

# Maine Homes by DownEast

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# HIDDEN FIGURES

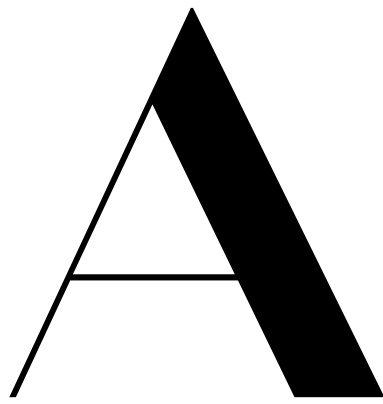
You'd be hard-pressed to spot this Sebago Lake compound from the water or surrounding forest — which is precisely the point

TEXT BY JEN DEROSE PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF ROBERTS



Cedar board-and-batten siding and a copper roof feather a Cape Elizabeth couple's Sebago Lake camp into the forest. The porch post atop a boulder nods to Norwegian architect Wenche Selmer. Saco's Richardson & Associates filled in the grounds with additional ferns, birches, and blueberry bushes.





lthough it's a mere 10 feet from Sebago Lake, a Cape Elizabeth couple's retreat barely registers with boaters. Comprised of a three-bedroom main house, two-bedroom guesthouse, garage, and workshop clad in camouflaging western-red-cedar siding and nut-brown copper roofs, the boxy forms are laid out like a crossword puzzle around the property's pines and birches. "It's funny to say this as the person who designed it," says principal Eric Sokol, of Portland's Winkelman Architecture, "but my favorite thing about the house is that it's not really visible."

Blending in was one of the couple's main prerogatives when they approached Sokol and contractor Bill Symonds, of Casco's Symonds Builders, about replacing the two tiny cottages on the property they purchased in 2013. The pair, who asked that their names and town be withheld, were particularly taken with the work of Norwegian architect Wenche Selmer, whose structures rely heavily on wood, a simple Scandinavian aesthetic, and deference to nature. (Selmer took the latter so seriously that she often became acquainted with a new building site by spending the night there in a sleeping bag.)

They were also inspired by the rustic, tucked-among-the-trees feel of Raymond's late-1900s Wohelo Camps, which four generations of the



**TIP**  
TO SPREAD HEAT EVENLY THROUGH MULTIPLE ROOMS, AND DIVVY UP AN OPEN PLAN, CONSIDER A PENINSULA FIREPLACE.

Bristol's Linekin Bay Woodworkers built the kitchen's island top from the same pine as the flooring, supplied by South Portland's Rousseau Reclaimed. StandFast Works Forge, of Parsonsfield, crafted the fireplace's metalwork and integrated woodstove. **OPPOSITE** A vaulted ceiling with custom skylights, built by Harpswell's Guy Kittell Construction, crowns the guesthouse porch.



“Since there is not an ounce of Sheetrock in the house, we used soft blues and greens to keep with the natural feel of the wood.”

Marvin windows with flush trim maximize the view from the living room, where a custom banquette embraces an ottoman covered in vintage rag rugs, pieced together by Yarmouth's Pistol Pete's Upholstery. The wife's grandfather created the painting at nearby Migis Lodge.





**TIP**  
 BUILD A BETTER SCREENED PORCH: THREE OPEN SIDES AND SKYLIGHTS IMPROVE AIRFLOW AND LIGHT AND A FIREPLACE... IT'S MAINE!

wife's family attended, and South Casco's 1916 Craftsman-style Migis Lodge, where the couple was married and the wife's great-grandparents spent summers. From their shore, the homeowners can glimpse the remains of the wharves used by the Songo River steamships that ferried her relatives to Migis each year.

A pine-needle-covered path leads from the water to the 1,700-square-foot main house, where blond-and-amber-streaked pine — salvaged heart pine on the floors, butcher-block kitchen island top, and countertops, and eastern white pine on the walls, ceilings, beams, and built-ins — prevails. "There's something to be said for the beauty of wood," says the wife, who doesn't mind the occasional ding or stain. "I like the wear and tear that comes naturally."

Low, exposed-beam ceilings on the first floor

— necessary to comply with shoreland zoning restrictions — make the buildings' compact rooms feel even cozier. "It's not a place where you can accumulate anything because there's no place to put it," says the wife, who, in a nod to Selmer, relies on built-in beds and dining and living room banquettes (the latter doubling as extra sleeping space) with integrated storage for stowing essentials. Having no TV, microwave, or dishwasher also saves space. "I don't want anything to break that we then have to replace," says the wife. "It's more maintenance free, which is freeing."

One notable splurge is a pair of gray-blue Lacanche ranges with jewelry-like brass knobs in the main and guesthouse kitchens. "Since there is not an ounce of Sheetrock in the house, we used soft blues and greens to keep with that natural feel of the wood," says designer Emily Ennis

Mattei of Yarmouth's e4 Interior Design. Among the splashes: an aqua island base in the primary kitchen ("the only painted thing in the house," Ennis Mattei says), cobalt chenille on the living room banquette, and sky-blue linen duvet covers in the guest rooms.

The couple spends camp mornings swimming in the cool lake, afternoons on one of the main home's four porches "with a baseball game on the radio," the husband says, and evenings next to the living room's massive three-sided fireplace — another hallmark of Selmer's — constructed by Orland's Freshwater Stone from a dozen boulders.

When the project wrapped, the owners offered the place up to Sokol and his wife for a weekend. "We watched the sunset from the sofa and had a fire — it was nice to be able to check my work," he says. How'd he do? "I wouldn't move a thing." □

**OPPOSITE** The fireplace on the main home's porch shares a chimney with the one inside; both were crafted by Orland's Freshwater Stone. Custom skylights between the porch beams flood the space, outfitted with Kingsley Bate seats, with sunshine. **THIS PAGE, FROM TOP** The 800-square-foot guesthouse has red-cedar siding like the main home, but applied horizontally. A Saarinen Tulip table, art by Lincolnville's Mary Bourke, and a Lacanche range pop in the pine-clad guesthouse kitchen. In a main house guest room, Scandinavian twin-size duvets, with linen covers by Portland's Always Piper, have less overhang than larger American twins.

