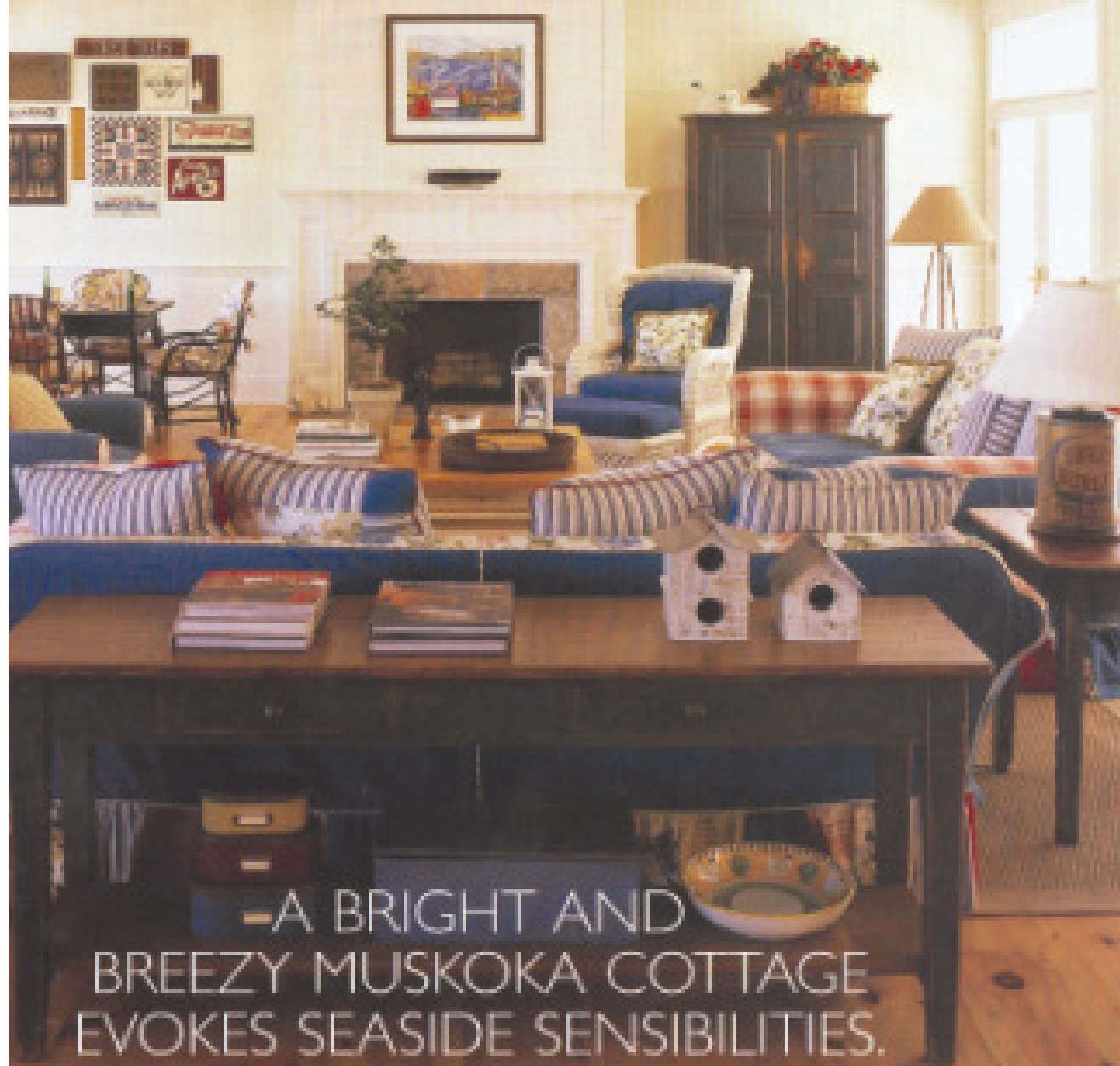


COTTAGES

TREASURED ISLAND



A BRIGHT AND BREEZY MUSKOKA COTTAGE EVOKES SEASIDE SENSIBILITIES.



LEFT: In the classic country living room, 10-foot-high post-and-beam ceilings emphasize the cottage's spaciousness. Armoire, Antiquités Le Coq Rouge; sofas, lantern, tin lamp bases, Muskoka Living Interiors; jasmine plant, birdhouses, Fresh Home & Garden.

ABOVE: A rustic bench adds contrast to the clean walls and staircase in the

hall. Framed sailboat print (purchased on a visit to Norway) anchors the bench. Windsor bench, pillow, Muskoka Living Interiors.

BELOW: A flagstone path winds through a lush English-inspired country garden of irises, roses, daisies and ornamental grasses leading to the front entrance. Landscap design, David Handyside

*Text by Kellee Ngan
Photography by Robin Stubbert*

When these longtime Muskoka

cottagers decided to relocate their family retreat, the local lighthouse on Lake Rosseau pointed them in the right direction, or, rather, directed them to the right point: Stormy Point, a secluded island tucked away from the bustle — but not the beauty — of Ontario's cottage country.

The owners and a business partner developed the land themselves, commissioning a bridge to the mainland and dividing the uninhabited island into eight lots — keeping one for themselves and one for their business partner, and selling the others. When it came time to design their cottage in 2002, the couple drew inspiration from the region's historic, turn-of-the-century homes and called on Toronto-based architect Tony Marsh to help realize their vision of a Victorian-



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COTTAGES



ABOVE: White Shaker-style cabinetry, a beadboard-paneled range hood, pine floors and a built-in plate rack define the bright country kitchen. Backsplash tiles, Country Floors; cabinetry, Cabico; tea towels, Harman Imports.

TOP RIGHT: An antique plate shelf showcases the owners' colourful ceramics collection acquired on trips to Italy and Portugal. Pine shelf, HorsefeathersHome; scalloped console table, Muskoka Living Interiors; candlesticks (on mantel), Lampe Berger.

BOTTOM RIGHT: A collection of vintage game boards and signs displayed as whimsical wall art provides visual interest in the living room's cosy games corner. Floral-cushion fabric, Kravet.



accented retreat. "We wanted the interior to be traditional and comfortable," says the owner. "A place that feels like home."

Creating the sense of home was an especially important consideration for a cottage that's a favourite family getaway. While the Toronto-based couple entertain guests at the cottage all summer, they cherish the time spent up north with their two grown sons, daughter-in-law, and one-and-a-half-year-old grandson.

The resulting structure, which took 18 months to complete, is a graceful 7,000-square-foot, two-storey, five-bedroom home, complete with an exercise room, a screened-in porch and romantic wraparound verandas; a 650-square-foot boathouse with two guest rooms will be completed this summer.

Nestled among mature pine, oak and maple trees, the cottage celebrates the landscape without dominating it. Ten-foot-high

COTTAGES



The expansive lakeside cedar deck, which complements the cottage's cheery yellow lapboard siding and is spiced with a collection of iconic Muskoka chairs, is a favourite spot for cocktails and conversation. Muskoka chairs by Muskoka Chair Company.



ABOVE: A translucent wash of white was applied to the master bedroom's walls to allow the wood's grain to show through. The cottage's bedrooms are the only exceptions to a no-curtain rule. Bed, armchair, ottoman, Muskoka Living Interiors; Jane Churchill fabric (for drapery and bedskirt), Primavera Interior Design; Gramercy

checked pillow fabric, Billbrough & Co.; blue pillows, Fresh Home & Garden; wall colour, Honey Harbour (CC-170), Benjamin Moore.

BELOW: The mostly white scheme continues in the master bathroom with a tongue-and-groove built-in vanity. Gramercy fabric, Billbrough & Co.; towels, London; rug, wastebasket, soapdish, Harman Imports.

ceilings and an abundance of windows maximize the south-facing cottage's panoramic views, and flood the entire space with generous amounts of sunlight. In order to maintain an unobstructed living space, they kept walls to a minimum on the main floor and installed seven sets of french doors that allow fresh lakeside breezes through. "We intended it to be a very livable place that's bright, cheerful, and airy," says the owner.

To complete the sunny seaside feel they were after, the owners enlisted designer Christopher Spraggett of Muskoka Living Interiors — a design, decorating and furnishings store in Port Carling, Ont. "We went with happy fabrics and simple, bright colours that you would find in a crayon box — pure blues, reds and yellows," says Spraggett. Now an independent designer, he worked with the owners to find furnishings that would pay homage to Muskoka's natural beauty and history. As a result, pine was used extensively — and appropriately for a cottage affectionately named "Tree Tops" due to its setting amid the trees — from the panelled walls to the wide knotty floorboards, lending a modest natural quality throughout the cottage. The incorporation of a seaside theme was inspired by the owners' collection of maritime icons. "We've always tended to gravitate towards properties on the water," the owner says.

To enhance the cottage's casual yet classic aesthetic, the walls were painted in fresh, fuss-free tones of white

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