



Outside the Not So Big House: Creating the Landscape of Home

Julie Moir Messervy, Sarah Susanka

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In this groundbreaking book, noted landscape designer and award-winning writer Julie Moir Messervy and bestselling author Sarah Susanka reveal how to bring house and garden into perfect harmony. After all, who doesn't yearn for a landscape that is as well designed as the interior of their home? In "Outside the Not So Big House," Julie and Sarah teach you everything you need to know about the design concepts essential to extending your home beyond its four walls.

Lushly photographed and illustrated with vivid drawings, "Outside the Not So Big House" explores how to build pathways and journeys in your gardens; how to make the most of your site; how to use details to bring it all together. Twenty homes from across the country aptly illustrate these easy-to-grasp design ideas. Fans of Sarah's previous Not So Big books will be pleased to discover not only Julie's clear, concise prose but also a new vision for creating home.

Outside the Not So Big House: Creating the Landscape of Home Details

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Ruth says

I read this book for home landscaping/garden design ideas and was disappointed. I had previously read Julie Moir Messervy's *_The Inward Garden_* and found it much more useful. Reading Outside the Not So Big House, I felt there was a disconnect between the home design aspect and the garden design aspect, and neither aspect was discussed adequately. BUT, there are great photos and layouts of a number of greatly-varied landscapes and in the end one of the photos did validate an idea I had been tossing around for my yard.

My greatest criticism of the book is that it seems to speak primarily to people with endless finances and structural possibilities. The book speaks much about enlarging windows and angling corners full of windows to face certain aspects of the landscape. These ideas are not practical for the vast majority of people because their implementation would require substantial structural design, or changing the very foundation of a building, yet these ideas were reiterated in illustration after illustration. I was expecting to see more about using plant design and garden structures to draw the eye inward or outward.

Marjanne says

There were some beautiful homes and properties in this book. Some good ideas and it got me thinking about how best to utilize my own piece of land. However, I was disappointed that so many of the homes and yards were quite large. Not exactly "not so big". This is good for ideas and inspiration, but not so great for advice, etc.

Marcie says

I thought this would be about gardening on an urban or suburban tract home lot but no, this had the usual custom homes on huge lots with gorgeous views and pools. It was all about maximizing the views of the lake not about minimizing the view of your neighbor's RV. The book was beautiful but not overly useful because it didn't really show many practical solutions for the small lots that go with most small homes.

Kristen says

Lovely gardens & pictures, but the writing was so unengaging I found myself just wanting to ignore it by the time I was halfway through. Would've much preferred more practical ideas for people with smaller lots, less money, & fewer grand ideas. Also very much wanted more different landscapes represented, especially a few in much drier climates.

Mary Catelli says

Applying notions inside and out. It's not all the landscape; it goes into how to use the windows to exploit it

Fran Fisher says

This, like the Not So Big House books, is very interesting. Susanka and her landscape friend tie the inside to the beautifully developed outside by creating, like so many wonderful gardens, a series of rooms, each special and private and lovely. Many great ideas for making the personal landscape striking and pleasant.

Deborah says

This would be good if you were building a home or doing a large-scale remodel. Helps with the concepts of linking the inside to the out. Not as helpful for established homes/yards. Still, a beautiful book.

Holly says

If you want to change the way you think about your house and yard and gardens this is the book for you! I love the approach of these two authors ... its not about size or grandeur or cash on hand but about space and how to use it to create harmony between your house, nature and the outside.

Snickerdoodle says

I enjoyed the pictures of lovely gardens and fabulous houses - but didn't find the design features to be terribly practical for everyday home owners.

Patty says

I have fallen in love with all the books in the "not so big house" series. They are so reassuringly sensible and reasonable in our greedy, profligate, ridiculous times. Everybody wants more, more, more- but only for themselves and they don't want to share with others (yes, I am talking to you - 1%). This series is all about what we really need to make ourselves comfortable homes and the answer is not 10,000 square feet of house. This volume is on landscaping.

Carol says

I'm totally ready for Spring! Went to the Home and Garden Show at the IX Center...saw many gardens with

grand ideas. This book is great for getting ideas too. Real life people with real life yards...even if they are in Boston, Colorado Rockies, San Francisco and Santa Fe and can afford architects and landscape designers! I always like to learn from the experts.

Erika RS says

Outside the Not So Big House is, perhaps somewhat obviously, part of Sarah Susanka's "Not So Big" series; Susanka is listed a co-author although her content seems to be limited to side bars.

In general, when it comes to books like these, I prefer books that are focused on principles rather than case studies. *Outside The Not So Big House* is a book of case studies. The principles are there but buried. Mostly, the reader is presented with descriptions of home after home.

I suspect that I would have liked this book more if I had read it after a more principle-centric book (such as Messervy's *Home Outside*).

Ernie says

This book has helped me conceptualize outdoor spaces in a new way that is more coherent than before. I love gardening but sometimes have difficulty planning for the big picture. Very good inspiration.

Candy says

Good pictures.

I didn't think the text matched up very well with the pictures of the gardens. Also, the diagrams were confusing, lots of arrows and large pictures divided up into panes.

I wouldn't buy this book, but it was worth reading from the library.
