

domestic bliss  
**HOT WHEELS**

**The garage, long considered a double-door blight on the suburban landscape, can be a great design opportunity** by Brennan Kearney



**DESIGNER TIPS**

**LIONEL MORRISON**

- Use windows and skylights to introduce more natural light.
- Install an indoor faucet for easy car washing. Grade the floor so that water will flow down the driveway or into a central drain.
- Build an interior wall to divide parking and utility areas.

**GRAY DAVIS**

- Dress up the garage with decorative molding.
- Install heating and cooling systems to make it more comfortable.

**MARTIN POIRIER**

- Plant trees and other greenery to help disguise the driveway.
- Pave the driveway with something other than cement.

"Considering that the garage is often at least half the size of the rest of the house, it's shocking that we have forgotten to pay architectural attention to it for so long," says Kira Obolensky, author of *Garage: Reinventing the Place We Park* (Taunton). "At some point, people stopped thinking of their garages appropriately," says architect Bill Ingram. "They just globbed them onto their houses."

Ingram—whose designs include garages cleverly disguised as barns, complete with cupolas and weather vanes, and others that double as pool cabanas—treats the garage "as an outgrowth of the stable." Often, he has garage doors custom-made to mimic those you'd find on more picturesque outbuildings. In the Hamptons, architect Gray Davis created a Shingle-style garage that replicated the main house, down to the custom-milled shingles. Of course, a garage can be built to look like something else entirely. Plans for garages that look like fire, gas, or train stations are available from Jeff Heilman of JCH Designs, at [vintagegarages.com](http://vintagegarages.com).

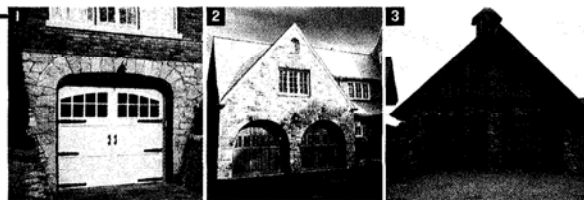
Sometimes, all it takes to transform a garage is the addition of a thoughtful detail. For a client in Greenwich, Connecticut, who wanted a "romantic" garage, architect Anne Fairfax tucked a birdhouse into the eaves.

In his own small garage, landscape architect Martin Poirier installed a DuoPark lift system from Harding Steel (800-727-5325) that lets him make the most of the space by stacking two cars, one on top of the other. "To create a place for people, not cars," Poirier also planted a hedge on either side of his short driveway, and a patch of succulents and ivy down the middle, leaving only two narrow concrete strips.

Whatever changes you make to your own garage, we bet you won't have had this much fun parking since you were a teenager.



**Harding Steel's DuoPark lift system makes room for two BMW M3s in Martin Poirier's tiny San Diego garage, above. In Birmingham, Bill Ingram's cottage-style garage suits the main house, far left.**



**SOURCES: GREAT GARAGE DOORS**

- Clopay Building Products: 800-225-6729. [clopaydoor.com](http://clopaydoor.com) (1)
- Coffey Garage Doors: 800-400-1088. [coffeydoors.com](http://coffeydoors.com)
- Designer Doors: 800-241-0525. [designerdoorm.com](http://designerdoorm.com) (2)
- Gunnison Garage Doors: 970-641-2769. [garagedoorsus.com](http://garagedoorsus.com) (3)
- Overhead Door Corporation: 800-929-3667. [overheaddoor.com](http://overheaddoor.com)

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