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### He's got a hammer -- if he only had some time

By Elaine Matsushita  
Tribune staff reporter

When it comes to real homes in real life, TV carpenter Paul DiMeo has had his own extreme makeover.

The hard-working and emotional cast member of ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" moved into his first home a little more than a year ago. And the Spanish-style house in Hollywood Hills, Calif., is a far, far cry from the Colonial he grew up in in Media, Pa., DiMeo says.



And while he works magic on kids' rooms on the little screen, you can credit his wife, Kelly, with turning the six-bedroom, four-bath 1927 house into an eclectically decorated nest that's ripe for entertaining.

Even though he's been on the road most of the year and unable to design the ideal kitchen, "The kitchen we have now is big and workable and [has] enough room for our friends to hang out and chat while we cook dinner," DiMeo says. "We love having friends and family over whenever we can. We usually have at least one dinner party when I am home between shoots."

1. One thing on your nightstand: My Sudoku book.
2. One thing on a wall in your living room: A painting called "The Cut" by New York artist and dear friend Mark Symczak.
3. One thing you have in your house from your childhood: My collection of Matchbox cars
4. Three condiments we would find in your refrigerator: Half-and-half for my coffee, pepperonis and horseradish.

5. Three things we would find in your medicine cabinet: Hydrogen peroxide, rubbing alcohol and Super Glue (great [for] paper cuts).
6. Do your dirty dishes go in the sink or dishwasher? Don't elves put them in the dishwasher? I just leave them in the sink.
7. Most high-tech gadget or appliance in your home? iBook.
8. Maker of your everyday dinnerware? Mikasa. English Countryside is the pattern. It's all white with grapevines.
9. Maker of your fine china? Lenox. Hancock is the pattern -- it is simple and elegant. We chose a pattern that we would enjoy today and 10 years from now.
10. If you had to save one "thing" from your home, what would it be? Our collection of artwork. And my guitar and iPod. Oops, it was supposed to be only one thing.
11. What is the biggest collection in your home? Musical instruments [DiMeo's got a baby grand piano, two electric keyboards, a mandolin, an autoharp, a French horn, a fiddle, a dobro guitar, five acoustic guitars, two electric guitars and harmonicas].
12. What CD would we find in your player right now? "Modern Times" by Bob Dylan.
13. What would we find under your bed? Our cat Pippin. [We're not sure where you'll find the DiMeos' other calico kitty, Fatty, or their pet dove, Papa.]

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