O

AT HOME

AN OPRAH
MAGAZINE

SURPRISE!
NATE KNOCKS
ON *YOUR* DOOR
Meet the Winners
of Our First-Ever
Design Contest

How to
LIVE
LARGE IN
A SMALL
SPACE

THE BIG IDEA ISSUE
OPRAH'S FAVORITE DECORATING TIP
and 104 Other Fresh Moves You'll Love

Living Room

IDEA #34 Eric and Lauren Wendlandt painted the walls *and* ceiling a variety of pale, cool colors—putty, seafoam, and glass green—to give the impression of airiness.

IDEA #35 A traditional boxy TV would loom like a zeppelin in Eric and Lauren's living room—unlike this worth-every-penny flat-screen.
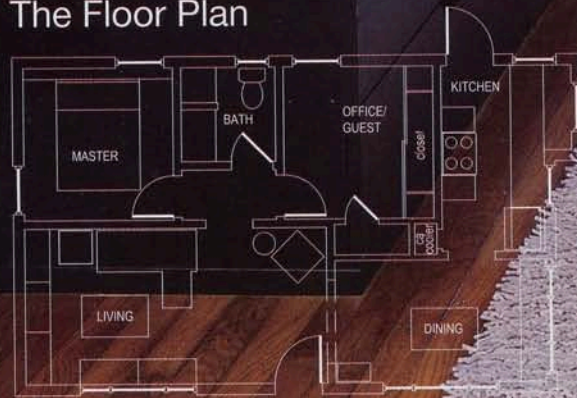
IDEA #36 To take advantage of the area under the mantel—and eliminate the need for freestanding bookcases and a bar cart—the couple designed craftsman-style built-ins that look original to the house.

IDEA #37 This hard-working bench not only provides a tremendous amount of storage, it also offers seating for up to four guests. (When friends and family come calling, the coffee-table tomes laid out on its surface get stashed below.) "We try to multifunction everything," Lauren says.

IDEA #38 She and Eric resisted the urge to fill a tiny room with lots of little furniture: One big piece, like this sofa-and-chaise combo, creates a room-within-a-room feel.

The Floor Plan

MASTER

BATH

OFFICE/ GUEST

closet

KITCHEN

LIVING

DINING

The Wendlandts in their living room, beneath an arrangement of black-and-white photos and candle-topped wall cubes.

Close Comfort

Eric and Lauren Wendlandt transformed a tiny San Diego bungalow into a home of consequence. **By Katy McColl**

LEAVE IT TO A MOON-EYED YOUNG COUPLE to see the potential in a 96-year-old, 750-square-foot, mouse-and-spider-infested fixer-upper that needed updated wiring, new plumbing, and a down-to-the-studs gut renovation. Then again, Eric and Lauren Wendlandt aren't just two 29-year-old dreamers from the Midwest. By the time they moved to San Diego and purchased their house in 2005, both had earned bachelor's degrees in architecture from Kansas State University. Even better for a couple on a budget: Lauren works for a firm best known for its low-income housing. "The expensive part of renovating is the labor," she says, "so we did it all ourselves." Lauren oversaw the plumbing, while Eric handled the electrical system. The only real rough patch occurred during the four long weeks the pair lived without a proper bathroom. "It was like camping," Lauren says, laughing, "We did a lot of 'European bathing.' But at least we have the same design sense. I can't imagine us doing this if we didn't." ◯