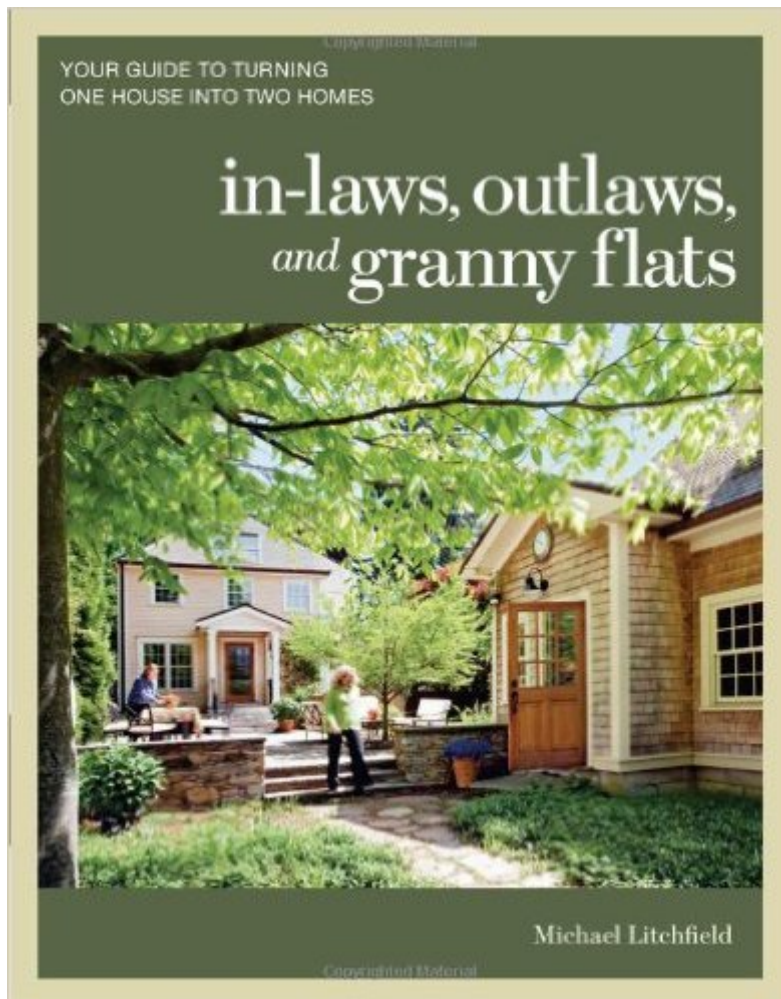


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# In-laws, Outlaws, And Granny Flats: Your Guide To Turning One House Into Two Homes



## Synopsis

In response to tight times, a remarkably upbeat and widespread change is taking place in households across America. Homeowners are creating second dwelling units--often called in-law suites, mother-in-law apartments, or granny flats. Second units make a lot of sense. They're perfect for families who want several generations living close by, they enable Baby Boomers to care for elderly parents while respecting their independence, provide private quarters for adult children still at home or, rented out, second units can generate income to pay the mortgage or provide for retirement. "In-Laws, Outlaws, and Granny Flats" is the first book to explore the many designs, uses and benefits of this time-honored and emotionally satisfying living arrangement. In-law units take many forms and they're all shown here: attic, basement and garage conversions, bump-out additions, carve-out suites, and backyard cottages. Creating an in-law unit--turning one house into two homes--is arguably greenest, most cost-efficient way to create a small home or cottage because you're building small, building on an existing lot, and conserving building materials. This book covers every aspect of turning one house into two homes. Its first four chapters deal with the specifics of assessing your needs, selecting an appropriate design, choosing space- and energy-saving appliances, and getting your plans approved. The book's second half is a warm and engaging portfolio of in-law units and the families who created them: what needs prompted their decisions, which layouts worked best, and how they met life challenges with common sense, creativity and compassion. With more than 200 color photographs, 50 floor plans and architectural details, and a lively, personable voice, "In-laws, Outlaws, and Granny Flats" is perfect for homeowners who want richer lives and a more secure future.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

We recently relocated back to the mid-atlantic region after being away for five years. My husband and I are retired and will be looking to buy a 'seasoned charmer' home in the next 2 years as opposed to a newer mcmansion with wasted space for two people. I saw this book reviewed in the Washington Post and since I have adult children with families in the immediate area, I was curious as to what options might be available in building a smaller space on an already inhabited residential lot. My advice to anyone contemplating this same option is 'don't pick up this book and start to explore it, anytime close to preparing a meal, unless you have a second cook in the house or you can order carryout.' It's mezmorizing in ideas, floor plans, before/after results pictures and makes you want to get in your car and start exploring the nearest town for available lots. I read it from cover to cover and kept interrupting my husband's activities to show him my latest 'what a great idea' find. I sent an email to a close friend in KC recommending this book to her since they are close to buying land and building a home and a MIL space with it. If you get this book, also get 'What Your Contractor Can't Tell You', as well. Equally as fabulous for information and getting to know the ins and outs of building or remodeling. Both books will be dog-eared worn out from referencing them in the near future.

Michael Litchfield's newly released book, In-laws, outlaws and granny flats follows in the tradition of Taunton Press' high quality crafts magazines and books. The photographs are beautiful and the layout and design is carefully done and easy on the eye. Where this book differs from many of their others, however, is in the ground-breaking nature of the "granny unit" topic. While granny units, or accessory dwelling units, were once common place as a way of providing for the shelter needs of extended family members our current-day communities have often turned their backs on this type of housing. Modern day zoning practices routinely see these small backyard cottages and converted attic and basement apartments as a threat to the serenity of our single-family neighborhoods.

Michael's new book is the first of its kind to challenge this way of thinking. Through the use of an impressive and carefully researched list of diverse case studies his book walks you through the re-emerging granny unit phenomenon. Granny units are actually just now begining to gain favor as a smart growth solution to communities that need to grow while keeping sprawl in check. Creative homeowners and their architects are finding ways that these small, energy efficient homes can

actually fit within existing neighborhoods with minimal impact. Relatively affordable, simply by virtue of their diminutive size, granny units are returning to our communities to offer the diversity of housing types that has been lacking for so many years. We are no longer a nation of husband, wife, three kids and a dog kind of families and our housing stock needs to change to meet the new times. Granny units offer a small step in that direction by offering a greater selection of housing options. They offer a way for seniors to downsize while remaining in their old neighborhoods, help augment the incomes of new homeowners and provide just the right balance between independence and support for young just-out-of-the-nest adults and grandparents alike. What's great about Michael's book is that he doesn't just show you his granny unit discoveries, he introduces you to the individuals and households and neighborhoods that struggled to create these ground breaking examples. He lets you see from their point of view the housing dilemmas that they faced, the options that they explored, and the solutions that they created. My take is that this will be the historic first book that will mark the beginning of a new wave of granny unit growth that will take place in the coming years across America.

What do you do when your elderly parent who lives alone can no longer drive herself or do errands? Where can your adult child who has just graduated college live when he has just landed his first job but cannot yet afford to rent or buy? What do you do with all the extra space in your house when the kids are gone--or you are newly widowed? Being an architect, I like to think that some of life's problems can be solved architecturally. Mike Litchfield, in his new book, *In-laws, Outlaws, and Granny Flats* sets out to prove this premise in a complete and compelling way. Think of Litchfield's book as a guide to get you started on the road to creating a second unit. Whether you are tackling the process by yourself, have an architect or contractor already on board, or are just in the early stages of exploring your options, this book can help you find your way. Baby Boomers will find this book especially helpful. An excellent primer on the complex issues of creating two homes from one house, *In-laws, Outlaws* is a must-read for anyone hoping to meet life challenges by making better use of their homes, or considering a shared living situation.

I concur with the other reviewers. There are several different methods for configuring an ADU and most are represented here. The text flows logically from dealing with planning departments through choosing a design appropriate for your needs. The sections on choosing space-saving appliances are especially concise and well reasoned. This book should be useful to anyone living in a small space, whether a second unit or not. Made us wish we still had living in-laws!

INLAWS is a great book. And one of the few I have read on housing that actually has people in it. Not coffee-table book pretty people, but real people with real stories about why they built their in-law unit. What was going on in their lives, what kind of in-law they decided to build (basement, attic convert, cottage, etc.) and how things worked out. Young people, old people, kids, dogs, even a baby or two. The photos are so rich you could walk through them opening doors and the floor plans look hand-drawn. Beautiful layout, too. Every corner has something useful tucked into it and reading Litchfield is like listening to your favorite uncle, the one who showed you how to bait a fish hook. Tons of useful stuff, too.

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