

The Top 10 Houzz Tours of 2016

We invite you to revisit our most popular home tours from the past year



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Houzz Tours take us behind the doors of inspiring homes created by architects, designers, builders, remodelers, craftspeople and homeowners from all over the world. These homes are brimming with style, personality, designer tips and remodeling ideas. Here's a review of the 10 most popular tours, as measured by the number of people who've saved photos of them to their Houzz ideabooks in 2016. Click on the links for a full tour of each house and ideas you may find useful for your own place.



10. A Contemporary River Home in Oregon

These homeowners wanted their home on the Deschutes River to connect them with nature, and that's exactly what they got. From their waterfront perch in Bend, Oregon, they sit on a deck placed above a beautiful stone ledge and watch the minks, river otters, muskrats, beavers, bald eagles, ospreys and kingfishers, along with the traffic of canoes, floats and kayaks going by. Inside, the public areas, master suite and an upstairs study all look out on the river, where the couple enjoy spying ducks such as goldeneyes, mergansers and buffleheads swimming and diving as they look for food.

FINNE Architects



Because the master suite is overhead, it wasn't possible to play with the shape of the ceiling in the rectilinear living space. However, because the house steps down, the ceilings are 12 feet high. This gave principal designer Nils Finne of Finne Architects a chance to do something creative overhead: adding curves for contrast. It's also part of the idea of "crafted modernism," which enhances the architecture with beautifully crafted details throughout the home. The river setting inspired two suspended curvilinear wood ceiling panels composed of 60 unusually shaped slats.

Take the tour: Contemporary Oregon Home Connects With Life on the River



9. A Colorful Abode in Tennessee

Interior designer Emily Lister's client loves bright colors. Lime green, hot pink, fluorescent orange — she isn't afraid of any shade. And therein lay Lister's challenge: how to channel that affinity for neon hues without turning the remodel of her client's home outside Nashville, Tennessee, into an Easter egg.

This geometric wallpaper from Cole & Son in the entry is a bold choice, but Lister

made it work, being careful about how she used color elsewhere. She painted the living room a bright white and picked up hues in the wallpaper with turquoise chairs and a contrasting orange rug.



Lister suggested opening the kitchen to a dining nook and sitting room. The ceilings were raised 2 feet and coffered, which distracts from the fact that the lights are a few inches off-center due to ductwork that couldn't be moved.

The homeowners didn't want an all-white kitchen, so they went with a bold lime-green backsplash of laser-cut, stained-glass mosaic tile. A more linear layout with a central island allowed the homeowners to create a more social space.

Take the tour: Color Lights the Way in a Tennessee Home



8. A Historic Coastal Home in Maryland

Historic preservation and restoration can be an unpredictable ride. This 1800s home owned by interior designer Sandy Brock is in a historic district in Annapolis, Maryland, and adding a charming front porch was at first deemed a no-go. But the architects at Alt Breeding Schwarz found old photos of the home proving that its original porch had been removed, and today a replication adds historic charm to the facade. Because the home was in a state of disrepair, the renovations were major. Still, the exterior maintains the style and charm of the original home. Inside, the homeowners helped guide the gut renovation in a way that suited their lifestyle and lends a sense of age.



The open plan on the first floor has a more modern feel that takes advantage of the bay views. The dining area is just visible on the left, and the living room is at the right. Brock chose low-profile chairs for the deck to keep the views to the bay clear.

“We really wanted to do a screened-in porch across the back of the house and went back and forth on it,” Brock says. “We ultimately decided against it, but our architect Scarlett Breeding was able to make it function as a screened-in porch anyway — there is a big motorized screen housed in the header over the doors that covers the large opening.”

Take the tour: Historic Charm Restored to a Dilapidated Coastal Home

Eric Roth Photography



7. Modern Farmhouse Bliss Near Boston

We throw around the term “modern farmhouse” a lot, but it means different things to different people. That was true for this couple, who were moving from a small home in Boston to a new four-bedroom house on the nearby North Shore. “They both loved the concept of ‘modern farmhouse,’ but I needed to nail down what that really meant to them,” says interior designer Kristina Crestin.

Crestin was hired midway through the construction of the home, which was featured this year on the PBS TV series *This Old House*. “They both wanted elements like barn doors, shiplap and architectural salvage, but her tastes skew a little more traditional farmhouse, and he likes industrial style,” she says. She helped the couple find their style while tying together rooms with dark accents, lighting, the color palette and other elements.



In the kitchen, the homeowners had already chosen a gray-blue Benjamin Moore paint called Black Pepper for the island. “This color gave us a base. I built up the

color palette for the house from there,” Crestin says. The 2-inch-thick Carrara marble countertop on the island is a showstopper, while large pendants add personality overhead. “We went a little overscaled with the lighting around the house because it’s modern and fun,” Crestin says.

Take the tour: A Made-to-Order Modern Farmhouse in Massachusetts



6. A Modern Jewel Box Near San Francisco

After closing the chapter on a decade in New York City, interior designer Brad Krefman, owner of BK Interior Design, and real estate agent Eric McFarland headed west with their French bulldog, landing in Marin County, near San Francisco. They looked at nearly 40 houses before coming across a midcentury gem clad in clear heart redwood. It formed an L shape around a courtyard pool and sat far back on a flag lot, affording plenty of privacy. “It checked all the boxes for life in California that would be diametrically different than life in New York,” Krefman says.

They built a new deck with a custom retractable shade feature to enjoy the sunny weather, replaced the interior floors, made minor but impactful updates to the kitchen, and filled the rooms with modern classics and vintage furniture pieces.

BK Interior Design



The entry opens to the living room. The ceiling beams were already painted white when the couple moved in, but they chose to keep the original redwood ceiling intact. “There’s no way we’d touch that ceiling, not in a million years,” Krefman says. “It’s clear heart redwood, mostly free and clear of knots. It has an amazing grain pattern. Redwood is now protected in California. To have that in its original state is something to cherish and appreciate.”

Take the tour: [How Can We Get Invited to This Awesome Midcentury Home?](#)



5. Big Style in a Tiny Home in Northern California

This tiny house combines the ease of building a model home with the option of avoiding a cookie-cutter structure. It’s a customized version of the Loft model from Mint Tiny House, a company near Vancouver, Canada, that builds microstructures on trailer frames. The owners of this house transported it to La Honda, California, in the Santa Cruz Mountains, where it became their full-time residence.

The couple opted for some add-ons to the base model, which brought the price to about \$68,000. The company offers five models, ranging from 16 to 34 feet long,

and all can be customized. “We work with each client until the floor plan is exactly as they need it to be. No two of our tiny homes are alike,” says Shannon Persse, who co-founded the company with her husband, Brian. Not for everybody — they wouldn’t work for a large family — these tiny domiciles require creative design and imagination for livability in a downsized space.



Dark wood floors and cedar beams, along with pine walls and full-size stainless steel appliances, make the compact living space stylish and functional. Open shelving keeps the kitchen uncluttered. The backsplash is whitewashed pine. The wooden bar on the left folds down. The stairs on the right lead to a sleeping loft; after the home was photographed, the owners added railings, which the manufacturer recommends.

Take the tour: A Tiny House Packed With Style



4. A Bold Studio in Boston

Black wallpaper in a 400-square-foot studio apartment is a daring move for some, but for homeowners Deb and Skip Windemiller, it seemed as natural an inclusion as

the plush custom furnishings and ornately framed paintings that adorn the maximalist interior. Their apartment, in a building constructed in 1850 to house a governor's family, was one of the first condo conversions on Boston's Beacon Hill. The home's diminutive size allowed the Windemillers to dream big and work with the team at TMS Architects to restore its historic details, resulting in their own work of art.



The kitchen is deceptively spacious and contains everything the couple needs, including a dishwasher, a Miele oven with built-in meat thermometer, and enough dishes and glassware for 16.

Take the tour: A Masterly Miniature on Boston's Beacon Hill



3. Midcentury Magic in Southern California

Suzanne Gray hadn't thought much about her childhood home in California's Ojai Valley since the day she left it and headed east after high school. But after losing both her parents and recently retiring from the banking world, she was faced with the decision of whether to sell the home or move back into it.

When the house was built in 1959 by midcentury designer and builder Rodney Walker, its glass-walled, steel I-beam construction captivated the residents of Ojai. It was this specialness that eventually inspired Gray's return and spawned a careful renovation with the help of the team at Allen Construction.



Gray's mother built the interior river rock patio around the garden with a local mason named Matt Chepin. Her mother originally kept plants like philodendrons and rubber trees, but Gray added UV blockers to the windows, filled the garden with more succulents and ferns, and replaced the soil with lava rock. There's an automated water system in place, but there's also a spigot in case Gray wants to do some watering herself, as her mother did.

Take the tour: [A Daughter Restores Her Stunning Childhood Home](#)

Christopher Architecture & Interiors



2. Storybrook Charm in Alabama

These homeowners thought having a larger home meant they would have to leave their beautiful neighborhood in Mountain Brook, Alabama. But when they hired architect Scott Carlisle of Christopher Architects & Interiors to help them figure out what to do, he came up with a plan that allowed them to stay right where they were.

A second-story added 1,200 square feet to the 1940s storybook home. A composition of Tudor-style gables and dormers keeps the house at a pleasing scale that complements the neighborhood. “The original house had no oomph or sense of entry; we wanted to make it more inviting,” Carlisle says. “We wanted some drama out front and gave it a kick with these tiered steps.”



Originally a tiny area served as the entry. Now a foyer has a welcoming presence and includes a new staircase leading to the second floor. Natural light flows in

through the front-entry door and windows. The clients opted to forgo their traditional formal dining room for a much-needed office, located through the French door to the right of the stairs.

Take the tour: Houzz Tour: A Storybook House for the Neighborhood



1. Easygoing Elegance in Massachusetts

The Second Empire-style home with a mansard roof and lovely high windows occupied a prominent spot in town, but it had become “tired-looking,” says interior designer Lisa Tharp. Her clients were moving in from a more rural setting and were ready to make some changes that included paring down their things in pursuit of calm surroundings. The renovation preserved the beautiful 1860s architecture while creating spare yet comfortable living spaces.

Tharp gutted the kitchen, which had an unfortunate 1970s orange-and-brown *Brady Bunch* vibe. “We wanted to make it look like a classic kitchen that had evolved over the years but kept true to its roots,” she says. Honed Jet Mist granite, which resembles soapstone but is more durable; simple Shaker-style cabinets with latch hardware; cabinets with a furniture feel; and two-over-one windows surrounded by beautiful casings all lend history and classic style to the kitchen.

Lisa Tharp Design



In the formal living room, the original marble fireplace provides a focal point. The bay window casts light on two oversize white planters get light from the bay window. A sea grass rug and pendant light composed of folded paper poppies keep things from feeling too formal.

Take the tour: Easygoing and Elegant in White, Cream and Gray

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