

The logo consists of the letters 'D', 'X', 'X', and 'V' in a stylized, white, serif font, arranged in a square pattern on a black background.A photograph of a bathroom featuring the Fitzgerald Collection fixtures. On the left is a white toilet. In the center is a white pedestal sink on a chrome stand. On the right is a white freestanding bathtub. The room has a patterned wall, a round mirror, and a patterned rug.

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A photograph of a modern wooden house with a gabled roof and large windows. The house is surrounded by trees and a clear blue sky. The text 'eugene LIVING Sustainable Home & Garden' is overlaid on the image.

# eugene LIVING

Sustainable Home & Garden

TWO OF A KIND | HOME AND HEARTH | A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST

# Side-by-Side Minimalist Living

Two Fox Hollow homes share a footprint and a clean, modern style

BY ANTHONY ST. CLAIR • PHOTOS BY RICK KEATING

RENDERING BY HOPPER DESIGN + ILLUSTRATION

**E**UGENE HOMEOWNERS BETTY AND JIM CAME to an understanding early in their relationship: They wouldn't marry or live together, but they wanted their relationship to continue. That meant Jim purchasing a house down the street from Betty in California and continued when Betty moved to Oregon ("to get away after Facebook took over the town,"



she says). They bought three lots of undeveloped land in Fox Hollow to build side-by-side his-and-hers homes.

Betty bought one lot for her home, Jim bought a lot for his home, and they bought the third together, for a total of 4.79 acres. Betty's house is finished and lived in, while Jim's is almost done. Jim chose nearly all the same fixtures and finishings for his home, and they can look out their kitchen windows and wave to each other as they're doing dishes.

At only 1,200 square feet, each house is a modest size for an architect-designed home, but it represents a substantial increase from the 930 square feet that Betty had in California.

Betty wanted a home she could live in as she ages—something all on one floor with no steps or levels—and something that blended in with the forested environment and had abundant natural light.

"The counters are the color of dried grass," Betty says. "The light fixtures are the same color as the oak leaves.

There are a lot of windows. I really like the connection to the outside and I rarely turn the lights on, even in the winter, because I don't need to."

Betty wanted nothing too heavy or dark, and she sees the outdoors from every room through the abundant windows. Sliding glass doors off the bedroom and living room open to small patios. Inside, the walls are white, with roll-down screens she rarely uses. "There are so many windows that one drawback is there's no place to put art!" she laughs.

To help make up for that, Betty, with her eye for gorgeous color, fits art and color in where she can. One photographic print of leaves on a frozen Walden Pond by John Wawrzonek anchors a living room wall in a wash of blues and earth tones. Colorful touches include a blue couch and chair, yellow-green pillows, and a windowsill filled with bright, multicolored glass bottles that catch the sun. Betty added an embroidered red cushion to a Danish chair she found on the street years ago,

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and even the jackets on her collection of birding books and cookbooks seem chosen for the colors they bring. Light, natural-finish engineered-wood floors and a glass tabletop allow light to reflect and the eye to settle. Radiant heat flooring adds to the comfort.

“We were creating a blank canvas,” says Eugene architect Willard C. Dixon, who designed both houses. “This home is like Betty’s painting for the artwork she appreciates and her eye for color.”

Betty enjoys cooking, canning, and entertaining, and in the kitchen, a downdraft stove with no hood provides for open views, while a 9-foot rounded granite peninsula creates plenty of elbow space. Adjacent to the kitchen is a table

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to seat guests along with a simple work area that can be cleared for buffet space.

Betty’s form-and-function choices were informed by her desire for ease and convenience. Wooden floors throughout and 14-foot ceilings allow Betty to feel less hemmed in. Betty doesn’t like vacuuming and didn’t want long hallways. The bed and nightstand rest on felt pads so they

both move easily for cleaning. “The nightstand can be vacuumed under without having to move it,” explains Betty, “but it is light enough that I can move it if I need to.”

“It’s a blessing as an architect to work with someone who knows what they want,” Dixon says.

At Betty’s request, Dixon made one



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“ This home is like Betty’s painting for the artwork she appreciates and her eye for color.”

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In designing the house, architect Will Dixon worked with Betty to create a blank canvas for her taste in color and art, including in the bathroom.



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subtle design change: moving a bedroom window from the corner to the right side of the wall. “She wanted to be able to look out the window from her bed,” Dixon says. “She was really able to picture it and knew she wanted that. The best projects are always collaborative.”

“I’ve always had my coffee in bed looking at the wildlife out the window,” Betty explains.

The bathroom off the bedroom is a serene white with blue and aqua highlights, including transparent aqua plexiglass towel bars and toilet paper holder, which also doubles as a grab bar.

The second bedroom is a guest room/exercise room with a handcrafted Murphy bed, made by Dee’s Cabinetry in Junction City, and a similar bathroom. “I’m a lazy shopper!” Betty says with a laugh. The Murphy bed’s light-colored finish allows it to visually recede and blend in with the rest of the room when not in use.

Jim’s home is very similar except that his ceilings are slightly

lower and he chose a different hardwood oak for his flooring finish.

Outside, nearly clear red cedar siding and a green roof help the structures blend into the landscape. Dixon is hoping Betty will refinish the cedar siding over time, but she says she might not. “I can visualize the cedar graying out like the tree trunks and the green roof making it really look like part of the landscape,” she says. “That’s what I wanted, two little houses in a great big field of grass.”

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