You have enough room to make dual showers and semi-enclose the shower area with glass walls.

Accent with reclaimed timbers for a rustic look. Your shower area will feel spacious and comfortable instead of cave-like.

In the main area, get rid of the tile altogether and opt for a water-resistant drywall instead. This will save money and let you bring in color with your rugs and even a bright vanity paint treatment.

As I said, it's not an easy fix, but you can do it. The satisfaction of ditching someone's misguided 80s sense of style will be worth it.

Andy

SOMETHING

amazing



Kitchen Canvases
by FreckledFemlock

Finds: Something Amazing • 20



School Set
by Sandy @ ATS



Juniper Bedroom
by ung999 @ TSR

Flag Garland by Zinny



SOMETHING *amazing*



Wall Simple Desk
by reiko



Gullmaj Office Accessories
by ArtVitalex @ TSR



Clutterholic Plant Conversions
by you-lust



Dover Bedroom
by MarcusSims91 @ TSR

TS2 Conversions
by you-lust



SOMETHING *amazing*



Hogsmeade
by SimsStudio



Versace Tea Set
by Art-Sims



Newark Living Room
by ArtVitalex @ TSR



Ask Dina

askdina@livingsims.net



Dear Dina,
 My Mom has just started renovating her house and, until all the dirty work is done, she is staying with my family. We want to give her a warm welcome, however, there is one huge problem - there's too little space in our house, and it seems the only room I can turn into a guest-room is our attic. Plus, we are really on a budget which means we cannot afford a complete makeover. So, how do we go about it and turn a messy storage room into a proper bedroom for mom?

Sincerely,
 In Need Of A Life Saver



Dear In Need,

When you have a really small space, a limited budget and a makeover to be done in a very short period of time, your best option is to go shabby. Luckily, your attic has quite a few features to play with. The exposed brick walls, combined with a little bit of shiplap, add texture to the room. The distressed ceiling, along with the wood beams, appear to be great accents that you can play up.

The room has windows, which is essential, since attic spaces usually lack natural lighting. All in all, you have a perfect setting for a sweet little guest bedroom.

Keep the layout clean and simple - in a small space every inch counts. Use as much white as possible to visually make the room look more spacious. I'd suggest leaving the hanging lights to save some bedside table space for a couple of deco pieces and bedroom essentials.

Use a chair rather than a proper table on one side of the bed. This is good for not only saving space but making a statement as well.

Speaking of statement pieces, keep the room as uncluttered as possible. A picture or a set of prints would do for the walls, while a bold vase on the bedside table and a couple of ornamental pillows will work as an eye-catcher. I would also suggest adding a coastal touch to the interior to make the room feel a perfect retreat for your Mom to enjoy her stay.

All my best,
Dina





Scandinavian Modern

FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you say “Scandinavian?”

In most cases, it is the blue and yellow buildings of the world-famous chain store from this area of the world. Let’s look beyond this image to see what Scandinavian Modern has to offer.

Article by *LadySpider*
Photographs by *viikiita*, *BlueHopper*,
LadySpider, *saywhat* & *Christobal*



“Wide spaces, whitewashed walls and floors, a couple of old pieces, modern furniture with clear lines and sophisticated proportions, a splash of colour here and an oriental accent there.”

Wide spaces, whitewashed walls and floors, a couple of old pieces, modern furniture with clear lines and sophisticated proportions, a splash of colour here and an oriental accent there. This is what we describe as Scandinavian design. Some people like it, others don't; but this style definitely won't leave you indifferent.

Scandinavian design emerged in Northern Europe in the 1950s. Back then, it was all about natural light, natural materials, minimalism and functionality, and so it perseveres through years. A rough climate with cold winters and

few bright, sunny days makes it essential to have a safe hideaway full of warmth, light and harmony, the key features of Scandinavian aesthetics.

What do you need to start turning your house into a Scandinavian home? The first thing you will definitely need is a blank canvas. Paint the walls, the ceiling and maybe even the floors in white, or neutrals.

White is usually used to expand the space, to let more air into the room. Start with a blank canvas, and then add texture. Wood, leather,

metal, fur and natural textiles will add texture to your house. Moreover, they will make the whole place look warm and luxurious.

Let as much light as possible into your place. Forget about the blinds and curtains; and, if you still choose to have them, use white, almost transparent, linen with no decor.

Use very sleek and simple lamps - a pendant lamp, a string of lights, a table lamp with a metal base and dark shade, or a modern candle holder will add more structure to your space. Speaking





of the structure, geometric sculptures and vases are broadly used in Scandinavian homes.

Sounds pretty boring? In fact, there are numerous ways to modify Scandinavian interiors to add interest. You can keep up with the neutral palette and add some antique pieces found in a flea market, a worn rug, a couple of vintage candle holders and go in a slightly shabby direction.

Or, you can add a colour accent. In fact, colour can be splashed everywhere, starting with art, throws, cushions, and ending with decorative furniture pieces. They say that black helps enhance the other colours, so try it. Black accents are a must in your Scandinavian home.

It is a common trend to add an oriental touch to a living space. Whether it's a Buddha statue, African masks, deco necklaces, dreamcatchers or even antlers, there are numerous options to create a home with an oriental flair.



You can choose any detail to personalize your place and reflect all things important to you. Remember, while creating a Scandinavian home, you always start with a blank canvas, and it is up to you to decide what will be the last stroke to finish the whole picture.

“Or, you can add a colour accent. In fact, colour can be splashed everywhere, starting with art, throws, cushions, and ending with decorative furniture pieces.”

MUST HAVES

Wall Prints

Hvikis

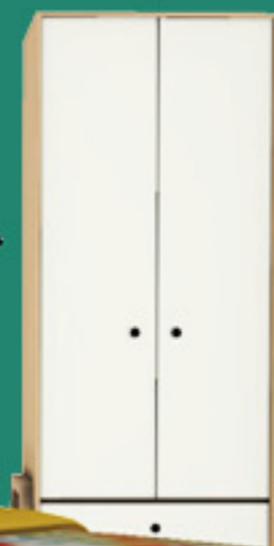


Anye Restoration Dining
conversion by MsTeaQueen



MarcusSims Plants
conversion by Hvikis

Greg Bedroom
Mango Sims



Vienna Bedroom
Saudadesims



Maxence Plant
MangoSims

Simple Table Set
YounZoey

MUST HAVES

4



Richmond Dining Set
Art-Vitalex @ TSR



Nox Dining Set
Peacemaker_ic



Grace Living Set
Ung999 @ TSR



Chisami's STE Collection
chisimi

Meet the LivingSims Staff

Ever wondered about the people who bring you LivingSims magazine? Here's your chance to learn a little bit about the people behind the magic.



Macthekat

Where do you call home? Denmark
Favorite design style? Scandinavian Modern
CC or no CC? Lots of CC sometimes
Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? Sims 3 & 4
Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? Architecture
What is your go-to color in design? Lime green

LadySpider

Where do you call home? Moscow, Russia
Favorite design style? Definitely, Scandinavian Modern.
CC or no CC? CC. I'm a CC-addict.
Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? It's Sims 2, since it is stable, there is so much CC for this game and I like the graphics.
Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? It depends, but I guess, interior design is my absolute fave.
What is your go-to color in design? It's white.



Bridelyn

Where do you call home? Edmonton, Canada
Favorite design style? This is hard, but I really like colour, natural materials like reclaimed wood and old brick.
CC or no CC? Definitely CC. I am a junkie and openly admit it.
Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? Sims 3 because I like to be able to change the colours in the patterns etc.
Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? They all have a special place for me, but I guess I would pick interior design.
What is your go-to color in design? Living in 6 months of winter, anything bright, but usually blue.



kitkat

Where do you call home? Florida, USA

Favorite design style? Currently I'm loving Rustic Industrial

CC or no CC? CC 4 Life!

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? I'm starting to like Sims 4 more, but for design Sims 3 is my favorite. Can't beat CAST!

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? Interior design is my current favorite. Architecture gives me fits!

What is your go-to color in design? Can I say black? It's so versatile and adds drama where needed.



Plama_chan

Where do you call home? That would be Bulgaria.

Favorite design style? Don't think I have one. I like to experiment a lot.

CC or no CC? CC addict here and I like using pieces I never used before in all of my builds.

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? TS2! This is my kind of game!

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? I like doing all but mostly interior design.

What is your go-to color in design? Is wood a color? Also blue and green.



Moxxa

Where do you call home? Croatia

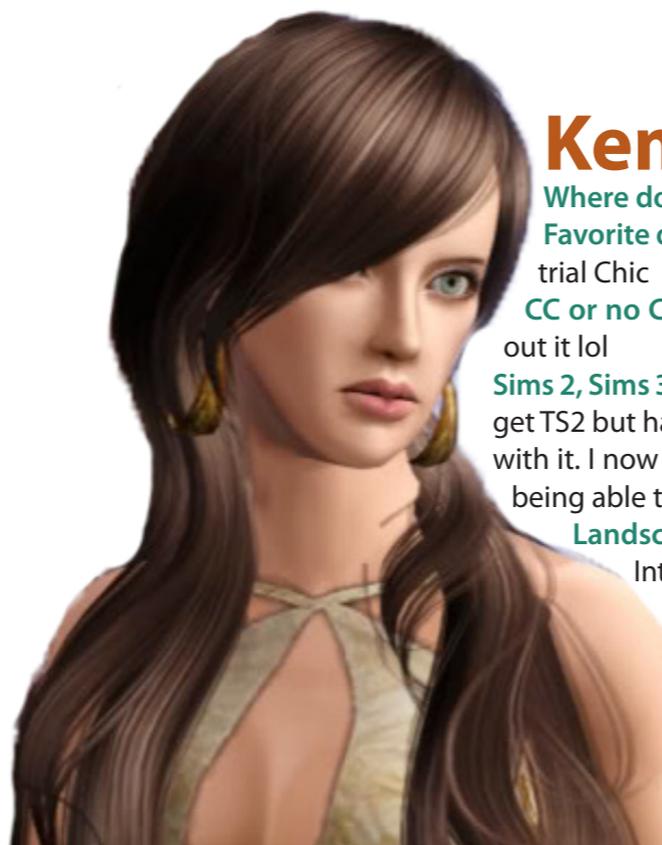
Favorite design style? Industrial

CC or no CC? CC!

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? Still loyal to TS2, though I've had some encounters with TS3.

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? Interior design.

What is your go-to color in design? Lately - all shades of green.



Kementari

Where do you call home? Texas, USA

Favorite design style? A mix of Rustic Luxe/Industrial Chic

CC or no CC? Love my CC, but normally play with out it lol

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? Sims 3 is still my favorite, I did get TS2 but haven't had a chance to really play around with it. I now play TS4 due to my computer no longer being able to handle my TS3 game.

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture?

Interior design by far, but I love to landscape too. I can not build to save myself! lol

What is your go-to color in design? I don't really have a color I tend to lean more towards earthy tones and neutrals.



Zingaro

Where do you call home? Between Germany and Portugal.

Favorite design style? Mid-century Modern.

CC or no CC? CC addict must admit, but not everything.

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? Currently playing Sims 4

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? I would say more interior design, and sometimes architecture.

What is your go-to color in design? Neutrals with some colour in between



Allears

Where do you call home? Southern California USA

Favorite design style? Is "comfortable" a style? I guess it would be eclectic. I go more for the comfort of the seating, and if I like the looks of a piece, rather than any particular style. I really like overstuffed seating and heavy, solid woods.

CC or no CC? CC, more CC and then more CC!!

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? I have them all installed, but I always come back to Sims 3 because of the CASt.

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? Interior Design

What is your go-to color in design? No particular color, but I go more for the cool colors - blues, greens and purple.

SelaronoSims

Where do you call home? Oregon, USA

Favorite design style? Shabby Chic or Country. I like the "lived in" look. Lots of clutter, lots of wood.

CC or no CC? CC.. Lots of CC..oodles of CC. Plethora even!. But I do do the occasional CC free builds for houses that I plan to upload.

Sims 2, Sims 3 or Sims 4? Sims 4 at the moment. I do have all the EPs for Sims 3 and it is installed. I log on and build every now and then.

Landscaping, interior design, or architecture? Architecture, landscaping then interior. Although it is VERY close. I tend to hop all over when I'm building and work on everything at the same time.

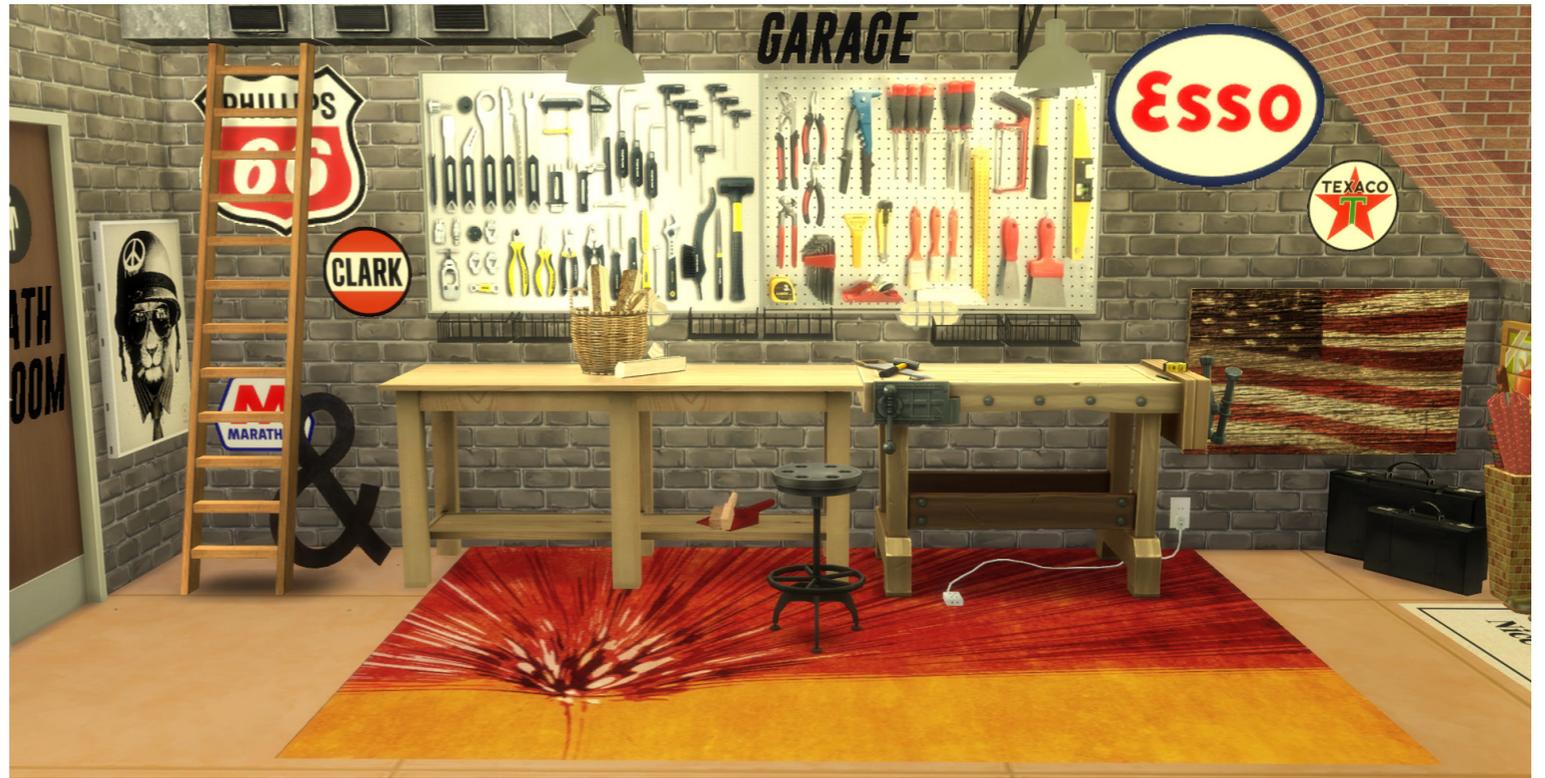
What is your go-to color in design? Pink and Turquoise are my favorites but, I challenge myself to use different colors in each build.



#CFC758

#228570

#B8581B



3 Colors

Who says a man cave can't be bright and inviting? Ditch those dismal shades of grey and brown and let the light shine in. This basement workshop and bar are the epitome of style while also keeping a distinctly masculine flair. Take a look at just how cool your man's space can really be.

Article by: *kitkat*
Photographs by: *SeleronoSlms*

The first rule of a man cave workspace is organization. There's no use in creating a great space if it's just going to get junked up with greasy tools and half-finished projects. Ample work tables and peg boards for keeping those tools in their place are essential for project efficiency. This project has plenty of both.

What else does a man need? Entertainment, of course! A vintage foosball game is the perfect size for the space and will take any guy back to his childhood. Exposed brick walls in the game area lend a rugged touch, while a colorful rug adds style.

Want to really punch it up? A cityscape mural softens the brick while curtains on each side of the mural make it feel like this basement could be the penthouse of a fancy Bridgeport apartment.

Every guy longs for a big television with surround sound to watch a sports match with his buds or snuggle in for a movie with his sweetie. To separate the game room from the media area, we've built a half-wall with plenty of useful



cubbies and topped it with a cool metal screen feature in a funky orange color. It serves multiple practical storage needs while also delineating the different uses of space.

Work table – check. Entertainment – check. What else do we need? Oh, yes – food and drinks! A bar area is a must, and this is another place where style should rule. You could easily opt for dingy cabinets and a scary used refrigerator to save money, but why let those dominate the design?

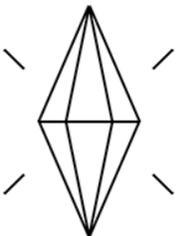
Even if money is a concern, used or economy counters and shelves can be given new life with vibrant paint and cool urban metal hardware. Want to really make the space indestructible? Opt for concrete countertops. They're easy on the budget and will hold up to even the most enthusiastic use.

If you're lucky enough to have space to create your ultimate man cave, don't let yourself fall prey to the usual stereotypes. You'll find that a bit of planning and some strategic use of color will result in a space that you'll enjoy spending time in for years to come.



EAMES LOUNGE CHAIR

• ANBS •
Alachie & Brick Sims

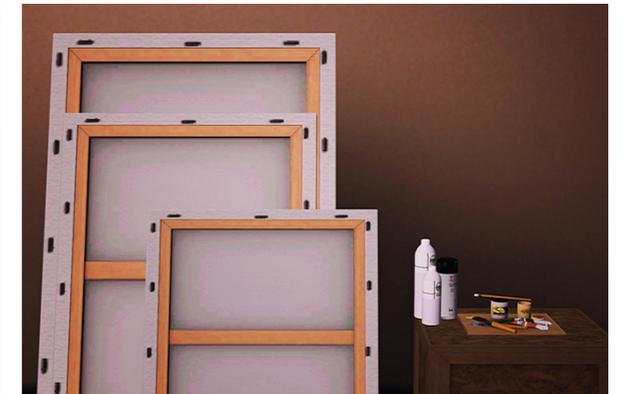




10x10^{4.0}

Limited space can be challenging for everyone, no matter who you are. So here we are, yet again, challenging our great community members to do basically the impossible. And, as always, each and every one of them managed to amaze us with the results they achieved. You might think that building on a 10x10 lot is not a good idea, but here are some examples that will definitely prove you wrong.

*Article by: Plama_chan
Photographs by: BlueHopper, Enla, littlecat,
riekus13, saywhat, soliva & Ursek*



Bluehopper

Just look at this amazing and cozy suburban masterpiece. The simple interior and exterior look perfect for every elderly couple looking for a little peace and quiet and enjoying the scenery out of the city. The colorful yet easy-on-the-eyes interior is perfect for relaxing days filled with happiness.



Enla

This neatly placed, small home shows us all the comfort needed for a young family. Raising a child in the city can be both easy and tough at times. On one hand everything you might need is only a few steps away, on the other hand it looks like there is never enough space to let your children run and feel free. Good thing that the perfect medicine to compensate for the latter is just some family and homey comfort.



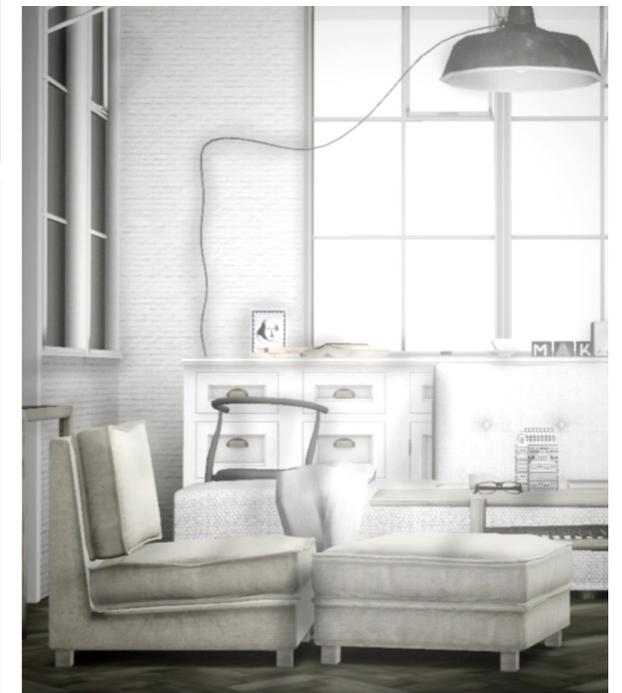
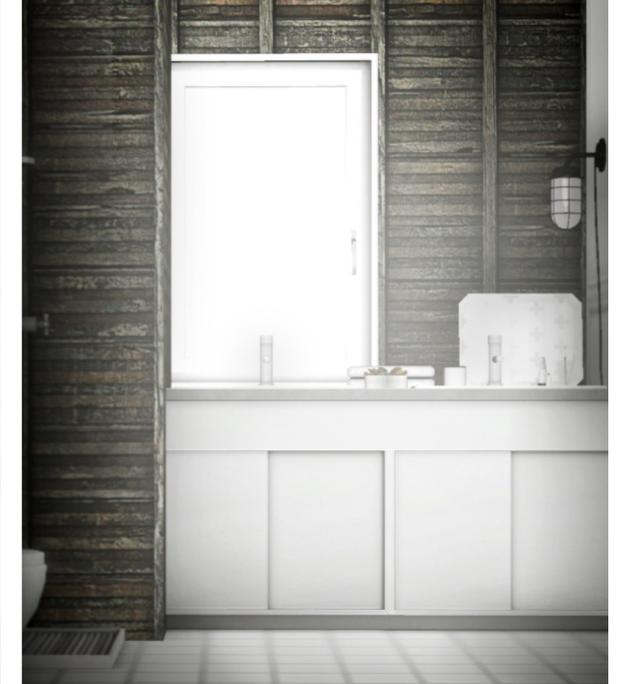
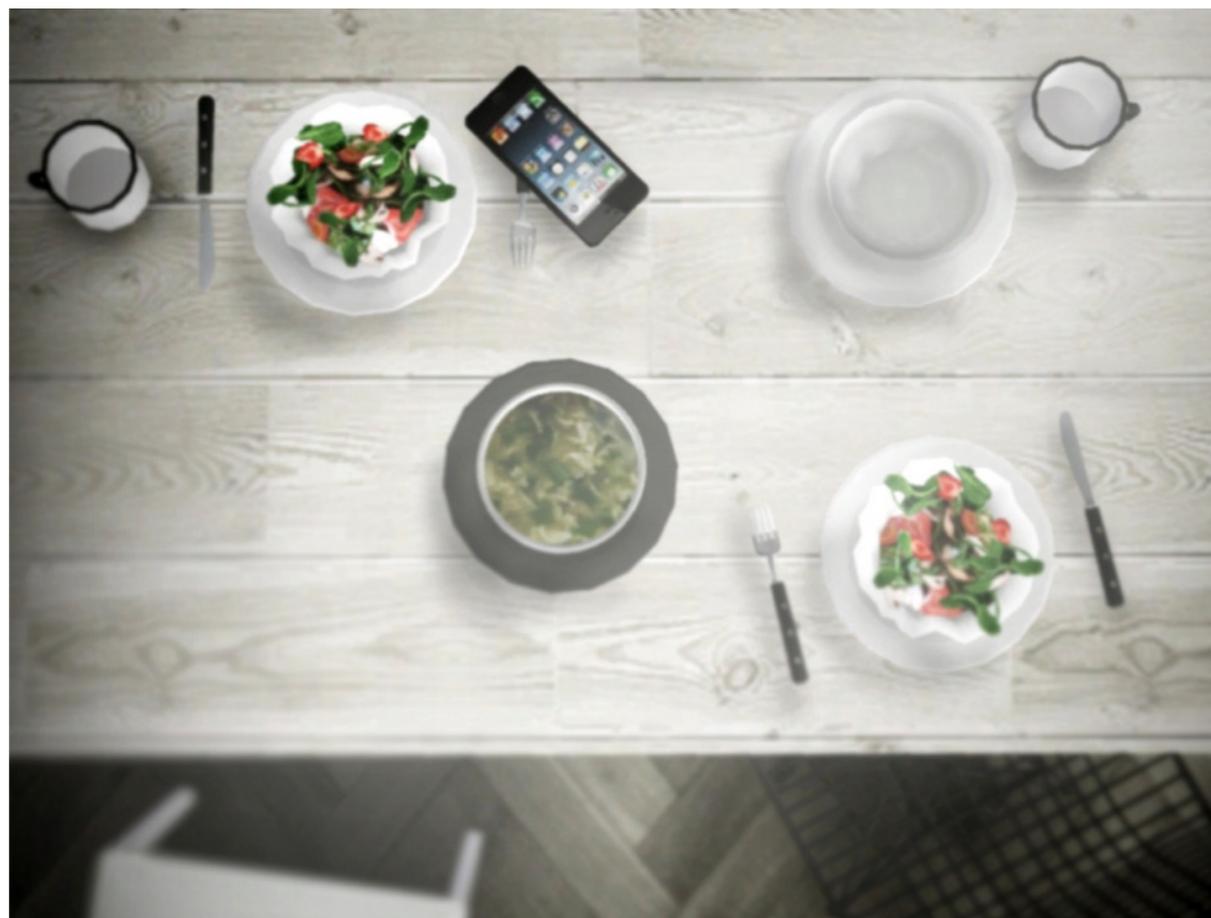
littlecat

At some point, every girl needs to grow up. But no one says she has to forget that small piece of herself which makes her feel happy yet childish at times. This cute little home shows that its owner plans to do exactly that. Have the courage to grow up but cherish the child in you, and simply be who you are.



riekus13

Designers are strange creatures of nature. They love color and usually choose beauty before functionality. Sometimes, to untrained eyes, their homes can look a little like a mess. But if you look closely, you will see that this so-called "mess" is actually a mash-up of creative ideas piled up for the creation of a perfect, yet slightly unusual, kind of home. But, hey, everyone needs a little "crazy" in their lives.



saywhat

White is as classic as they get when it comes to colors. Easy, yet so incredibly hard to work with, especially when you set yourself the goal of using only white and basically nothing else. Maybe that is why when one succeeds; the results - simple and so realistic - are also so gorgeous.



soliva

Living in a gray rental is no fun, right? Also, the fact that it is a rental means you have to be careful how crazy you can get when it comes to repainting walls and such. So instead of that, a very creative way to handle all the "grayness" is to go crazy with the colors of the furniture. Plus, every artist needs inspiration, so what better way to find it than do something crazy with the rugs first?



Ursek

Scandinavian - admit it, we all love this style. A Scandinavian home interior is always a treat for the eye, right? Centered around the natural palette of black, white and wood, this home is perfect for just about everyone, be it a couple, family or a single workaholic. Plus, who wouldn't want a chalkboard wall in their home?



House2House

This issue, Charlotte McAdams, an assistant Modern Literature professor and an aspiring writer who lives in Downtown, lets us take a peek into the world of those who eat, sleep and breathe literature. Step inside her studio apartment to see how a pretty small space can still look pretty cool.

*Article by: LadySpider
Photographs by: moxxa*



Books. That's what you see once you enter this small studio apartment in Downtown. Hundreds of books stacked pretty much everywhere. Charlotte was named after a prominent writer and spent her childhood in her father's bookshop surrounded by thousands of books. That's where her love for literature came from.

After finishing her postgraduate studies, Charlotte started working for the local university. She needed a small place not far from the campus, and that's how her quest for an affordable apartment began. She managed to find one and transform it into a perfect place meant just for her - a Charlotte McAdams original.

A perfect place for Charlotte had to be bold and beautiful. Colour. That's the next thing you notice. Colour is very important, since Charlotte is very much into colour psychology. Colour,

books and a lot of small things. These are the key features of this cozy space.

As you step into the apartment, you find yourself in a home office. Charlotte needed one to check her students' assignments and work on her own papers. She believes that orange is good for stimulating your brain activity, that's why she picked orange paint for the wall. Moreover, orange is all about positive outlook on life which perfectly reflects Charlotte's personality.

Go farther, and you'll find yourself in the kitchen. It seems so full of colour that you cannot decide which colour is predominant. It's only when you get used to it a bit that you notice that the predominant colours are actually black, white and grey.

The rest are masterfully used accents: a pop-art poster, a green carpet, odd barstools, numerous jars. Oh, and the flamingo wallpaper that is

so neutral that you don't realize that it is actually flamingo wallpaper at first.

The living area is all orange, green and yellow. The colour green is the colour of balance and harmony, and yellow is believed to stimulate mental agility and perception – the perfect choice for a place meant for reading or relaxing.

Charlotte filled her living area with the things she loves: her favorite old toy, the books she likes, a vintage radio - nothing posh and everything that makes her smile.

The bedroom area and the bathroom look very neutral compared with the rest of the apartment. As a supporter of colour psychology, Charlotte believes that too much colour is no good for a bedroom. Stimulating colors will prevent relaxation and lead to fatigue in what is supposed to be a room of rest. That's why she's







chosen just a few green and yellow accents for this space.

The last area Charlotte shows us is her wee balcony. "You might think that there's only enough room for one, but I tell you, there is no other place like this to sit and talk to friends, enjoy a sunset, or put your arms around a fluffy pillow and dream a little," Charlotte tells us, and we couldn't agree more.

DESIGNER TIPS

Article by Plama_chan

Photographs by: BlueHopper, Minena, moxxa, saywhat, Shiver, steefjee90, Ursek



BLUEHOPPER

Feeling tropical in your own living room is usually hard to do, especially out of season. Why not make yourself a small home-based botanical garden? Add some furniture painted in colors that remind you of summer, and that might just do the trick. Don't forget some big glass windows as well. These will make the tropical effect even stronger during sunny parts of the day.



STEEFJEE90

Wondering how to brighten up the kitchen? And, no, we don't mean paint it white. When we say "brighten," we mean how to add those small details to your white kitchen and really make a statement. Well, a nice floral element on the wall and a few smartly placed, colorful pieces around the room can make a really big difference. More than you imagine.

MOXXA

A young lady moves in with her boyfriend, but his place is full of all this gray and dark blue. Basically, nothing in the place says, "I am not single anymore." Nothing to even suggest this might be the beginning of a new family. It's a little disheartening to look at. Now, put a few cushions on the sofas and maybe some flowers on a table as well. Take another look and the entire vibe of the place has shifted.



MINENA

It's the same idea when it comes to prints. Have you ever thought how much your otherwise boring kitchen can change if you just put a nice print on the wall? Go with something different, something you might think will not be appropriate, something totally "out-of-style" even, and you might be pleasantly surprised by the results.

SAYWHAT

Classic never gets old. And what is more classic than the combo of white furniture and wooden floors? Add to it some Scandinavian interior design, and you get the very definition of modern. You now have the best of both worlds.



SHIVER

In a kitchen, one might think that red will be too much. Red is usually one of those colors considered hard on the eyes or too strong to handle. What do you do then? No one said you have to paint everything red. But a fridge and a few wall pieces in the right shade of red might do the trick. Don't you agree?



URSEK

On the other hand, nothing is a better reminder of autumn than a cozy and warm home atmosphere. In case this is your favorite season, and you want to feel like it is autumn all year long, a good idea might be to use more wood wherever possible. For such an effect, wooden floors and ceilings usually are a good starting point.



STEEFJEE90

Space dividers can be a big pain sometimes. Many times building a home is not the same as designing its interior. Smartly placed space dividers are rare and, when buying a house, you might encounter a wall or a column in a place that will totally ruin your design. You might want to tear them down, but if that is not possible, what can you do? Well, use them to your advantage, and design around them. Strip them down, make a half wall, or whatever else comes to mind and see what kind of design magic happens.

URSEK

The same goes for staircases. Many times, when working around a staircase or a railing, you might be left with a lot of basically unusable space. This can easily ruin your design. Most of the time, the easiest solution might be to simply find some creative way to use it. Put some paintings or other memorabilia in the area and see what style emerges.



Tiny Franklin Dream

Julie and Taylor Franklin are embarking on a new chapter in their lives in more ways than one. Newlyweds, they are all set to leave behind their single lives and move into a new home together. They are also looking to downsize so that they can focus on their shared love of travel. A big house with a massive mortgage payment just won't do, so this couple is ready to "Think Tiny" as they start their big, new adventure.

Article & photographs by kitkat



From afar, the Franklins' little cottage looks like your typical home. It's only upon closer inspection that you can see just how tiny it is. Greeting me at the door, the young couple ushers me into their home.

The front door opens into a small, but functional, kitchen. The striking green cabinets are in contrast to the cottage style of the exterior, but it all seems to work somehow. "Taylor loves modern," explains Julie. "He was nice enough to cater to my cottage tastes on the exterior, so I let him design the kitchen."

With plenty of counter space, every inch is carefully planned in the kitchen. Glass-fronted upper cabinets keep the walls from feeling closed off. The refrigerator didn't fit in the kitchen alcove, so it's been placed just around the corner near the dining table.

"In a house like this, it pays to be flexible and creative," confides Taylor. "Most people would think the refrigerator HAS to be within the defined kitchen space, but being willing to work

outside that space a bit gave us more counters and storage. It's a trade-off we were willing to make."

Speaking of being flexible, the dining table does double duty as a work table for the couple. When it's not in use for a meal, Julie, a design student at the university, can be found studying there. She's often joined by Taylor, who works from home in pharmaceutical sales.

Exposed brick on the walls blends nicely with Julie's vintage décor finds, creating a room that both Julie and Taylor are at home in. "We commissioned a built-in seating area from a local craftsman," says Julie. "I designed it, and he built and installed it. We couldn't find a piece in any of the local furniture showrooms that fit the bill, so custom was the only way to go."

In contrast, the bedroom is practically roomy. Open storage on the walls means that a large section of the space didn't have to be closed off for a closet.



"We've pared down our wardrobes considerably," laughs Taylor. "Well, Julie did anyway. I didn't have that much to start with."

Julie playfully punches his arm in response. "Don't let him fool you! I've never seen a man with more shoes than Taylor. We both got rid of a lot. When it comes down to it, we found that quality was more important than quantity in the clothing area."

It's worked out for them. The bedroom is warm and cozy while also being free of clutter.

In the bathroom, again every inch of space is planned and accounted for. While it's tight, there's enough room for both a sink and spacious stand-up shower. "It's everything we need

and nothing we don't," says Julie. "Not to mention, it takes me half the time to clean as my old bathroom."

For the final part of the tour, the couple leads me to the back yard and a quaint dining gazebo. "We love to entertain," explains Taylor. "We can fit six around the table out here. As long as the weather is good, we can still have dinner parties and keep up with our friends when we're in town."

The love and attention-to-detail the couple poured into their little home is apparent. Their house proves that bigger is not always better. Sometimes tiny is, indeed, the way to go.



Interview: JodelieJodelie

For this issue we spoke to JodelieJodelie, the Queen of Maxis Makeovers. Her realistic interiors and incredible gardens leave us speechless every time, so we asked her to build us a house just for this occasion. And, man, did she deliver! Keep reading and get some great tips, and drool with us while looking at her lovely pictures.

*Article by JodelieJodelie, moxxa
Photographs by JodelieJodelie*





Can you tell us something about yourself?

Hello, my name is Felicia and I'm from The Netherlands! I have a master's in Psychobiology and am currently looking for a job. A lot of my time is spent decorating in TS2, picking some herbs and slaying some dragons in Dragon Age: Inquisition, binge-watching series and movies on Netflix, and watching Let's Plays on YouTube. Oh, and occasionally I do something social with real-life people – only occasionally though.

When did you start playing the Sims? Which of the four games is your favorite?

I've been playing the Sims since TS1, which I got when I was around ten or eleven. I was one of the first people in my class who had that game, so I was actually pretty popular with my friends for a while, haha!

When TS2 came out, I immediately fell in love with it and have been playing it ever since. TS2 was also the first time I discovered there was actually an online Sims community and a marvelous thing called "CC" existed.

I tried playing TS3 a few times, but it didn't run smoothly on my PC; and I really didn't like the look of it, especially the lighting. And the many color and pattern options and combinations were just too much for me to handle, so I gave up really quickly.

I haven't tried out TS4. I might in the future. So yeah, TS2 is definitely my favorite.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

A year ago I used several of my mother's garden design books to help me design the gardens for my own lots and later for my Maxis

lot make-overs. Right now, I try to make use of the skills and techniques I've learned, but sometimes I just wing it and plop down some stuff, haha.

As for my interiors, I don't really know where my inspiration comes from. It really differs from time to time. Sometimes it's a picture I saw on my favorite interior design Tumblr, and other times I get inspired by a single piece of CC. In the case of premade Sims, I use their personalities and backstories to design the interior.

Do you have a favorite theme or style you like to use in your houses?

I'm definitely more and more inclined to use contemporary and modern styles in my lots. At the moment, I'm very fond of using concrete walls and floors whenever I can. And I love to combine those with textures like glass, metal,







and wood. Of course I can't use this style in every lot, but maybe that's a good thing. Variation is important.

What is the style you'll never use and why?

Wow, this is a very difficult question. I have already used several styles in my quest to make over all Maxis lots. I guess I will never use something like minimalism because I really like clutter, and actually have no idea how to make a room minimalistic without making it just look empty.

Building, decorating or gardening?

Ha! This is interesting, because if you asked me this a year ago I might have liked gardening best. But currently, I'm actually more fond of decorating, but only a little bit more. I still kind of like building, even though I'm not very good at it.

Your Top Five CC creators?

I took meshing, recoloring and converting into consideration, and I came up with Moxxa, PaisleyAvenue, Riekus13, Buggybooz, and Shastakiss!

Do you have any tips you could use with our readers?

You know what really looks good? A wooden floor with a white wall. It's really simple, but I use it all the time. Add wallpaper on just one of the walls to give your room something extra. I really like using that trick in my bedrooms.

Walls of natural materials can also make your room look really modern. I love adding a little brick or concrete here and there in my lots. These are things I've learned over the past year. Like many things, decorating is something you become better at when you keep doing it a lot.

Any background story to the house you built for us? What ideas did you have while making it?

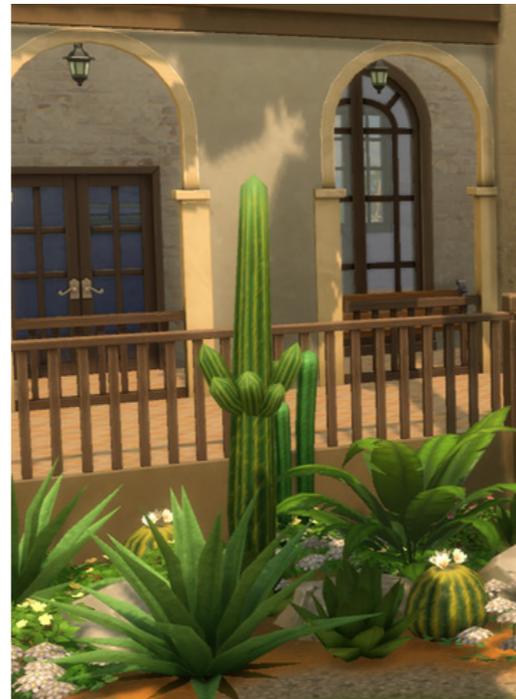
Yes, there is a backstory. When I received the theme of this issue, I immediately thought of my family's house. My mom always complained it was too small for six people, and this was especially true before the reconstruction.

So I based the exterior and floorplan somewhat on the previous structure of our house, except that we live in the right house, not the left one. And we actually have an attic, which I



did not include in this lot. But anyway, I really like the outcome.

For the interior I really wanted to use basic colors for most of the objects, and bright splashes of colors for the accessories, like the lamp above the dining table. And, since I really want to have a cat in real life, I also added a cat tower to the living room. One can dream, right? And, since it wouldn't be a JodelieJodelie garden without one of my little ponds in it, I, of course, put one in the back garden.



WAYWARD NO MORE

Oasis Valley Orphans Find a Home



Many children have come through Miss Montpellier's Wayward Winds Home for Orphaned Children over the years. Charles Chamberlain is one of the many success stories. After receiving a full scholarship to the University, Charles majored in social work and came back to work at the home where he got his start. Along the way, he's convinced prominent community members to finance upgrades and amenities at the facility far beyond what is the norm. Wayward Winds is well on its way to launching many other unfortunate children to great promise.

Article by: kitkat
Photographs by: gmcrozier



Charles Chamberlain greets me at the gate of the expansive grounds of Wayward Winds. "Welcome, welcome," he says warmly as he shakes my hand and leads me to the front steps. "We're so glad to have you. I hope that your feature of Wayward Winds will lead even more people to invest in the future of our wards. Who knows, we may be able to open a home in Willow Creek or another city in the future."

Charles ushers me into the building, which isn't at all how I had pictured it. The Mediterranean style architecture and tropical landscaping make for a warm and inviting presence. "Our children have, in many cases, experienced the most tragic losses and hardships when they arrive here," Charles tells me. "Miss Montpelier, our original benefactor, wanted to make sure the place felt warm and inviting from the start. I've built on that over the years, and I think we've

managed to achieve something that she would still be proud of."

Next on the tour is the education area. Wayward Winds has a state-of-the-art science lab for its aspiring students. "The Landgraab family has been very generous," he confides. "They hope that some of our residents might be inspired to pursue a career in science, possibly even working at Landgraab Industries or the Marine Science Facility."

Moving upstairs, you are surprised to see resident rooms are distinctly lacking in the institutional feel so common in these types of facilities. Both the boys and girls rooms have vibrant color and texture with personal touches of the residents abounding.



"We were lucky enough to hire Mr. G. M. Crozier, one of the top designers in Oasis Springs, for the job of decorating our resident rooms. The kids love what he did with the rooms."

From wallpaper accents to attractive prints on the walls, the rooms are both functional and inviting. I smile as I see a young girl skip down the hall and bounce into her room, plopping down her bookbag and perching on the edge of her bed with a book. She smiles at me shyly.

"That's Macy," Charles tells me. "She's been with us a few weeks. She went through quite a trauma, but she's starting to come around." He waves at Macy, and she waves back enthusiastically.

Moving out on the balcony, there are easels and art supplies in front of a fantastic view of Oasis Springs. "The kids all love to take art classes out here," Charles explains as he looks out over the valley. "The scenery is very inspirational.



There are definitely some budding artists in the group.”

There’s more to see as Charles shows me the industrial kitchen, gym, and group lounge area all with top-of-the-line fittings. The story of Wayward Winds is intriguing and impressive. With Charles Chamberlain at the helm, the future is bright for the orphans it serves.



Home for the Holidays^{2.0} The Challenge

Tablescapes

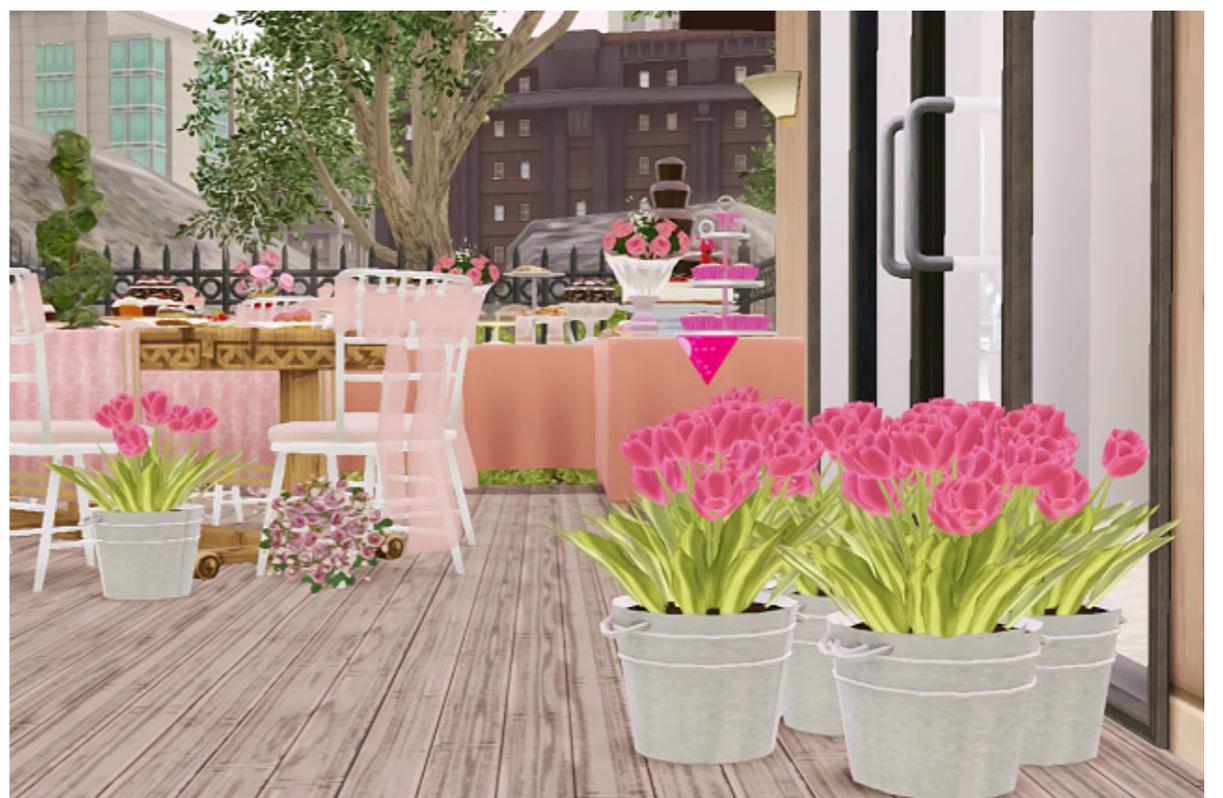
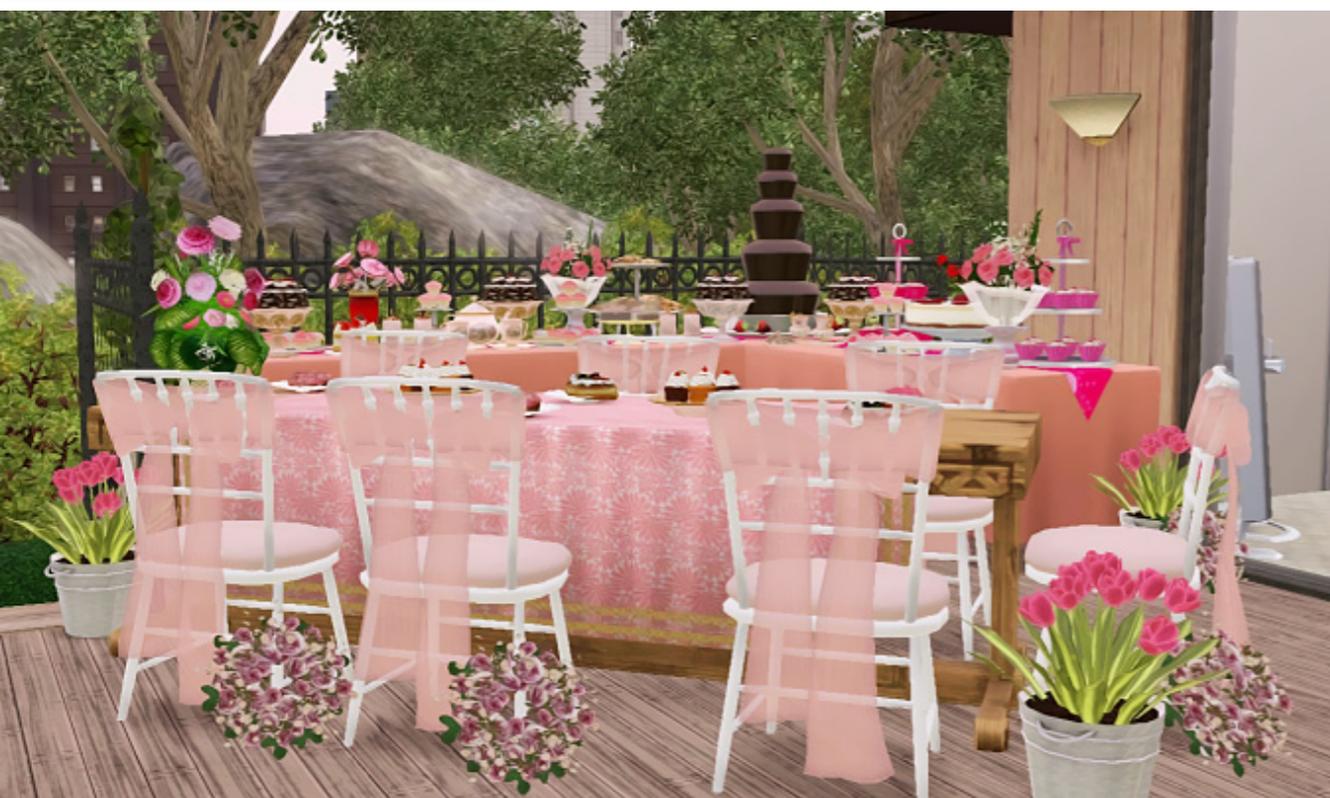
Setting a beautiful table

There is nothing more inviting than a beautifully decorated table top. Art, nature, and beautiful textiles can all provide the inspiration for tablescapes that truly elevate your dining experience. We gave our talented forum members an inspiration picture, and they created clever and beautiful table settings.

Remember the feeling of warmth, love, family and tradition brought on by the Holiday season. Remember the smells, the decorations and, most important of all, the presents. Remember that the best entries will be featured in the 2015 holiday issue of LivingSims.

Photographs by: BlueHopper, Elle, florence, Green-Girl, Naitomea_Sims, smillachan, steefee90, viikiita & Wintertime

Wintertime



viikiita



SweetCaffeine



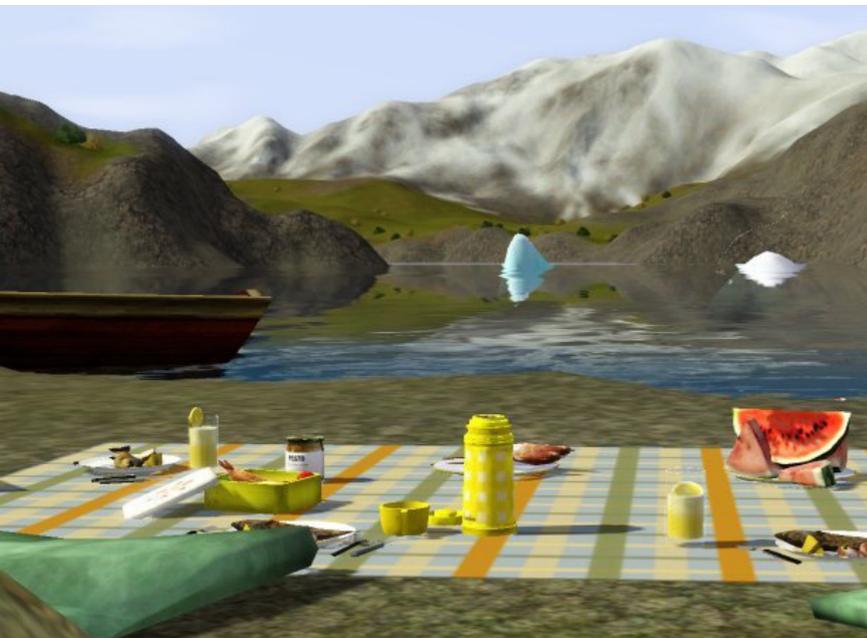
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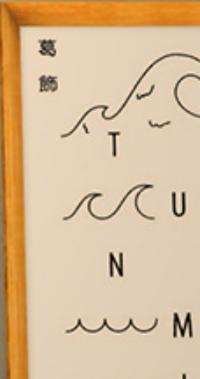
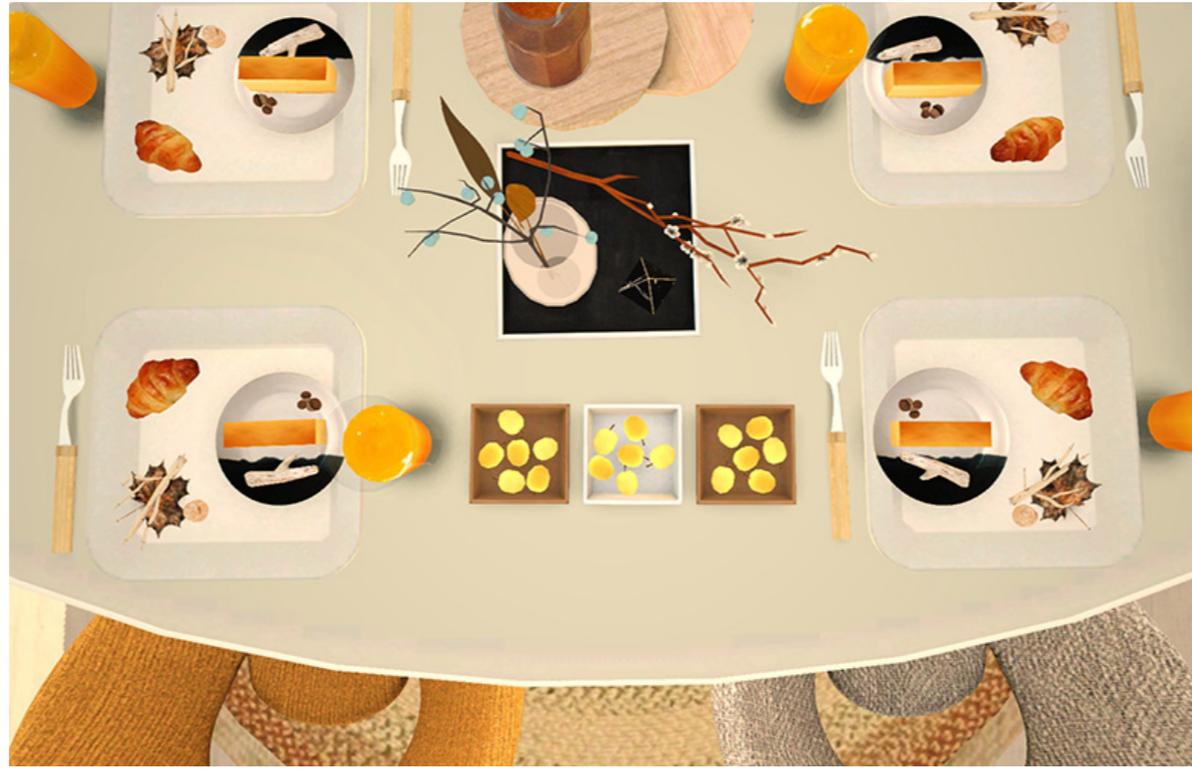
Naitomea_Sims



Green-Girl



florence



Elle



BlueHopper





“I was on a budget and needed a pretty small place, so this one-bedroom starter house was just the right choice,”

Worlds Collide

Sarah Jones has always wanted to swap her big-city apartment for a small country house. Her dream has come true, and now Sarah shares a few hints on how to mix very opposite styles and make an ordinary house a perfect home.

Article & photographs by LadySpider

I check my GPS once again. The location is correct, still no house can be seen from the drive. It's only when the road makes a sudden turn that I can finally see a low Craftsman house hidden behind the hedge. As I approach, Sarah waves to me from the porch and welcomes me warmly, eager to show off her home.

“It was love at first sight,” Sarah says. “When I saw this place I realized it had to be mine, no matter what.”

The white siding looks somehow decayed and reminds me of beach houses; but, combined with gray shingles and tapered timber columns, it creates just the right Craftsman look.

“It was love at first sight. When I saw this place I realized it had to be mine, no matter what.”

“I was on a budget and needed a pretty small place, so this one-bedroom starter house was just the right choice,” Sarah explains.

She was lucky to purchase a recently renovated property, so the changes to be made were mostly cosmetic. The biggest challenge however, was to add a more personal character to the ready-to-move-in place. Sarah wanted to blend her modern industrial preferences with





the traditional country style of the home to create a clean, uncluttered space with a few statement pieces.

"All white with a touch of decay," she says of her style. The original wood paneling fit perfectly. Sarah also painted the kitchen cabinets white to get just the right look and add a French Country flair to the room.

Indeed, devil is in the details. Vintage cup pull-handles for the counters, a couple of wire baskets, an old milk crate, a printed quotation and modern appliances make an ordinary kitchen look stylish; as does the vintage headboard on the wall of her dining room.

The living area is extremely simple - just a couch with a couple of pillows, an old bench turned into a coffee table and another distressed bench to serve as a loveseat. The statement pieces here are a set of map prints

surrounded by heavily distressed black wooden frames and a vintage black file drawer cabinet.

"I love these," Sarah says fondly. "Found in them in a flea market. They are my past big-city-life treasures."

The bedroom looks more cluttered than the rest of the house. This is due in part to the bookshelves on both sides of the bed instead of the traditional bedside tables.

"I placed two candle holders on the headboard, since it's broad enough to use the surface. I thought it would be a great idea to save some space for my books and have a reading nook right in my bed," Sarah laughs. "This house is a dream house of mine. It has a history. It has charm. It has my character."

Indeed, this is a one-of-a-kind dream home where Sarah can live happily ever after.





Aquilifer

The Most Interesting Simmer in the World

He doesn't always build in *The Sims*, but when he does magic happens. Aquilifer has some of the coolest builds we've seen in *Sims 4*. He was kind enough to answer our questions about building and regale our readers with his most intriguing and improbable background.

Article by: *kitkat & Aquilifer*
Photographs by *Aquilifer*

Please tell us a little bit about yourself.

I'm 36, and I currently live in Boston. I always found math and physics really easy in school, so I decided to study languages at university because they were harder for me. And I figured that path would give me a much more well-rounded mind.

I taught modern German, medieval German, and Viking literature at Harvard for six years; and once I even rowed a Viking boat from Denmark to England. But recently I have moved into capital management, turning back to my strengths in numbers and using my language skills for building relationships with international clients. I also renovate houses in real life.

When did you start playing *The Sims*?

I was given a bootleg version of the original game by a friend when I was an undergraduate. I didn't have time to play *Sims 2* because I was an internationally competitive rower at the time, and training 40 hours per week on top of my studies. But I came back with *Sims 3* where I also started uploading builds in mostly medieval styles.

What is your favorite aspect of the game?

Building is, by far, my favorite part of *Sims 4*, but I also like playing the game with aging turned off. I make copies of my real-life friends and move them into my town, and I wouldn't want to see them all die off. I can only play the actual game for a few hours at a time though. If I'm really excited about a building I'm working on, however, I could easily stay up all night without noticing the time pass. Interior design, on the other hand, wears me out quickly. People who are familiar with a lot of my builds will see the same types of room decorations repeated again and again. Roofing, though, will always be my favorite thing of all.

If you have played other versions of the *Sims*, which is your favorite for building?

There were aspects of building in *Sims 3* which I really enjoyed, such as multi-story columns and adjusting the ground levels to make extraordinarily tall creations. I also think I had more control over exterior wall coverings in *Sims 3*.

But building in *Sims 4* is so much faster than it was in *Sims 3*, and I'm much happier with the results. I also truly appreciate that most of the





build-mode upgrades for Sims 4 are given out for free instead of having to buy a new expansion for pools, then another one for an extra story, then another one for basements.

I stopped building in Sims 3 after Generations came out just because I didn't want to keep buying expansions. I look forward to getting new roofing tools,

and spiral stairs and whatever else they roll out for us in this new game. And now I can buy only the expansion packs that I truly want without limiting my possibilities.

Where do you draw inspiration for your builds?

I usually just play around in build mode until something looks cool. It is generally something really small like an interesting arch over a window or a simple idea like "zig-zag roofing patterns." I throw out almost everything that I create when I am playing around. And then, all of a sudden, something is just too perfect for me to delete it.



It's not so much that I'm inspired by it as it is that now I'm cursed to have to figure out how to make an entire building to showcase this one perfect thing. I don't really take inspiration from pictures. I don't use any building plans, and I don't try to do things that I see other builders uploading. I just play around, experimenting with the building tools, until something suddenly captivates me.

I've said in the forums that it's like sculpting with clay, where I can just keep adding more and more until everything looks exactly like it's supposed to, even if I don't know what direction I'm heading in when I start. That's a big contrast with Sims 3 which was like sculpting in stone and where I always had to know exactly what path I was following before I even began the journey or risk ruining everything.

So I guess I would say that it's the tools themselves which inspire me in Sims 4, and the possibilities that I don't even know exist until I stumble upon them by accident.

Do you have a favorite style for building? On the flip side, is there a style you steer away from or would never try to build?

My favorite style is definitely medieval, but I don't think that the options currently available in build mode are well-suited to a medieval style. I have been exploring a more Victorian style recently, which I have enjoyed. And I have also always liked designing public buildings like museums and libraries in a Romanesque style.

If they released a set of tools designed for medieval buildings, though, I would probably never build anything else ever again. I like asymmetry. I avoid modern buildings, but I will admit that some of my best roofing ideas came about after some other builders challenged me to make something in a modern style. Pushing ourselves outside of our comfort zone is always a great way to learn new techniques and become better.



Your roofs in the Sims 4 are amazing - seriously amazing! Can you tell us a little bit about how you plan and execute a roof design?

Most of the time, I play around with roofing ideas before I even begin building anything else. I want to do something new, that no one has ever seen before, with each new building. That was always true, but now that I've become known as "the roofing guy," I feel like it's even more important to be pushing myself to try new things all the time.

But no matter what kind of roofing I am designing, I always think of it from the ground all the way up to the highest peak. You can't build a house and then slap a roof on top of it as an afterthought, or as though it was just decoration. A roof is an integral part of the whole design, and the whole design starts from the ground. Interesting details in the roofing might dictate where windows have to be placed below it, or that the shape of a room has to be changed.

Tall roofs work best on top of tall walls; gabled roofs work best over narrow walls; long horizontal features look better when they're interrupted by narrow vertical features. I like the color of

my roof to contrast with the color of my walls, as well.

I try out a lot of possibilities before I finally settle on the best design, and even then sometimes I'll come back and change it later. It really helps to sleep if I'm stuck on a roofing problem, or at least walk away from the computer for a day or two.

Then all of a sudden, in the shower the next morning or on the way to work, I will come up with a fantastic solution to the problem; something that I've never tried before. And it will seem so simple that I wonder why it took me so long to think of it before! I never plan beforehand exactly what I want the finished roof or building to look like, though. At best, I have a rough idea of where I want it to go, but I think that leaves me the flexibility to change directions and try new things along the way.

Can you describe your build process?

I have actually worked this out very scientifically. A new building takes me almost exactly 1.5 minutes per square on the lot. It used to be 1 minute per square, but my buildings have become more complex as my own abilities have



developed, and things take longer now. So that means a 15x20 lot takes me 7.5 hours, and a 50x50 lot takes me 62.5 hours.

I start with the external shape. I build vertically, and add onto the building horizontally. So, I might start with a tower, all the way through to a finished roof, and then add on a wing attached to that, and then another tower attached to that, and then another wing. I build in sections which are complete from bottom to top before I move onto the next section. I usually add windows and doors last to the outside. Then I do landscaping. Next, I delete all the inside walls that are left over from the building process, figure out reasonable places to put stairs and break the interior into rooms.

I put all of the lighting in rooms before I do any other interior designing because you can't see what color anything is in the dark. Then I go room-by-room decorating the interior and try not to go crazy with how annoying I find it.

At the end, I exit and reload the lot a couple times looking to see if any objects disappear and playtest any areas which I think might be questionable. If everything passes, I upload it. And then, over the next couple days, I usually think of things that I wish I had done to make

something even better; but I try to include those improvements in my next build.

What advice would you give for builders just starting out in Sims 4?

Be open to constructive criticism, and try to learn something new with every build. Take your time, and don't rush to finish everything just to be able to upload something. At the same time, don't get over-worried about making everything perfect; you can always improve things on your next build.

Don't confuse time with quality; a building isn't better just because it took longer to create. Always be prepared to delete everything and start over. Getting featured by Maxis is nice, but it usually doesn't mean anything.

Get involved with the Creative Corner of the forums, but look for the honest people who will give you real advice; it's a place to learn, not a place to advertise yourself.

The worst builders in the game are the ones who think they're already perfect and want everyone else to tell them so. We all start out terrible. Look at my own early buildings; they're awful! Everyone has talent somewhere, but it takes a lot of work and concerted effort to bring that talent forth.

APARTMENT LIVING

dreamteamsims

riekus13

ShilohMay

florence

soliva

IAmSherlocked

SweetCaffeine

MsWry

viikiita

Kiare

Zingaro

Apartments are fun. Most of the time they are easy to build, quick to decorate and offer a way to explore your creativity and imagination more than you would give them credit for. Yeah, sure, building that one dream house is awesome, and we all know no one will ever say a thing like, "Hey, let's live in a dream apartment." But that doesn't mean that an apartment can't offer all the comfort and coziness of a house, and even more than that. So, we asked our lovely community to build us such an apartment and, oh boy, we are more than glad we did!

*Graphic credit to: anbilero adaleru
Photographs by: dreamteamsims,
florence, IAmSherlocked,
MsWry, riekus13, ShilohMay,
soliva, SweetCaffeine, kiare,
viikiita, Zingaro*

dreamteamsims



florence

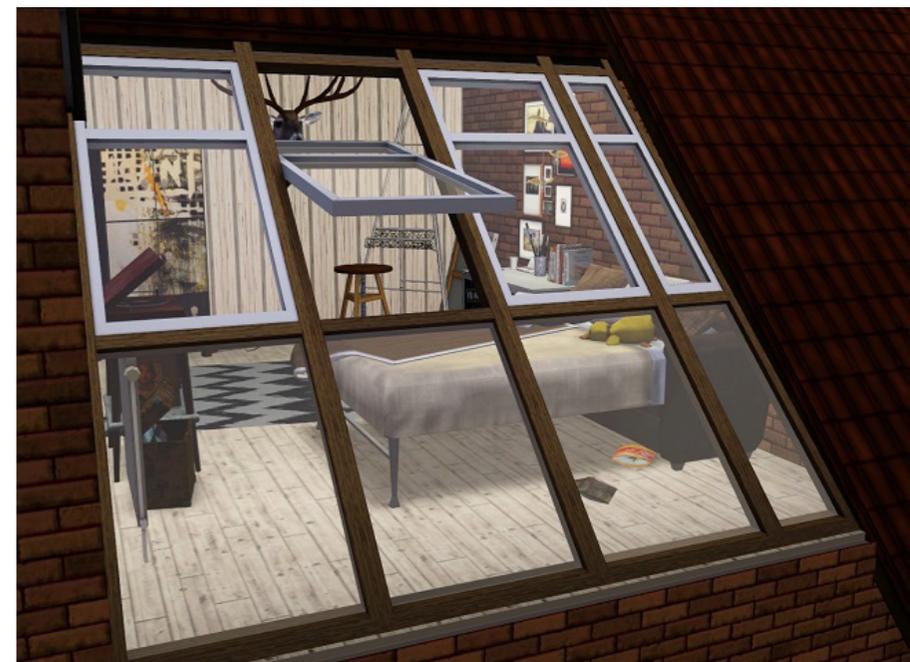


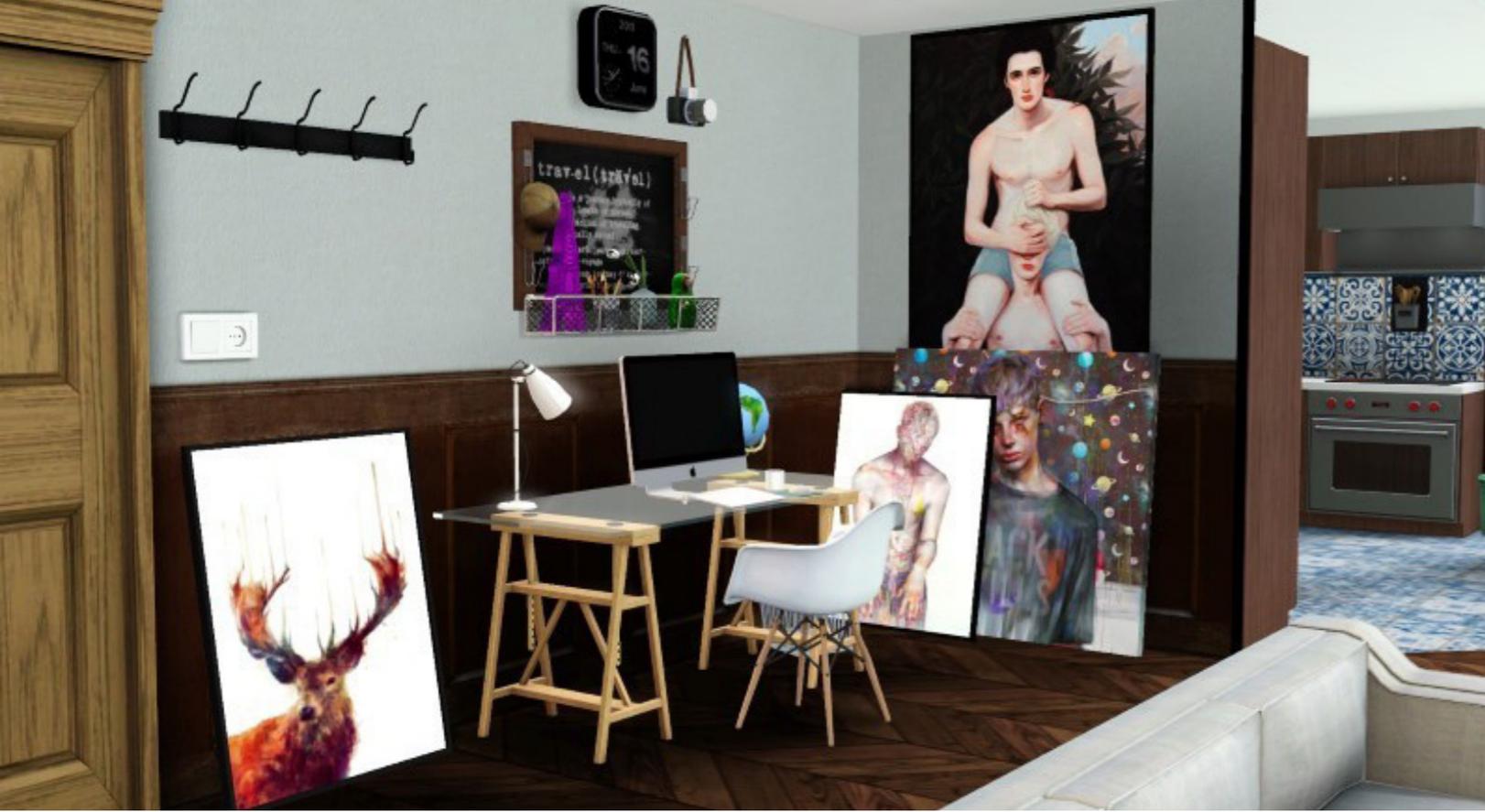


I Am Sherlocked



kiare





MsWry



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ShilohMay





Soliva



SweetCaffeine



viikiita





Zingaro



Interview with FAKE HOUSES REAL AWESOME



Please tell us a little something about yourself.

My name is Sky. I'm finishing degrees in International Relations and Middle Eastern Studies, and I currently have a pretty boring real-life job as a copy editor. Besides the Sims, my hobbies include baking and knitting, although I've been known to cross stitch and have dabbled — and failed — in crochet and tatting. I lived in Nepal for six years, and while I was there developed an acute case of wanderlust, so I also love to travel... but that hobby is harder to finance.

Things that I'm ALWAYS ready to have an embarrassingly-enthusiastic conversation about: British panel shows, natural (curly) hair care, and nail art.

When did you start playing The Sims?

Way back in 2000 my older brother got this game that he had heard about, and let me have a go at it. He lost interest; I got hooked.

Do you prefer Sims 2, Sims 3, or Sims 4? Why?

Don't make me choose! I still play all three, and love them for different reasons: TS2's animations and interactions have the cutest details that make me slow down and actually pay attention to my Sims. TS3's open worlds and story progression give my game an unpredictability that I really enjoy, and TS4's art style and Buy catalog is pretty drool-worthy. But if I really have to pick, I'd go with TS3!

Where do you get your inspiration from?

I've always had a casual interest in architecture. I seek out and gawk at interesting buildings wherever I go. I always grab a real estate listings book when I visit a new place, and I've been known to take advantage of open houses and estate sales just for the opportunity to poke around pretty houses.

I read magazines and blogs like CIRCA Old Houses, Architectural Digest, American Bungalow, Preservation Nation, and many more. I also have an unreasonably large folder on my computer, filled with pictures of interesting buildings that I come across online, that I browse through when I need some quick inspiration.

What are your favorite styles in decorating?

At this point, I should probably confess to being really terrible at decorating. While the honest answer would be "anything that looks like I spent more than twenty minutes on it," I do have a soft spot for the weathered, distressed, and generally just lived-in look — but not necessarily grungy. Chipped paint, worn wood, and desaturated colors make me happy

CC or No CC?

Definitely CC. The Sims games have always had an incredibly talented modding community, and I cannot resist the allure of custom content.



Predictably, I swoon for the Build Mode stuff. I particularly love sets that expand on existing game items—for example, to add different heights and widths of a certain window, or complementary styles of a certain wall. But that said, my TS2 game was completely CC-free for years and I was very content!

Are there any game, SP or EP decorative items that you can't live without?

Yes! The patches of scraggly grass from Pets for TS3 (plus the one from the base game) don't get nearly enough love. I like doing landscaping that looks natural, and even a little overgrown, so those grasses are definitely a staple for me.

You have a large presence on Tumblr. What can you tell us about how you got started there?

My first-ever post was a collection of screenshots I took of a little yellow Victorian I built in TS3. It was my favorite thing I had built in a while, so I showed the pictures to my brother, who told me I should start a blog. My subsequent posts were pictures and downloads of the houses I was building, as well as links to custom content and worlds I liked using in my own game. People really started finding my blog after some of my early posts were reblogged by a couple of awesome Simmers in the Tumblr/Simblr community - Amanda of Sim Designs and Gelina.





Please tell us a little about the house you built for this issue of the magazine.

Since this issue is about small spaces, I decided to build something on the smallest lot in TS4 (and used just about every inch of space!).

I chose a gambrel roof because I wanted a usable second level while still keeping the exterior as compact as possible. I used densely layered ivy, hedges, and flower bushes to landscape, trying to give the narrow gardens an

“oversized” appearance to contrast against the tiny house and emphasize its size.

Open floorplans suit tiny homes, but they can also be rather uninteresting. So I used half walls and the placement of furniture to create distinct sections in the main living room, trying to make the space realistically cozy without sacrificing playability. I used warm earth tones alongside reds and oranges in the common areas; the bedrooms have “cooler,” more peaceful, color schemes of green/yellow and purple/blue.

Do you have any advice for new builders in the Sims world?

I always tell people to just spend some time looking at real life architecture, either in person or through pictures, and get an eye for realistic proportions. To me, proportion is the most important part of creating realistic builds in the Sims, so use things like doors and windows as landmarks to translate a house into Sims scale. A lot of people tend to build their Sims homes too large, which looks rather unrealistic. While it



is important to leave enough room for routing, try to picture how the space and the furniture would look from a Sim’s-eye view and don’t be afraid to make your rooms a bit smaller!



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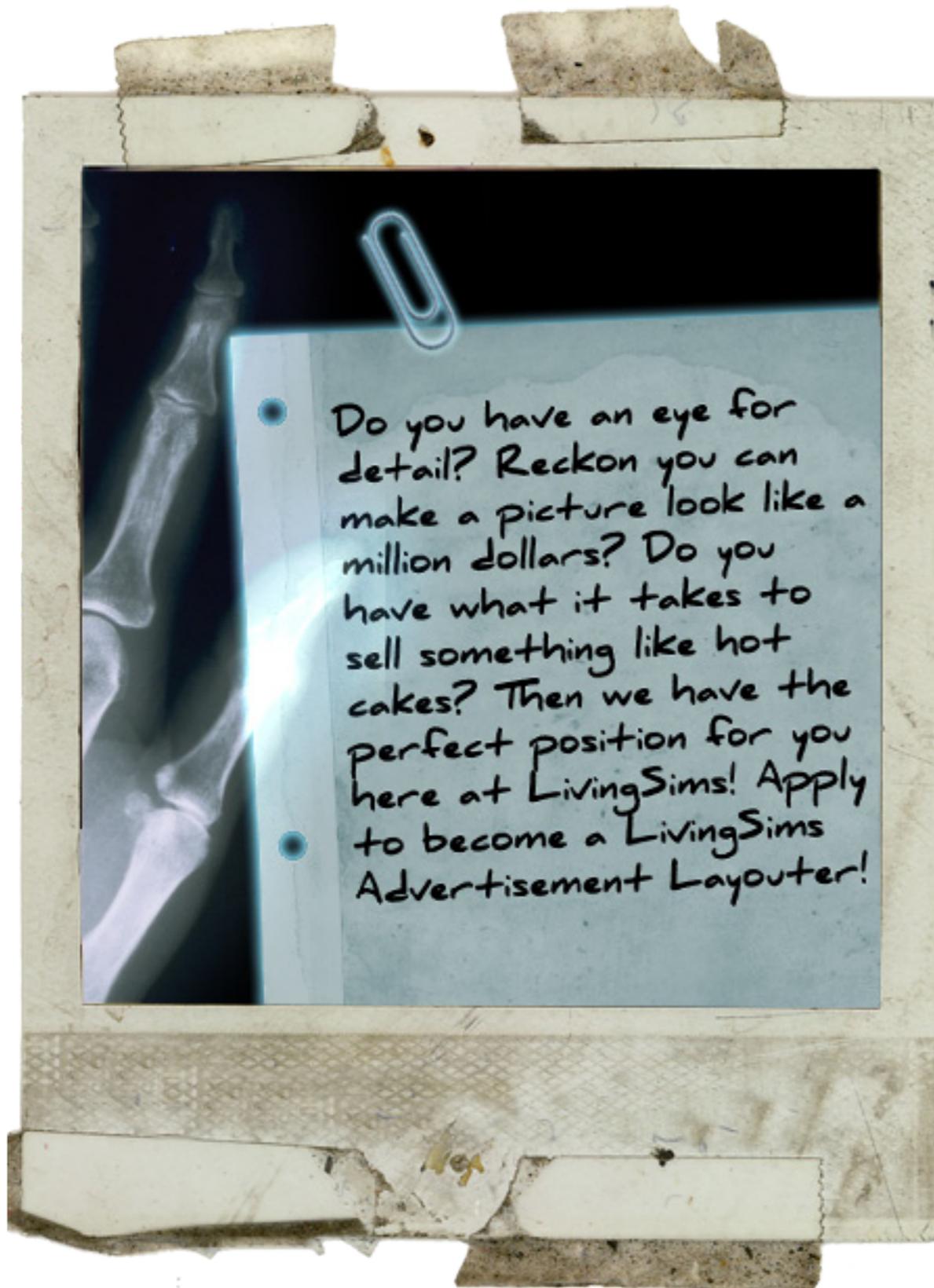
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FAKE HOUSES REAL AWESOME



"Colour does work magic. Add just a little bit of colour to your space - here and there - and it will brighten up your home and improve your mood better than a bowl of ice-cream. Add a little more to create a special atmosphere: relaxed, energetic, cheerful, or even dramatic - the choice is all yours. Add even more to achieve a totally overwhelming effect. Brighten up your life a bit and let your imagination go wild!"

In our recent forum contest, trumpets0ng took this premise and ran with it. The result was dramatic rooms full of vibrant and interesting use of color. We caught up with her to find out a bit about her approach to the contest and design in general.

*Article by kitkat, trumpets0ng
Photographs by trumpets0ng*



Where are you from?

I am a native New Yorker, through & through - born & raised in Brooklyn.

What do you do in real life?

I am a Business Development Rep. for an architectural hardware company. Basically, I handle sales to the trade outside of the showroom (i.e. contractors, interior designers, etc.). I am also a freelance interior designer on my own time. It's my passion and what I actually got my degree in.

What is your favorite design style?

Umm, wow, that's hard to decide... I would definitely have to say that my favorite style is eclecticism. I love the texture and edge of industrial, the warmth & comfort of rustic, the color, softness and whimsy of Bohemia, with just a smattering of mid-century flair for form. I just think that multiple styles combined give a level of visual interest that just one style alone can't achieve. But that's just my opinion, of course.

How long have you been playing The Sims?

Since The Sims 1. I am a die-hard fan of the franchise.

When did you start decorating in The Sims?

Day 1, lol. My brother put me on to the game through Sim City 3000, I think it was. I would build houses for his game, and he told me of this new upcoming game where I could design the interiors as well as the exteriors. Thus began my addiction. Of course it was far harder in the days of TS1.

What did you find hardest in the contest, and what did you learn?

The Split Complementary round was by far the hardest round. I didn't know where to start. And though I really wanted to use the bamboo yellow, because I was using TS4, I couldn't match the complements in a way that was comfortable. TS4 is very limiting. Overall, I learned not to be too overly literal when it comes to matching colors. Just do your best and have fun.



What are the 3 favorite design ideas you used in this contest?

1. I enjoyed adding sim-created paintings and photographs to their rooms. It was just a fun way to make their homes more unique & personal.
2. The guitars on the shelf brought some extra colors and unintentional artwork to the studio. It was purely to give a colorful space a more obvious purpose. However, it became one of my favorite features.
3. The nesting doll rooms within the studio. I was surprised that they fit, and they remind me of some small studios that I've been in.

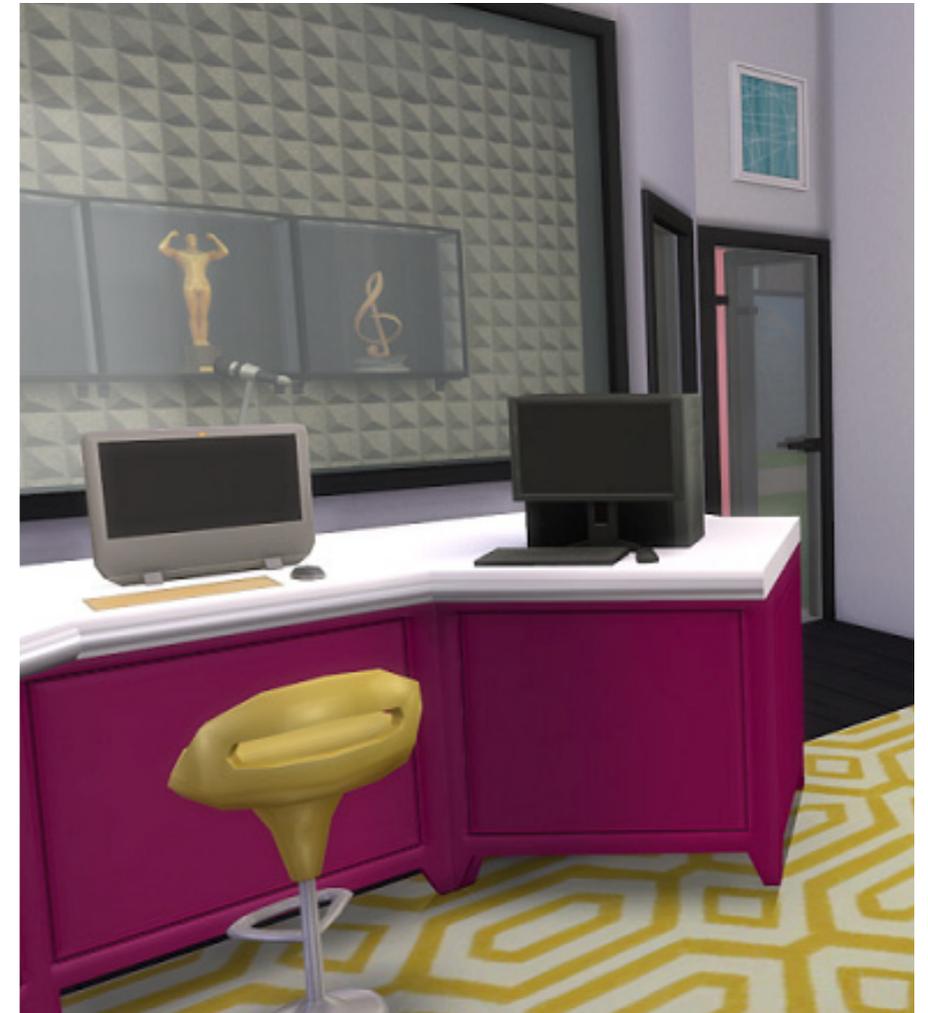
What are your top design tips for our readers?

Don't be afraid of color. Be-it for a slight accent, or the main focal point of a space, color can really bring a room to life.

Layering objects can be your best friend. It adds a level of visual interest to a plain space and a bit of realism to the clinical order of the game.



“Don't be afraid of color. Be it for a slight accent, or the main focal point of a space, color can really bring a room to life.”



Gourmet RATATOUILLE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion, sliced thin
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 3/4 lbs eggplant, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 3 cups)
- 1 small zucchini, scrubbed, quartered lengthwise, and cut into thin slices
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 3/4 lbs small ripe tomatoes, chopped coarse (about 1 1/4 cups)
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano, crumbled
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme, crumbled
- 1/8 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup shredded fresh basil leaves



PREPARE AND COOK IT

1. In a large skillet, cook the onion and the garlic in 2 tablespoons of the oil over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally until the onion is softened.
2. Add the remaining 3 tablespoons of oil, and heat it over moderately high heat until it is hot but not smoking.
3. Add the eggplant, and cook the mixture, stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes or until the eggplant is softened.
4. Stir in the zucchini and the bell pepper, and cook the mixture over the moderate heat, stirring occasionally, for 12 minutes.
5. Stir in the tomatoes, and cook the mixture, stirring occasionally, for 5 to 7 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
6. Stir in the oregano, thyme, coriander, fennel seeds, salt and pepper to taste, and cook the mixture, stirring continuously, for 1 minute.
7. Stir in the basil, and combine the mixture well.

The ratatouille may be made one day in advance, kept covered and chilled and reheated before serving.



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