



Eco Lodging!

Sustainable diva Margaret Hyde takes an aging Craftsman to green new heights—treehouse included!

| By AnnaMaria Stephens |
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Margaret Hyde might just have the greenest pad in Santa Monica. After an eco-renovation, her 1910 Craftsman-style house is not only LEED Platinum, it scored 104 out of 108 possible points. In other words: practically perfect.

If you've ever met Hyde, that wouldn't surprise you.

The Memphis-bred daughter of AutoZone founder J.R. "Pitt" Hyde III produced her first documentary two years ago, the Oscar-nominated *The Witness: From the Balcony of Room 306*, an account of Martin

Luther King Jr.'s final hours. She's also a professional photographer and the author of *Mo's Nose*, a popular children's book series that features scent-dispensing packets of soothing essential oils—a press 'n' sniff technology that Hyde trademarked. (Ten percent of the book's proceeds go to charity.) And did we mention she learned to surf after having three kids?

But one rather large piece of the puzzle didn't feel right: her 12,000-square-foot palace in the Palisades. "I thought, 'This isn't

me. How did I end up here?' So I decided to change everything in my life," says Hyde, who opted to purchase her new digs, which clock in at a comparatively more modest 4,000 square feet. But downsizing turned out to be just the beginning. "I knew I wanted a green home," she says. "But I didn't really know what that meant."

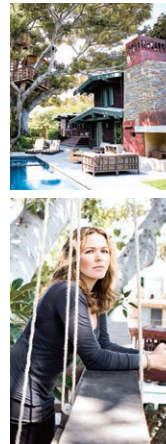
So Hyde did her research. Working with Chris Patton of Quantum Green Technologies—she calls him the project's "real guru"—Hyde implemented every sustainable feature imaginable, from gray-water irrigation (treated water from the sinks and showers soaks the gardens) to photovoltaic electricity. Forty solar-charged batteries in the garage help keep the home off the grid most days. "The batteries will last more than 100 years," she says. "We just clean them with lemon juice and water."

One less common green feature? Hyde installed Roman cooling, an ancient form of geothermal heating and air conditioning that uses pipes sunk more than 160 feet into the ground.

She was also mindful of the way she went about renovating the house: All hardscape supplies were sourced from within a 300-mile radius of L.A., allowing for a lower carbon footprint. Adds architect Melinda Gray: "We recycled old copper solar panels for the gates and the cladding on the garage doors."

The property's most unforgettable feature is the towering treehouse, made mostly from reclaimed on-site wood. A wind turbine perched on its roof powers the lights inside the one-room structure, a hangout for kids and grownups alike.

For all of the ambition and hard work that went into the renovation, the result is a distinctly laid-back house filled with Hyde's photography and unique finds from her travels to spots like Bhutan and Tanzania. "You wouldn't even know the house was so green unless I told you. It's just a great, efficient home for a modern family." **A**



HYDE PARK Clockwise from left: NYC-based Roderick Studios designed the treehouse in a 150-year-old fig tree, which is on the city's historical register; the pool is solar-heated; owner Margaret Hyde in the treehouse.