



Undecorate: The No-Rules Approach to Interior Design

Christiane Lemieux , Rumaan Alam (Contributor)

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Jettison the old rulebooks about home décor and “undecorate” your space. As the founder and creative director of DwellStudio—which is famous for its brightly colored, graphic textile designs for home furnishings—designer Christiane Lemieux challenges tradition in a quintessentially American way, championing a fresh, unconventional approach to creating a beautiful and comfortable home. Lemieux emboldens readers to push aside stuffy, professionally-designed décor, showing them instead how to infuse their own personality into their home.

Undecorate profiles twenty homes from all over the country, revealing their owners’ love of imperfection and penchant for surprise and unusual juxtapositions while inspiring readers to follow their own whimsy and practicalities in their personal spaces. An anglophile creates an English manor in Hollywood, mixing British flea-market finds with midcentury furniture. A car fanatic turns a vintage Airstream trailer into a master bedroom and situates it in the middle of a vast industrial loft in downtown Chicago. A couple transforms a log house in Nashville, Tennessee, by blending their modern and eclectic styles with the home’s rustic charm. Though the designs differ widely, the spaces all express an open-minded attitude. Some homes embrace their contexts, while others transcend them. All are shaped by instinct and imagination and share innovative ideas that readers can use to organically and elegantly create their home to match their lifestyle and tastes.

Lemieux gets to the essence of the homeowners’ distinctive styles, pinpointing the transformative ideas, thoughtful details, and useful solutions that make each home memorable. With more than 200 full-color photographs, *Undecorate* will both inspire and guide homeowners to a new outlook on home design.

Undecorate: The No-Rules Approach to Interior Design Details

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From Reader Review Undecorate: The No-Rules Approach to Interior Design for online ebook

Peter Derk says

Here's my BuzzFeed-style review, Home Decorations That Prove You Have Too Much Money

+Giant, framed art that's on the floor, leaning against the wall. This is a thing, I guess. Want to be a decorating rebel? Just lean that shit against the wall. C'mon, don't be a dick. That's terrible. That's basically the easiest way to say "I do not vacuum/mop/sweep my own house."

+Outdoor, concrete garden statues, note the plural, inside, on the floor. If you don't want that room, you can just board it up, you know. Tell people it's haunted. Now THAT'S fun.

+Stacks of books all over the floor, sometimes with art perched on top, sometimes a vase. This is one of those rich man/poor man things. Your artfully arranged, on-the-floor book stacks do nothing for me, sir. I would go so far as to say I hate them.

+Lamps that rich people own. Seriously, these table lamps look like infectious disease cells as viewed under a microscope. How is it that rich people have the worst lamps? They could get any, cool lamp they wanted, and the crap they get, my god, it's like a ceramic thing someone made, and while they were throwing it on the wheel, they vomited all over it and just kept on a spinnin'.

+Crazy fucking chairs. These are very generously called chairs because no one is sitting on that fucking thing. A metal, wire frame chair? That's like something they would have in a movie inside of a futuristic prison. Here's a hint: If you're buying a chair from a store, and if that chair is the only one of its kind, I probably hate that chair.

+Trilobites. That's a bug, sir. If you want to decorate with bugs, come by my place, see how it works for real.

+A giant mirror, leaned up against THE WINDOW, at like a 45-degree angle. Just, why?

+Giant, weird, fake animal furs on the floor. This is like a universal rich person decoration. A giant, fake cowhide, or a giant, fake polar bear fur or something. They love that shit. I don't know why.

+Giant, old-timey maps. If it's got a sea monster where Hawaii should be, and if it's sold at a pricey map store in a downtown storefront, then it's a must-have for richards.

+A tree stump. Yeah, you can try and perch a newspaper on that sucker. We know how it really functions. We know it's a matter of hauling something up a flight of stairs and then just slowly building up the guts to toss it off the balcony. You'll get there.

Brittany says

I was disappointed at the conventionality of this book rather quickly and quit reading and just looked at the pictures. While this approach may be "undecorated" by 1950s' standards, these pictures would be perfectly at

home in Elle Decor, Dwell, IKEA, or West Elm, etc. which makes me think this book is titled incorrectly. For a book coming from 2011, this seems just like the mode du jour in my opinion.

Sarah says

i don't know why all the middling ratings...this is such a beautiful, inspiring book - a total 5. i especially loved the peek inside the marina city tower (chicago) apt. at the end!

pea. says

a twist on the blog to book ... it is her pinterest boards with long winded, kiss assy explanations of details that may or may not be as over thought out as one is lead to believe.

LemontreeLime says

I ended up feeling a little disappointed with this interior design book. I thought it was going to be more of a 'how to use what you got', instead of 'here look at all these peoples houses who have more money and time than you'. *shrugs*

Sara-Kay says

Too expensive. Too cluttered.

jess says

This interior design book, from the creators of DwellStudio, is about breaking rules like harmony, balance, scale and moderation. The premise of this book is that we, the people, are on the cusp of an "undecorate" movement in contemporary interior design. The advent of the internet democratizes interior style, providing inspiration, a soap box and suitable d.i.y. instruction to turn anyone with a sense of style into their own interior designer. In this environment, breaking the stuffy old conventional rules of interior design is de rigueur. The only rule that seems to remain is that you must love it. Fabrics and patterns don't match or even complement each other. Wallpaper creeps up the ceiling.

Some of the homes in this book are not exactly my taste, but I found myself "ooh"ing and "aah"ing more often than not. Each home is distinctly different from the others in the book because this isn't a lesson in A Style; it's an inspiration for Style. What they have in common is a truly personal expression of each quirky, creative, busy person/people/family. The resource list is predictable if you read websites like Apartment Therapy, and the really exciting shopping comes from flea markets, antique stores & thrift shops. We all already knew that, but I admire the way these homes pull that together and make it look so effortless.

Grace says

One of the best interior design books I've read recently. Not every interior will be to everyone's taste (my favorite was the couple with the antique farm outside New York), and some may seem ridiculous, but they all encourage you to think outside the decorating box.

Ligaya says

I admit that I read little of the text within this book, much preferring to take in the photographs in and of themselves. The photos show interiors that are more lived in than many interior design books - so that's a big plus. But there were many interiors that I wondered if people really lived there at all - oh, so much statuary inside!! Interesting glimpse into some peoples lives.

LibrarEmiller says

Fantastic photos and the homes/apts... yeah thats what I want. That is where I want to live :-)) Lovely book. Would have it on my coffee table, if there wasn't so much other crap on there already.

Audrey says

Lemieux has gathered a collection of beautiful homes for this book, and I found most of them to be accessible and not unrealistically styled (although there were a couple of exceptions) as is usually the case with interior design books. I was obviously drawn to the homes of families with children, particularly those where it was evident that they **LIVED** in their homes -- that's not always evident in some of the houses you frequently see on design blogs or in shelter mags. For me, the standout houses were Genifer Goodman Sohr's Nashville log cabin, Kim Ficaro's Brooklyn apartment, Christina Sacalis's New Jersey home, and Harriet Maxwell McDonald's beach cottage. The text is well-written, and I took away several good reminders from Lemieux's "undecorated" vision.

**Note: It did get to where I was playing "spot the Dwell bedding in each house" as I browsed. Lemieux's line was featured in almost every home in the book and become a little obtrusive toward the end, particularly since several homes featured the same linens on their master beds quite close together, making it much more obvious.*

Relyn says

I have honestly no idea what was undecorated about these homes. Everyone of them seemed completely "done". Yes, they tended to be done in thrift store finds and too much clutter, but they were still done by a decorator. I found the books premise really annoying since it was so obviously untrue.

Liaken says

The thing I really, really like about this book: The way it gives permission to go totally toward your own style, whatever that may be.

The thing I really didn't like about this book: I didn't connect with any of the styles presented. Not one. But maybe that teaches me A LOT about my own style.

I realized as I looked at the pictures that I often found them cluttered. I like clean and open. I like comfort and warmth. I like inviting and interesting. I do not like clutter and distraction (lots of distraction in this book, according to my taste). I do not like loud colors and clashing patterns. I guess I wish there had been some examples that weren't as "excessive" as those pictured. Something with the breath of simplicity while at the same time being individual. That's what I'm looking for.

This is an eclectic book in many ways, which is both its great strength and its great weakness. By the end, I didn't feel like I had an idea of what "undecorate" meant in practice. In theory, yes. But practice, no. So, the idea of the book is inspiring, but none of the pictures were ... for me anyway.

Ctny says

I think most interior design readers are truly voyeurs at heart. I glean bits and tiny ideas about staging a home but in all honesty I barely have a functional structure to my living space let alone a sense of style. Lemieux must know this she urges her readers to design around the chaos of their lives and grasp at the symbolic style of what soothes our artistic spirits. I've tore through many a decorating book with the same mission. Lemieux sorts undercoating by people rather than styles and although there's a bit too much copy for my taste, rampant ubiquitous turn of the century white walls, and obviously I can't afford to decorate a cardboard box -she does a tremendous job in presenting diversity of style and geography with a cogent flow. I am happy that 90% of this book isn't apartments in Brooklyn. My favorites happen to be from the homes in Louisiana. Don't take my word for it take a look for yourself.

Martha says

The founder of DwellStudio is publisher and amassed this collection of photographs providing a variety of personal style dwelling ideas. She proves that all a home needs to be is clean. The interior design and decor is really the personality of the inhabitants. I marvel at the collections, textiles, display of color and function within design. Really fun!
