

10 Minutes for the Planet
The Tiny House Community ©
by Valentine Rinner



Hello everyone and welcome to this week's episode of 10 Minutes for the Planet. In a previous episode, we talked about the recent trend for tiny houses, and more specifically, tiny houses on wheels in France.

Tiny houses on wheels are regular wood-structured houses, except that they are built on top of a trailer. In France, tiny houses are usually 2.5 meters large by 6 meters long and 4 meters high, making for an average of 15 square meters, including a sleeping loft. These tiny houses also must be lighter than 3.5 tons.

Most tiny houses include a living/dining space with an open kitchenette, a bathroom with a shower and composting toilets, and a bedroom loft. However, some designs can also incorporate a child's bedroom, an office, a second loft, and a terrace. The idea when designing a tiny house is to identify the future inhabitant's exact needs and eliminate all those extras that aren't needed. That means that each tiny house is different and they're always entirely adapted to your needs. Some are built off-grid, while others can be connected to city water and electricity.

Because of the 3.5-ton weight restriction, the choice of construction material is central. Wood is a very popular option. Most tiny houses also have an ecological approach to their construction, often selecting recycled materials.

Because these houses are transportable, you don't need a permit to build them – all you are required to do is simply declare the house to local authorities and pay a flat tax of 150 Euros per year, as applicable to all other mobile housing. However, you will need an authorisation from your local municipality to park your tiny house for more than three months on private property.

It's easy to find advice within the tiny house community based on owners own experiences regarding which municipalities are supportive of such housing alternatives and which are reluctant. The community is also a rich source of information regarding insurance and which companies are open to new types of accommodations and which will refuse to consider alternatives. Believe it or not, it can get tricky to get your tiny house insured properly because the concept of full-time tiny house living is new and doesn't quite fit in existing categories, while still being at the experimental stage. However, every day tiny housers share new information on the different online sharing platforms. The most popular is the "Collectif Tiny House" Facebook group and the Tiny House France .org website. There are plenty of blogs out there where tiny housers share insights on their new lifestyle and are happy to share both their successes and failures. If

you're interested, do have a look online to find if tiny housers are hiding near where you live. There are also a few events hosted annually by different companies and collectives that include visits and workshops. And every year there are more of these popular events.

If you haven't heard of tiny houses till now, wait and see as the trend develops. We're not there yet in France but in the United States, there are even two reality shows about tiny houses on wheels. We may soon catch up!

Now have a good day! And stay tuned for next week's episode of 10 Minutes for the Planet.