

DESIGNERS ABROAD

INSIDE THE VACATION HOMES OF TOP DECORATORS



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alexandra angle

CAPE BRETON ISLAND, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA



Composing a color palette is usually Alexandra Angle's first step when she designs an interior. For the vacation home she and her husband, Eliot, built on Cape Breton Island overlooking the Gulf of St. Lawrence and mountainous Highlands National Park, she says she was inspired by the landscape's "moody blues and grays, delicious greens and lavenders . . . completely different hues than those we have at home in Los Angeles."

Although the vacation house is the length of the continent away, she explains, "We're both from the East Coast and really weren't concerned about how often we might get there. We just thought it would be nice to have a house where our families could come in the summers or whenever our schedules permitted. We remind them that the water is warm enough for swimming!"

Angle purposely kept the cedar-shingled cottage's architecture simple so that it can withstand the freezing winters and periodic gale-force winds. She consequently doesn't worry about it sitting unattended for long periods. Built by local craftsmen mindful of the rugged area, the structure sports floor-to-ceiling windows facing every point on the compass and a wraparound deck of local pine.

"I wanted it to feel like a summer house," she says, "easy and relaxed, where sandy feet are OK and there's always room for unexpected items we might collect over the years." She succeeds with a mix of old and new, sleek and handcrafted pieces arranged in airy configurations.

A global roundup of furnishings, including many that reference the sea, holds court. Angle designed the slim birch table in the kitchen, flanked it with Gio Ponti Superleggera chairs, and lit it with a chandelier from Turkey. "I cook a lot here—we never have time in L.A.—so it was important to me that the kitchen feels welcoming," says the designer. "But my truly favorite place is the colorfully cushioned window seat spanning the living room." The maple coffee table reminds Angle of the jellyfish—nonpoisonous—that surface once a year in the gulf, the rattan chairs, seashells, and the knitted-felt hassock, brain coral. "I don't like theme-y rooms," she says, "but I did want to project the idea of being near the sea. The need for some curves to counter all the straight lines was equally important."

Angle installs antiques and regionally crafted handiworks upstairs to homey yet clean-lined effect. Some, like the guest room's early-nineteenth-century sampler stitched by sailors to ward off boredom, are from Eliot's grandmother; others, such as the commode in the guest bath, rich with generations of flaking paint, are local finds. "We'd be kicking ourselves now if we hadn't listened to our contractor. Thankfully he suggested building guest quarters upstairs. We had been planning to use it as an attic."





LEFT *Eliot Angle* crafted the master bedroom's plywood-topped side table from driftwood found in a stream leading to the nearby beach. *Alexandra* designed the rug, which a local artisans' cooperative wove. The beechwood

lamp is by *Le Klint*. **BELOW** *Serenely* simple, a wood-paved master bath features an *Angela Adams* rug, a vintage tub found in *Halifax*, and antique stools picked up in *Maine*. The vanity is *Alexandra's* design.

PREVIOUS PAGES, RIGHT *Paint* on a vintage chair contrasts playfully with the modern finish of a *Piet Boon* desk made from corrugated cardboard. A felt light fixture by *Mixko* casts butterflies on the walls come night.



Whale-watching can happen right from the living room, which reveals subtle sea shapes throughout. A custom Fedora Design rug is reminiscent of sprays of foam, shell-shaped rattan chairs are by Vittorio Bonacina, and a painted aluminum light fixture, called the "Octopus," from Autoban, hangs above.







LEFT The functional space in the "living-room-dining-room-kitchen," as Alexandra calls the house's large, open area, is lined with beadboard cabinets and open maple shelving for the

cookware, china, and glasses she gathers on business trips. The rush-seated chairs at the table—which was built by a local craftsman—are Giò Ponti. **BELOW** Thoughtful hosts, the

Angles provide appropriately themed bath-robés for their guests; they hang in a small guest room near an Alvar Aalto bureau, a gift from Eliot's grandmother.

