

She Shed

YOUR PRIVATE ESCAPE



Men have been sloping off to their man caves to drink beer, play with power tools, watch sports or indulge in other manly pastimes for years. Why shouldn't ladies have a similar place to escape to? *Words by Natasha Were and Tracey Kline.*

The good news is, they are beginning to. She Sheds are popping up in backyards across North America and provoking envy on social media. As the name implies, a She Shed is the lady of the house's private retreat. It's a child-free, spouse-free, work-free space – a sanity-saving sanctuary to relax, unwind and enjoy quality 'me time', or focus on a hobby or interest – all in blissful peace and solitude. Who wouldn't want one?

A SHE SHED NEED NOT BE A SHED

If you have an unused garden shed on your property, what are you waiting for? Stake your claim, sell, donate or relocate its contents, and get painting and decorating.

For those with yard space, but no existing structure, custom sheds can be built for about half the cost of adding a room to a house, while DIY kit sheds can be purchased for around US\$3000. A simpler option – especially if you lack the space – is to turn a guest room or junk room into your own little Zen den.

DEFINE ITS USE

Before you dive headfirst into building or remodelling, ask yourself why you want

a She Shed. For some, the dream might be a place to simply curl up and read a book; for others it's the chance to have a studio where they can paint, sew, write or do pottery. Or you may prefer to make it a health and wellness pod where you can practise yoga, meditate or work out. Use it for whatever makes you feel good.

DESIGN YOUR ZEN

This is your space, and yours alone, so if you've had to rein in your femininity in the home, this is your chance to max out on florals, scatter cushions, scented candles and all things girly.

If an oasis of calm is what you need, choose soothing colours, soft fabrics, dimmable lights, and keep it clutter-free. Does proximity to nature make you feel grounded? Then fill it with plants, install window boxes or surround it with shrubs, grasses and vines.

Creating a relaxing ambience needn't cost a fortune, and furniture-wise, all you really need is some comfy seating (or a daybed if space allows), a worktable at which to draw, write or craft, and perhaps a kettle and/or small fridge for refreshments.

BYE BYE, WIFI

While a She Shed can take many forms, they should be technology-free zones. The point is to switch off, disconnect and tune out, so leave the TVs, phones and tablets elsewhere.

RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT

The real ROI is the psychological wellbeing you – and by extension your family – will enjoy as a result of having such a refuge. But if you need to justify the financial outlay it's easy: sheds add to the resale value of a property. As well as being an attractive addition to a garden, they provide extra living or work space. If realtors are increasingly highlighting sheds – or even space for sheds – in property descriptions and sales pitches there can be little doubt as to their appeal.

The She Shed: a place to escape from it all, without going anywhere. 🏡

For more design information contact Tracey Kline of Encompass Cayman: www.encompasscayman.com

