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## THE LIFESTYLE MICRO HOMES

*A new generation of home buyers has spurred  
a small revolution – the tiny house trend*

Developers, housebuilders and even design brands are doing a lot more with a lot less space. In housing, great things now come in small packages, thanks to the introduction of the micro home.

Private developer Pocket Living specialises in compact 38-square-metre one-bedroom flats that cost at least 20 per cent less than the surrounding market rate. Its two latest iterations in Lewisham feature apartments that were built off-site at Vision Modular Systems' factory in Bedford. Placed in hip neighbourhoods, these



### COOKIE-CUTTER APARTMENTS THESE ARE NOT. THE NEW GENERATION OF SMALL HOMES ARE STYLISH AND PACKED WITH SMART STORAGE

flats boast leafy communal spaces, bike parking and big picture windows that promise light-filled rooms ([pocketliving.com](http://pocketliving.com)). Similarly, YO! Home has also embraced the move towards small, prefabricated homes, with its first build underway in Manchester. Its cleverly designed 40-square-metre apartments will be built in a factory and then trucked onto the site, cutting down on building costs – meaning the savings can be passed on to buyers ([yo.co.uk](http://yo.co.uk)).

Meanwhile, private developer U+I ([uandiplc.com](http://uandiplc.com)) is debuting an even smaller, rental-only concept in London: the 'micro-flat'. It's out to convince the authorities that middle-income young professionals would gladly opt for less space than the current minimum standards for a studio (37 square metres) if it meant affordable living. It's collaborating with two architecture firms, Ab Rogers Design ([abrogers.com](http://abrogers.com)) and The Manser Practice ([manser.co.uk](http://manser.co.uk)) to design and build two prototypes, at 19 and 24 square metres respectively. One features 3.2-metre-high ceilings that allow for a bed on a mezzanine level, a spacious built-in closet and drawers built into the stairs. Plus, the apartments are both decked out in John Lewis' smart 'House' range ([johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)). >

WORDS: ELIZA HONEY



From top The 'Hut' by Japanese retailer Muji. One of the new Manchester-based mini apartments by YO! Home. A 'micro-flat' prototype by private developer U+I, decorated using the stylish John Lewis 'Home' collection



**THE MOVEMENT  
TOWARDS MICRO  
LIVING ISN'T JUST  
MOTIVATED BY SPACE  
CONSTRAINTS AND  
AFFORDABILITY  
- SMALL CAN ALSO  
BE LUXURIOUS**

### MICRO HOMES...

But it's not just about necessity – small can also be luxurious. Minimalist retailer Muji recently debuted its 'Hut' as a consumer product in Japan. The stylish, black timber-framed cabin consists of a 9.1-square-metre room and a 3.1-square-metre porch, with its plywood interior making it a beautiful outhouse for the garden or a mini beachside retreat (muji.com). Meanwhile, Danish kitchen and bathroom specialist Vipp was one of the first to embrace the micro living trend with its modular steel and glass 'Vipp Shelters' this year (vipp.com). The brand first rolled these homes out from its Copenhagen headquarters and, this year, it's looking to make them available in more locations, including the US and Lebanon.

Micro living is more than just a solution to a lack of urban space – it's part of a growing minimalist revolution and a movement towards affordable house ownership. As our lives become ever more cluttered, the definition of home is changing. New buyers are realising that houses don't have to be big to be beautiful – it's about putting your stamp on your living space, however small it may be. We're paring down our belongings and not just making do with less room – rather, we're consciously opting for it. **ED**



**From top** The ultra-sleek 'Vipp Shelter' by the kitchen and bathroom brand is one of the first, and still one of the most stylish, examples of small-space living. The plywood-clad interior of the 'Hut' by Muji, with its large picture window (see previous page for exterior shot)

PICTURES: WETOUCH/IMAGEWORK

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