

* bonus: 20 ways to pack big style into small spaces

Country Home

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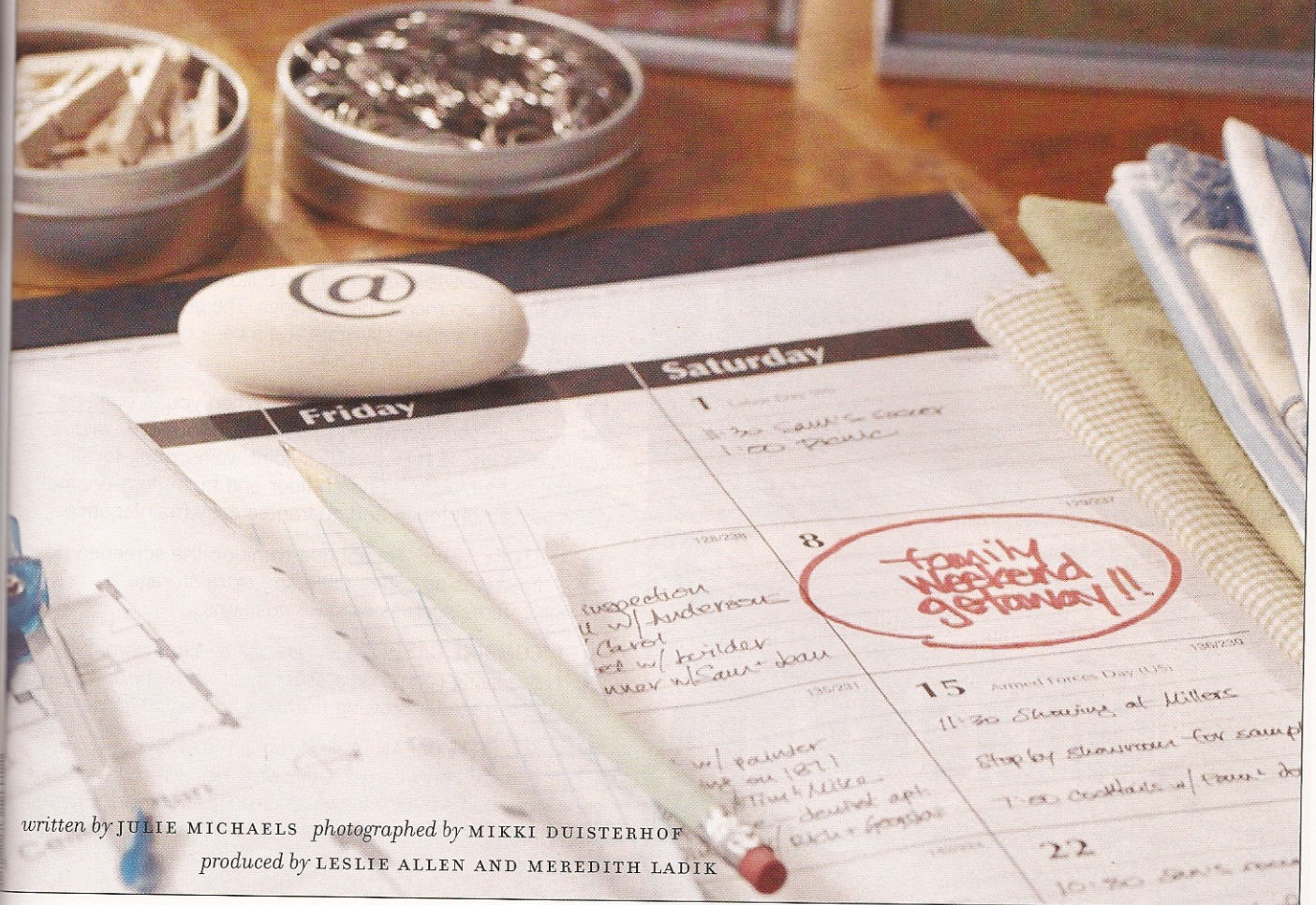
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living for the

week-end

20 ideas for building smart style into a small family getaway



written by JULIE MICHAELS photographed by MIKKI DUISTERHOF
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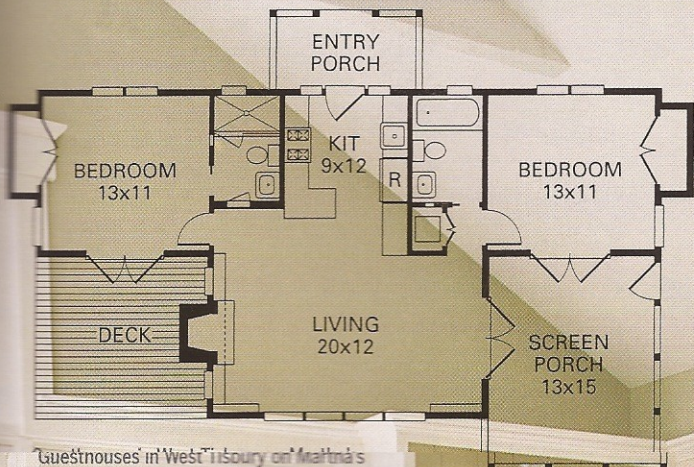
“**m**y Dad always wanted a family compound,” says interior designer Leslie Allen, explaining the tiny gem of a guest cottage that sits behind her parents’ summer home on Martha’s Vineyard. Clad in cedar shingles and clean white trim, the cottage is designed to accommodate three grown children and their families, who visit in various combinations for weekends or weeks at a time. The key, says Leslie, is flexibility, creative storage, and an eye for the grand gesture. Here are her suggestions for living large within a small space.



“Since we usually have supper at the main house, the cottage didn’t need a dining room,” says Leslie. Instead, she placed matching, square tables on the porch and in the living room. Family members can lunch at one and play cards on the other. Tables are joined for dining when there’s a crowd.

- 1 | AIM HIGH** Small doesn’t have to mean claustrophobic. “It’s always less expensive to build up than out,” says Leslie, who recommends high ceilings. The guesthouse living room rises two stories; skylights and a bank of windows help flood the room with light.
- 2 | SPLURGE ON THE DETAILS** “When you’re building small, you can afford to splurge on details,” says Leslie, who chose 6-inch-wide V-joint wainscoting for all the rooms. A bluestone porch floor and high-gloss enamel paint add a rich touch and guarantee easy maintenance.
- 3 | STORE MORE** An antique trunk on the screened porch functions as coffee table and extra storage for bulky items such as outdoor cushions.
- 4 | COMBINE CABINETS** A deep television cabinet in the living room has a second set of doors that open onto the terrace for stowing firewood and small garden tools.
- 5 | SWEEP IT CLEAN** A sisal rug in the living room is the cottage’s only carpet. Otherwise, Leslie recommends bare floors that are easy to sweep clean. Her parents chose sturdy maple for the living areas and tile for the bathrooms.





Guesthouses in Westisbury on Martha's Vineyard are limited to 800 square feet of living space. That means no space-wasting halls—instead, French doors link the rooms and give the cottage an open, airy feel.



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A good weekend cottage requires very minimal provisioning. Spare kitchen cabinets provide alternative storage. One cupboard functions as a mini office, holding a printer, paper, and pens.

6 | FIND IT AT A GLANCE Open shelves in the kitchen, paired with a stainless-steel countertop and a deep vintage-style sink, make for easy access to serving pieces and quick cleanups. "We love the simplicity and the look of the open shelves with the wainscoting," says Leslie of the short-order kitchen. "You don't have to hunt for anything."

7 | USE DOORS AS WINDOWS The main entrance to the cottage is through the galley kitchen, where a Dutch door is left open to let in light and air. Multipaned French doors also keep the small cottage awash in daylight.

8 | DO DOUBLE DUTY The overhanging stainless kitchen counter that fronts the living room serves as breakfast table and desktop, with office supplies stashed below. Another kitchen cabinet doubles as a linen closet.

9 | KEEP THINGS SIMPLE "Don't crowd the rooms," says Leslie. Minimal furnishings make the small house seem larger. Dining chairs can be moved from porch to living room for extra seating.

10 | TRY CHILDPROOF SURFACES "Why ruin a vacation worrying about spilled food or suntanned legs?" says Leslie, who covers dining chairs in easy-clean, laminated fabric. Glass tops added to tables protect painted finishes.





11 | USE BEDSIDE SHELVES

Wall-hung shelves with brackets are designed deeper than normal to serve as night tables in the master bedroom.

12 | LIGHTEN UP Wall-mounted reading sconces come in handy since space on top of the bedside shelves is limited.

13 | SHARE A NIGHTSTAND A French antique washstand separates twin beds, and its towel racks are great for storing pjs.

14 | PACK THE CLOSETS Both bedrooms have deep double closets that are fitted with drawers and shelves for holding everything from swim goggles to summer dresses—eliminating the need for dressers. Sometimes, though, drawers can be too big for little things like underwear and socks. Place cloth-covered boxes inside the drawers to keep things separated.

15 | PICTURE THE POSSIBILITY

Leslie added thicker top trim to wainscoting in the children's bedroom, creating a narrow shelf to display photos and keepsakes in a room with few tabletops.



16 | HANG IT UP A wall-mounted toothbrush/cup holder clears space on the deck of a sink. A hotel-style storage rack keeps towels out of the way.

17 | MAKE IT PRETTY, MAKE IT SIMPLE White subway tiles on bathroom walls are an easy-care solution for bathrooms that see plenty of after-beach bathing.

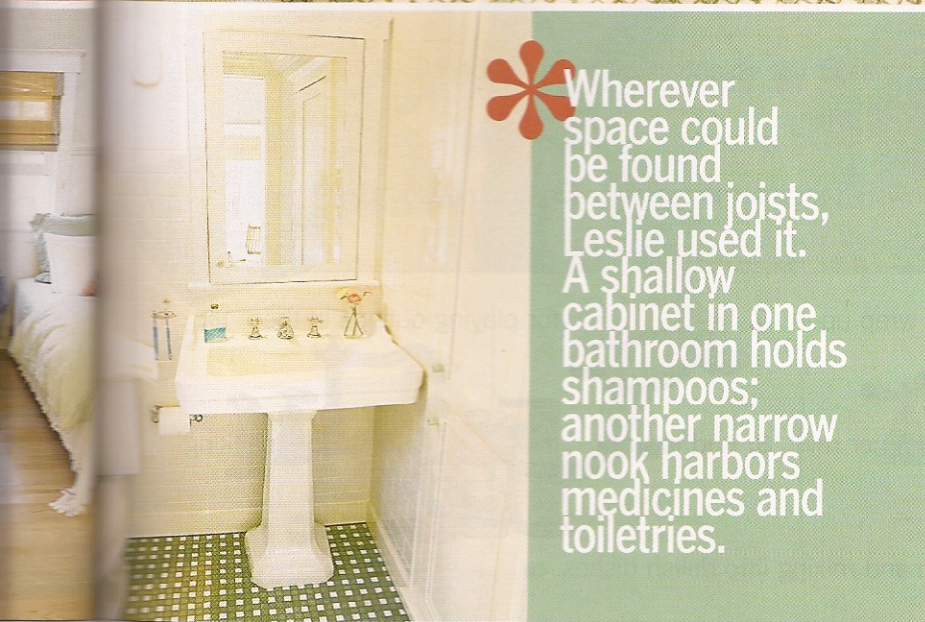
18 | PUT IT ON A PEDESTAL A pedestal sink frees up floor space, giving a less-crowded feel.

19 | DON'T FORGET THE FUN Floor tiles lend a sand-and-surf feel, and a red toy wagon on the back of a commode holds washcloths.

20 | SIMPLIFY THE LAUNDRY "My mother believes in bleach," says Leslie, who uses all white towels to make washdays a simple chore.

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For more information, see Sources beginning on page 140.



Wherever space could be found between joists, Leslie used it. A shallow cabinet in one bathroom holds shampoos; another narrow nook harbors medicines and toiletries.

