

# SATURDAY

REAL ESTATE  
ADVERTISING  
INSIDE

JANUARY 31, 2015

WSCE

FOOD & DINING :: HOME & DESIGN :: MIND & BODY :: L.A. AFFAIRS :: GEAR & GADGETS

## HOME & DESIGN

# LIVING IN THE FUTURE

Rediscovered classics, innovations, 'appropriate' gardens and the color Marsala. A look ahead.

Kick, run, pass ... and dip for Super Bowl Sunday.

**FOOD & DINING**

Is the juicing trend a glass half full?

**MIND & BODY**

When the clicking





## HOME &amp; DESIGN: THE FUTURE

## Smart and subtle appliances

BY LISA BOONE

From compact appliances to touchless toilets, today's home devices are designed for streamlined operations. And with homeowners spending more time than ever on their smartphones, designers are responding with apps that allow you to control such devices as lighting and your washing machine with a swipe of a finger. Here, we offer a selection of new designs for 2015 that promise to make home life a little easier.

**Wi-Fi-connected appliances**

Want to preheat your oven before you arrive home? Now you can turn it on remotely using a smartphone app designed by GE for its Profile collection. The Wi-Fi-enabled appliances, which will arrive throughout 2015, include ranges, wall ovens, a French door refrigerator, laundry duo, a Geo Spring water heater and dishwasher. The apps are included in the price of GE Profile appliances, one of GE's higher-end brands. [www.geappliances.com](http://www.geappliances.com)

**Wireless charging surface**

No more searching for cable or wall outlets to charge your fading cellphone. The TechTop wireless charging surface by LG Hausys — which won best of show at the 2015 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show (KBIS) in Las Vegas earlier this month — allows you to charge your mobile device by simply placing it on top of a surface, such as a countertop, embedded with wireless charging technology. Currently, it is available only for phones, with laptops and tablets to come. Pricing depends on local fabricators listed on the TechTop website. [www.lgtechtop.com](http://www.lgtechtop.com)

**Touchless flush toilet**

Toilets aren't just toilets anymore. They now come with accessories such as LED illuminated night lights, bidet functionality, self-deodorizing capabilities and heated seating. In some cases you don't even have to flush the toilet using a handle. Kohler's new San Souci touchless flush toilet is the perfect appliance for the germ-phobic. Simply wave your hand over a sensor mounted inside the tank and it will trigger a flush powered by four AA batteries. Available in 10 colors. The toilet starts at \$820 in white. [www.kohler.com](http://www.kohler.com)

**Garden sensor and water valve**

The solar-powered Edyn smart gardening system allows gardeners to assess soil nutrition, moisture, light and temperature via smartphone alerts. Expect a ping from Edyn if your tomatoes need water or fertilizer. The concept: Using Wi-Fi, Edyn's garden sensor measures environmental factors courtesy of a long metal probe that is planted in the ground. The system sends the data to your phone, where you can monitor your plants and activate water valves. The system is composed of the Edyn Garden Sensor, Edyn Water Valve and Edyn App. One sensor is good for 250 square feet. More may be necessary for bigger plots. Available for pre-order on Edyn's website and available at Home Depot stores in spring 2015. Garden sensor, \$99.95. Edyn Water Valve, \$59.99. [www.edyn.com](http://www.edyn.com)



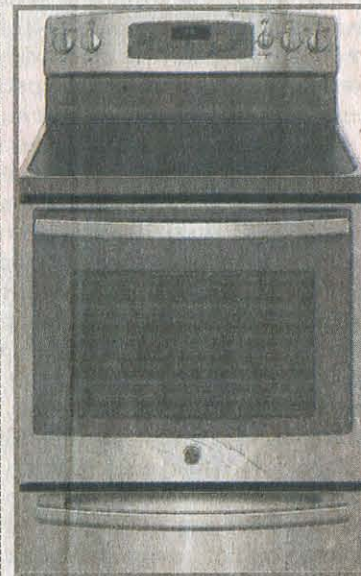
LG Hausys

**WITH TECHTOP**, you can just toss your cellphone onto the counter to recharge it.



Kohler

**KOHLER SAN SOUCI** touchless flush toilet works with the wave of a hand over a sensor.



General Electric Co.

**A WI-FI-ENABLED** range lets you set timers or preheat your oven remotely.

**Desks with integrated power outlets**

Two new desks from Room & Board feature four three-prong power outlets and four USB ports that are hidden on the underside of the desk. The design provides 10 amps of power for office electronics and keeps cords within easy reach. An 8-foot detachable cord connects to the back right leg of the table. The desk features a modern stainless-steel base and a variety of tabletop options. Starting at \$839 for one with a glass tabletop. A Parsons desk, also available with power outlet and USB ports, starts at \$659. [www.roomandboard.com](http://www.roomandboard.com)

**Interactive pet camera**

Guilt-ridden pet owners can check on their furry friends with the new Petcube Camera that allows you to watch, talk and play with your pets from a smartphone. The Petcube Camera features a wide-angle camera along with real-time HD video, which allows you to view your pet clearly. You can also talk to your pet via a built-in microphone and speaker. Additionally, you can play with your pet from your smartphone using a laser pointer. The camera offers a free mobile app for iOS and Android

**PET OWNERS** with a Petcube Camera and smartphone can play with pets remotely.

Petcube

**VOICES**

"Transformative spaces are in. The sharing economy is redefining how we design environments and objects."

— DAVID ROCKWELL, architect and interior designer, Rockwell Group



## HOME &amp; DESIGN



**LENOVA'S NEW OZONE** collection faucets deliver ozonized water that is safe to drink.

Lenova



Edyn



MTI Baths

**EDYN IS A SMART** garden system that monitors and tracks soil conditions.

[Appliances from F10]

### Small space tub

The new Halo soaking tub from MTI Baths incorporates last year's popular free-standing tub trend with another hot topic: small-space living. The simple circular design measures 52 by 26 inches and consumes little floor space in a tight bathroom. The Halo also features a built-in seat and can be enjoyed as a soaker tub or as an air bath with 20 air jets, a heated blower and a waterproof remote control. Made of Engineered Solid Stone, it comes in classic white or biscuit

**THE HALO TUB** consumes little floor space but offers the bather a fully immersed soak.

with an optional gloss finish. \$6,655. [www.mtibaths.com](http://www.mtibaths.com)

### Ozone faucets

Lenova's new Ozone collection faucets feature a water-air-patented technology that infuses the powerful oxidant ozone directly into the water through a chamber inside the spout. Due to its disinfectant and oxidation capabilities, the process creates ozonized water that is safe to drink. Available in April, starting at \$995. [www.lenovasinks.com](http://www.lenovasinks.com)

[lisa.boone@latimes.com](mailto:lisa.boone@latimes.com)



**A NEW DESK** features three-prong power outlets and USB ports that are hidden on the underside.

Room &amp; Board

### THE MIDDLE AGES

# Mr. President, a word from the fed-up middle

**CHRIS ERSKINE**

Pardon my impertinence, Mr. President. But I have a few thoughts on the current state of the union.

There is always, it seems, a veneer that stands between the way you presidents see things and the way we actually live. You live in a mansion. We don't. You'll get a pension. Most of us no longer do. When you leave the White House, you'll get a big book deal that will set you up for life. We haven't had a raise since 1980.

For our entire lives, we will be worrying whether the rent check cleared.

Sure, we like the way things are going — better gas prices, more jobs — but for the most part, your policies seem incremental, not bold.

Parents continue to freak out over their children's prospects, and it trickles into the schools, where teachers are also freaked. It leads to obsession over fourth-grade test scores and "panicked parenting" in general.

Why not? Where once parents could help with homework, we're now paralyzed — at the mercy of a Common Core no one demanded or understands.

As a scientist friend put it: "Math should be taught with a pencil and a piece of paper," not \$1,000 worth of buggy silicon.

See, that's the thing: All we've ever sought from our leaders is hard-core common sense. You give us platitudes when what we want is a dose of Harry Truman. Meanwhile, no one gets us, no one cares.

Where we once could roll up our sleeves and work extra hard, we now live in fear of stressed bosses and the next round of cuts.

Half a century ago, President Eisenhower warned: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed."

Yet you still let the military suck the marrow from our pay-



checks.

Forget missile systems. Invest in drones and antiterrorism, books and teachers. What are all those U.S. forts protecting Germany from? The Dutch?

Instead, do more for the middle class. Buy down their student loans.

Finance their start-ups. And forget token gestures, such as free community college.

Be bold, not incremental.

Your \$3,000 tax credit for day care certainly would help, though it's not close to being enough. Know what day care costs? Four times that.

In the meantime, every day companies dump their most-loyal workers in favor of cheaper youngsters.

Even so, the job prospects for talented twentysomethings are spotty at best. They move back in with us, then out again, then back in.

I fear for young adults. Will they ever have a career? When they find work, it doesn't pay enough to live. When they work overtime, they are afraid to put in for it, for fear of losing the job that doesn't pay them enough to live in the first place.

Help.

Help with the burden new technology places on families. Help them afford the laptops and the printers schoolkids can't live without, not to mention unbridled connection fees.

Do we seem a little cynical? Yes. We're cynical because we never see most of what we make ... because you politicians take a third of our earnings and insurance takes the rest.

Look, Mr. President, the middle class is your fireball, your offensive line, all the obvious metaphors for economic thrust and vibrancy. On it, everything rests — the present, the future, our ability to adapt and compete. Without the middle class, everything folds and you're scrambling from the bad guys who want to pound you.

For God's sake, in New England, they're even running out of air for their footballs.

But I digress.



MANDEL NGAN Associated Press

**PRESIDENT OBAMA**, giving a State of the Union address Jan. 20, needs some tips.

That's what happens when we rant, I guess. We're flummoxed; we're feisty. Such desperation reflects our distrust — the broken pacts between politicians and the people, between companies and their employees, between hard work and a living wage.

We rant because we feel taken advantage of, because no one seems to inspire us anymore, even as the Super Bowl — our annual Festivus — features two win-at-all-cost teams.

So, in tweets and talk shows, we fire back. If it seems civility is lacking, so are sportsmanship and shame.

Think we're desperate for hope and moral guidance? Maybe. Our most-popular movies deal mostly with the end of the world.

Television's so-called golden age is fixated on creeps, meth labs and dysfunction.

If the Internet seems a scary place, just turn on Showtime.

Finally, another parent was saying the other day that her son had chosen soccer over baseball, deciding not to juggle two sports, in addition to three hours of algebra each night, the product of the freaked parents and freaked teachers I was speaking of earlier.

"I'm tired of being tired," her son Connor explained.

He's 12.

[chris.erskine@latimes.com](mailto:chris.erskine@latimes.com)  
twitter: @erskinetimes