

TINY HOUSE

FOR MICRO, TINY, SMALL, AND UNCONVENTIONAL HOUSE ENTHUSIASTS



Simple Life

3 questions to ask a designer

with Johanna Elsner of Perch & Nest



Q: Is it better to approach a tiny house builder with a plan in mind or to allow them to guide you through the process?

A: Both approaches are acceptable if you are specifically working with a small space designer. (Some builders do require the buyer to provide a finalized designed plan rather than offer a design service as part of their build services and therefore, you will want to have the layout work done beforehand.) I always tell folks to make a quick "napkin sketch" of what they are envisioning for their home OR simply make a list of must-haves and deal breakers. From there, we can draft scaled renderings and tweak things together based on more specific details of their home. (Ie. If you do not desire a bathroom beside your kitchen or a screened in porch is a must, these are important details to mention early on and will only speed up the design process.)

Q: How does having a traditional flush commode -vs- a composting toilet change the design of the bathroom and even the shape/ placement?

A: If you are designing around RV compliance/ code, anything goes in terms of toileting placement. Meaning, you are not limited to a specific design layout with any of the RV compliant toileting options. (Composting, incinerating, or macerating.) Of course, the size as well as the utilities needed to operate these fixtures does vary and that may determine your final bathroom size and utility layout. Therefore, it is critical to research the fixtures specifications before finalizing the layout of this room and making this (often) large purchase. (Ie Does a power source need to be placed away from your bathing area? Does the toilet need space to open and be emptied? Where will the vent be located on your exterior? And so on.) Of course, if you are working with a designer, they will assist you with all of these details as well.

Q: If I want to stay in my tiny house for years and years do you think it is best to look at a loft or something single level? Why? How does that effect the design?

A: This is certainly an important detail to consider not only for long term use, but also for the possibility of resale and/or rental purposes. Creating a diverse space that can grow with you (or someone else) provides longevity for your investment and is generally simple to achieve in a tiny layout. Ie. If a grand open ceiling isn't a crucial part of the design of the home, including lofts and maximizing sleeping areas in the original design is a good idea even if they will not be used initially. Having a living room that may double as a bedroom down the road is also a great idea if you do not see yourself using a loft long term.

Perch & Nest bridges a passion for both simple living and skilled craftsmanship. Whether new or restored, on wheels or on land, each of our homes is custom designed with the end users needs and inspiration in mind. And every Perch & Nest home is constructed utilizing general building code and state-of-the-art materials ensuring your home is safe, efficient, and will withstand our times.

Hailing from a 15+ year career in both public accounting and personal organization, Johanna brings a past of house flipping, thrift store shopping, crafting, and reclaiming things "destined for the dump" to the tiny table. As Perch & Nest's lead designer, a mother, wife, and homesteader, Johanna understands what it takes to achieve practical design along with practical budgeting. "Designing tiny brings everything we love into one venue. Every day feels like a coffee date sharing ideas with friends. I can't see us doing anything else!"