

Natural Cleaning for Your Home: 95 Pure and Simple Recipes

Casey Kellar

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Natural Cleaning for Your Home is, remarkably, as much a coffee table book as a cleaning manual. Illustrated with 80 color photographs, 13 of which are hand-tinted, it makes cleaning look idyllic. Cozy stacks of earth-toned towels and gleaming honey-colored wood floors are inviting, and the author suggests that cleaning containers can be made not only from old plastic milk jugs but also from decorative bottles picked up at garage sales. Readers may be tempted to roll their eyes at the L.L. Bean/House Beautiful-type presentation, but anyone who keeps a house this clean must be serious about finding things that work.

The author owns RainCountry Naturals and RainShadow Labs, a manufacturer of all-natural bath, beauty and home fragrance products. In her introduction Kellar says she's fascinated by how different ingredients work. More of that basic information would have been helpful to readers wishing to experiment intelligently.

Kellar shows improvising is possible by offering several different formulas for cleaning windows, for example, and explains some basics. Baking soda removes odor and helps stop corrosion. Vinegar is a natural degreaser. Teatree extract is a natural anti-fungal and antibacterial agent. Proving this a book of the '90s, she provides a natural formula to prevent static on computer screens.

Included is a basic list of ingredients for natural cleaning, and shopping suggestions which range from health food stores to the local hardware store. She notes that the formulas are less toxic than what we buy in cans, cost less and take only minutes to prepare. Kellar also provides a shelf life for the recipes. She says her formulas will help people create a "fresher, calmer home life." Her book has a lot of good tips.

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