

### Tiny Living

adapted from a blog by Ashley Rossi



- 1 If you haven't come across a tiny home TV show or *Buzzfeed* article yet, let me be the first to introduce you to the concept of "tiny living." It's a minimalist lifestyle that's resonating with multiple generations, and some people are going so far as to ditch their four-bedroom homes and white picket fences for a mini-sized house on wheels.
- 2 Each tiny home tells a story about its owner(s) – how it was built, where it has traveled, and what purpose it serves. Mario lost his house in the 2008 recession, and when it came time for him to buy a new house after paying off his debts, he looked for an alternative. He built his house completely on his own, and included features like saltwater batteries, wireless lights, a skylight, air conditioning, and a wireless door. Going green wasn't his motivation, but that lifestyle fit well with tiny living. Jenna and Guillaume didn't want the burden of a mortgage and debt, so they quit their 9-5 jobs for a tiny-house lifestyle. Alexis and Christian always loved the concept of outdoor living.
- 3 When Mario went to register his tiny house in California, it was initially classified as a "travel trailer." And while it is a widely accepted lifestyle, in the U.S. it is forbidden by law to stay and sleep in a travel trailer full-time, so this makes tiny living a little tricky. Jenna and Guillaume were given an eviction notice last year when parked on a lot in Denver because someone complained about their house in the neighborhood they were parked in. Jenna believes things are changing, though. "I think they're not going to tell 30,000 (or however many tiny houses there are) people that they have to destroy their tiny home on wheels." Alexis and Christian think they have a great potential to positively impact the homeless population and low-income areas.

- 4 The situation is beginning to change. Fresno, California is now the first official city to classify tiny homes as a secondary residence, which meets the basic requirements for full-time living. That is a step forward. Mario is confident that once some states allow tiny homes to be permanently occupied, 7.
- 5 Ranging between 100 to 400 square feet, one of the most fascinating parts of a tiny home is the creativity in fitting the necessities in such a small space. “Overall it feels like me and it fits my personality ... I’ve never lived somewhere where it’s felt so much like me,” says Alexis. One of the best parts for the couple is “really tailoring for how you live your life, about boiling down to the essence of what you really love or need and how you use your space.” Jenna says: “You don’t have to have the 4,000-square-foot mansion to show off your wealth. It’s a different idea of the American Dream.” The average cost of a U.S. home is \$341,500, while a professionally built tiny house averages around \$47,500, and a personally built tiny home costs around \$27,500.

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