

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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TO THE TRADE

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Making a Play

I was the tomboy in my family. My mother wanted me to be a lawyer, but I got a job out of college as a bricklayer's helper because I didn't want to get stuck indoors," says Barbara Butler, who parlayed her love of the outdoors into a business making backyard play structures (right) for children. "My play structures look like big pieces of furniture," says the Bay Area-based Butler, who has made ones in the shape of a lighthouse, a pirate ship and a gingerbread house and is in the process of building one that will include a mad scientist's chamber. She's also making fun furniture in odd shapes, often with asymmetrical doors, and painted in a rainbow of colors.

