

Immaculate Homes Lack Character

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Friday, 19 January 2007

Houses can be remarkable for their grandeur, cuteness, special features or location. But, there are some homes that are remarkable for the way in which they way they are kept.

These homes are immaculate at any time of the day, any day of the year. They are meticulously maintained, barely a flaw to be found. Housekeeping marvels.

I am befuddled by this. Are these homes equipped with radar of some sort? Are they occupied by super humans?

When I say 'immaculate', I mean, clean edges, through and through. Everything put in its place, no dust, gleaming windows and mirrors, bright and clean, and definitely no clutter.

How anyone can escape clutter, especially with pets and children, is beyond me. I am so often sidetracked by things needing my immediate attention that I have to just put things down and go. Laundry, for instance, is gathered, sorted and brought to the laundry room. Then it is cleaned, dried, folded and returned to the bedrooms. In any order I go, that's a multiple step process. Anything that comes up in the midst of that process causes me to abandon the task, leaving a pile somewhere. I try my best, everyday, but as much as I admire a tidy home, its a daily challenge for me. Even with my best efforts it is only sometimes realized.

Very often, I am making progress on one room whilst the kids are (knowingly or unknowingly) destroying another. I will finish vacuuming and they will produce crumbs and mud almost instantly. Spill proof cups leak, don't be fooled. I have permanent stains on my carpet to prove it. I am satisfied to disinfect well enough to keep everyone healthy. That means bathrooms, beds, kitchen and dining table are tended to regularly. I am pleased when things are put away and impressed with myself when I am able to pull everything together in time for expected company, but on a regular basis, there is always room for improvement.

I have to determine what it is that keeps me from attaining an immaculate home. After some thought, I have arrived at a few theories. First, its everyone else, not me. I am constantly maintaining things, so it must be everyone else in this home keeping me from immaculate status. Second, I am outnumbered. I can't possibly be the only one to handle a job of this magnitude. And lastly, if I am using my time to explore, write, learn, talk with others, relax, create, play with my children and enjoy, it is time well spent.

When I was a kid, my mother made an elaborate centerpiece for the table. It was an edible gelatin aquarium with carrots for goldfish, parsley for kelp, and more. It took her forever to do, as you could imagine, so she didn't get around to vacuuming before company arrived. We all still talk about the gelatin aquarium, thirty years later, but nobody remembers that she skipped vacuuming that day. I learned quite a bit from hearing her tell the story. Immaculate homes must be boring. Am I jealous? Maybe. But, 'character' homes are more lively. I am proud of my character home.

Note to self...leave the vacuuming til later, life is calling.