

MARTHA STEWART

Living

SPRING CLEANING ARSENAL

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FROM THE PROS**

*Martha photographed
in the blue garden at
Lotusland, in California,
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**103
WAYS TO GET
READY FOR**
Spring

RE//USE, CYCLE, SIDE.

ON OREGON'S RURAL SAUVIE ISLAND, THIS TINY COTTAGE HAS ITSELF BEEN RECYCLED OVER THE YEARS. ACCORDING TO LOCAL LORE, THE BUILDING HAS SERVED AS HOUSING FOR SHIPYARD WORKERS, A SURVEYOR'S OFFICE, AND A GOOSE-CHECK STATION. NOW, AFTER AN INVENTIVE GREEN MAKEOVER, IT'S HOME TO A FAMILY OF FOUR.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY Lincoln Barbour | TEXT BY Eleanor Duncan



// THE KITCHEN //

Yvonne Doulla and Jesse Halgerson covered many walls in their cottage in wood cladding reclaimed from a barn on the property. "We stained one wall and painted the rest white—it was just too much to have natural wood everywhere," says Halgerson. They used metal joist ties instead of wooden joists along the ceiling to create a sense of openness.



THE FLOOR PLAN



Back in 2004, a young family—Yianni Doulis, a very pregnant Jessica Helgerson, and their then 2-year-old son, Max—went for an outing in the country, making the quick trip north from their house in Portland, Oregon, to Sauvie Island. “We were hiking through a field and scared up a flock of birds,” Helgerson says. “It was one of those amazing moments.” It was so amazing, in fact, that the couple began searching for an affordable property on the part nature preserve, part agricultural island to create a weekend retreat.

The five-acre lot they found for their family of four a few years later “had good bones, with beautiful old oak trees,” says Helgerson. Never mind that it was strewn with old cars and had “no buildings of worth,” according to the real-estate agent. Helgerson and Doulis, who are dedicated to green design (she’s an interior designer; he’s an architect), made an offer. “We like to fix things, and we saw it as the project we’d always been looking for,” she says.

For the exterior of the cottage, the couple wanted to respect the existing vernacular architecture: simple American country. “But we also wanted to make it a little playful and a little surprising and a little funny,” says Helgerson. So they replaced the roof with one planted with moss and ferns collected along the Columbia River Gorge. “Honestly, in Oregon your roof wants to be mossy,” she jokes. The couple revamped the 540-square-foot interior, building in storage behind walls and under beds and installing eco-friendly fixtures and lighting. In 2016, Doulis says, “I busted hump to get the house done by Jessica’s birthday on Memorial Day weekend.” The family spent the night in the house that weekend for the first time—and gradually decided to make it their permanent home. “It’s mega-cozy! And it’s really neat and how well we get along,” says Helgerson. The biggest challenge? “Yianni and I had just 3½ inches of closet space.” “Every morning I was grumbling, ‘Where are my brown jeans? I can’t find anything!’ But we just finished a walk-in ‘closet’ in one of the barns. I have a rug, a mirror, a chest of drawers. I go out there in my bathrobe every morning. I have eight feet of hanging space, and I’m in heaven.”



THE BATHROOM

Above the wall opposite the sink conceals storage. The slipper tub, salvaged from a friend’s place, originally had polished chrome lion feet, Helgerson says. “My husband is a modernist at heart, so he designed and built the wood feet.”

THE ENTRY

Opposite, top The front door opens onto the great room. A kitchen-living space combo large enough for a big farm table that Doulis made. “We expanded the windows and lowered the sills to let in air and light,” says Doulis.

THE KIDS’ ROOM

Opposite, bottom In the room belonging to Max, 9, and Penelope, 7, a closet at the foot of the bunk pulls out to reveal drawers and a hanging rod. The area under the beds holds more storage. The room also has a double bed for guests.



// THE LOFT //

Top Helgeson and Doule sleep in a loft that overlooks the living room and kitchen. "It was a little worried about feeling cramped," says Doule. "But I love the magic of climbing up to our little pup-tent space."

// THE GARDEN //

Above A garden and a hoop house help sustain the family year-round. They keep chickens for meat and eggs, and bees for honey and orchard pollination. They hope to one day turn the grounds into an educational farm, named Wild Goose Farm by Max.

// LIVING SPACE //

Right "We wanted to think of the house as a book, so we built in storage wherever we could," says Helgeson. The wide sofas (which double as extra sleeping accommodations) and bookcases were designed and constructed by Doule and an architect friend.



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STYLING BY Rebecca Robertson

INSPIRATION AND INFORMATION

When they're designing, planting, or cooking, the couple turns to these books and websites.

ARCHITECTURE IDOLS

"We both love the books put out by the Rural Studio," says Doule. "And the book of David Salmela's modern vernacular architecture is my new fave."

GARDENING BIBLES

"Eliot Coleman's books have wonder for advice," Doule also recommends Steve Solomon's *Growing Vegetables West of the Cascades*. (For more on Coleman, see page 88.)

FAVORITE BLOGS

These sites are on their bookmark bar: designspooner.com (for design ideas), cookwithwhatyouhave.com (for recipes), and jude-miller.com (to get hungry," says Doule).