

Shelf Life

Book reviews from Larry Cox

House of Havoc: How to Make, and Keep, a Beautiful Home Despite Cheap Spouses, Messy Kids, and Other Difficult Roommates by Marni Jameson (Da Capo, \$16.95)

Marnie Jameson, a journalist and nationally syndicated home columnist, has the can-do spirit and simple tips necessary to get through almost any house-related crisis. Her new book is geared toward those who feel trapped in an endless cycle of clutter, to-do lists, and style-less rooms in desperate need of makeover. For most people, a makeover means a high price tag but that not necessarily so. For example, Jameson claims that since vertical surfaces in kitchens attract more attention than horizontal, new tile for the backsplash makes more sense than the cost of new counters. She also suggests the best wine glasses are not those that are most expensive and that when choosing bath towels steer clear of the ones that feel nicest in the store. Whether looking for secret ways to prolong periods between cleaning days, redecorate a room from scratch, make your home more econ-friendly, or spend a Saturday afternoon with a few no-cost, glue-funneled projects, this book is just the guide to make your life more manageable.

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