

Student and Commuter Housing

Students and young professionals are being pushed out of cities by soaring rents and house prices. Could micro-architecture be the solution?

We think often about the weekend retreat: the flight from the city to a rural getaway.

But with more people living outside the city and obliged to travel to work—or who want to keep a place in town for leisure—there is a need for a contemporary take on the pied-à-terre that is small, sustainable, flexible, and affordable.

For students, particularly those studying abroad, the campus living experience is a cornerstone of the university contract. The best examples provide central locations, communal spaces, and personal privacy, cultivating the conditions for a rich and interactive community life.

For these subsets of the population, a portion of their lives is often spent elsewhere, making a small space not just acceptable but desirable. Living smaller does not necessarily mean living worse. It can mean a more streamlined, efficient, even sustainable existence; one with the flexibility to travel at short notice and higher disposable income.



However limited the square footage, commuters and students alike are still looking for practicality, ease, originality, and elegance in their small homes.

In the early 20th century, student housing became a testing ground for new theories of cooperative living, epitomized by Le Corbusier's Swiss Pavilion, built in 1931 at the International University Campus in Paris. Designed in collaboration with Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand, it expresses the five principles of the architect's manifesto for contemporary



Left Green courtyards create extra space in multiperson accommodation. Right Using different colors and materials adds interest to identical layouts.