



Louis Penfield House.

## Sleeping with Mr. Wright

Homes to call your own for a weekend. By GAYLE KECK

**T**our a Frank Lloyd Wright–designed house, and it’s impossible to avoid fantasies of living there. Fortunately for fans of America’s greatest architect, there are five Wright homes where they can have the entire house to themselves. All are what Wright called Usonian, modest homes designed for families of average means, although in terms of style and drama, there’s nothing modest about them. Most require a two-night stay—long enough to sense the soul of the architecture, witness the play

of light, feel the embrace of nature, and experience the soaring of the spirit his buildings evoke—without downsides, like trying to repair a notoriously leaky Wright roof.

### Louis Penfield House

**WILLOUGHBY, OHIO** “Anyone over six feet tall is a weed,” Wright once noted. When six-foot-eight-inch Louis Penfield asked if Wright could design a home for him, the architect reportedly replied, “Yes, but we’ll have to design a machine to tip you sideways first.” Wright relented and created this two-story spruce and concrete-block house, near Cleveland, with unusually high eight-foot doorways and narrow “ribbon” windows. Rent the three-bedroom home and, “It’s as if you owned it,” Penfield’s son, Paul, says, inviting guests to relax on reproductions of custom Wright furniture and gaze out floor-to-ceiling windows at the wooded surroundings. From \$275; [www.penfieldhouse.com](http://www.penfieldhouse.com).

### Mr. & Mrs. John D. Haynes House

**FORT WAYNE, IND.** Although John Haynes wrote to Wright asking for a “modest and functional house,” this is the rare home built exactly as Wright specified, sparing no expense. With materials like brick and red tidewater cypress, plus a number of Wright’s mitered windows, it cost twice what Haynes requested. The highlight is a dramatic cantilevered fireplace. The current owner and his father have built 24 furniture pieces Wright designed for the three-bedroom house. From \$275; [www.hayneshouseinc.com](http://www.hayneshouseinc.com).

### Bernard Schwartz House

**TWO RIVERS, WIS.** Bernard Schwartz saw a Wright “dream house” design in *Life* magazine and convinced the architect to adapt his unused plans for a site in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, a sleepy harbor town 90 miles north of Milwaukee. The four-bedroom home, built of brick and red

tidewater cypress, is the largest Wright-designed home you can rent. With three fireplaces (one outdoors), all emanating from a massive central, brick chimney, and a zig-zagging second-floor interior balcony overlooking the 65-foot-long living room, it’s arguably the most stunning, too. From \$295; [www.theschwartzhouse.com](http://www.theschwartzhouse.com).

### Donald and Elizabeth Duncan House

**LAUREL HIGHLANDS, PA.** Originally built near Chicago, this prefabricated house was rescued from demolition, disassembled, and reconstructed an hour’s drive east of Pittsburgh. During the structure’s challenging renovation from ramshackle to showpiece, the concrete-block fireplace and other areas were rebuilt in stone—a spectacular upgrade option Wright specified in his plans. The original ceramic tiles still grace one bathroom. From \$385; [www.visitduncanhouse.com](http://www.visitduncanhouse.com).

### Seth Peterson Cottage

**LAKE DELTON, WIS.** Perched on a wooded bluff in Wisconsin’s Mirror Lake State Park, this compact cottage was described by Wright’s protégé and successor, William Wesley Peters, as having “more architecture per square foot than any other building I know.” Featuring a dramatic, slanted roof that crescendos to an expanse of windows revealing the forest and lake, this one-bedroom retreat surrounds guests with iconic Wright touches. Added amenity: A canoe is provided to explore the lake. From \$225; [www.sethpeterson.org](http://www.sethpeterson.org).



Windows framed by vertical beams are said to echo Wright’s client Louis Penfield’s stature.

RONALD KEITH BOLINGER (UPPER); ARCADIA/ALAMY (LOWER)