

ENHANCING

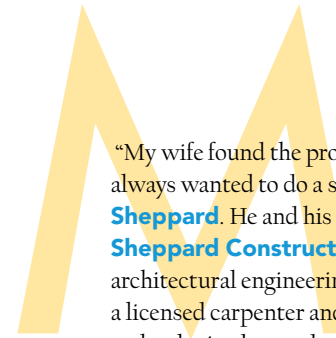
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PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY

THE VIEW

SUCCESSFUL BUILDER DECORATOR TEAMS SHARE A VISION. WHEN THE BUILDING SITE IS ON VIEWPOINT TRAIL, FINDING THAT COMMON OUTLOOK IS SIMPLIFIED.

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Stone pillars, fir beams and timbers frame an impressive main entrance to this new cottage by Sheppard Construction.



“My wife found the property and we’d always wanted to do a spec,” explains **Darcy Sheppard**. He and his wife, **Heather** own **Sheppard Construction** and both have an architectural engineering designation. Darcy, a licensed carpenter and a certified engineer technologist, began designing two cottages, two bunkies and a boathouse for the private 9.2-acre parcel set on 235 feet of waterfront, facing west on Lake Muskoka.

“We tried to optimize the waterfront using as much glass as we could without compromising the structural integrity,” Darcy explains. “We had to capture the view. The sunsets we get here are unbelievable.” To maximize the view, Darcy chose Laflamme Portes & Fenêtres from Quebec to supply hybrid aluminum exterior and vinyl interior

windows that feature minimal-width dividers between glass sections.

On the entire waterfront wall of the main cottage, windows and glass doors frame the lake’s fickle moods. Yet inside, the heart of the new cottage begged for a decorator to follow the magic of nature’s paintbrush.

Heather worked with **Elise Boyer**, principal decorator and owner of **Veranda** in downtown Bracebridge, which specializes in home furnishings and décor. Heather took the lead on all of the interior design – the paint colours, wall textures, barn doors, stone, wood colours, kitchen colours and tile. Both Heather and Elise sensed a nautical feel on site, and worked together to pursue this theme consistently when selecting colours, textures, furnishings, and accent décor. *Continued on page 97*

BELOW: A well-equipped wet bar in the boathouse and a large dock enhance waterside entertaining. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Below the cottage, Lake Muskoka laps at the rocky shore of the 9.2-acre property. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Stone masonry extends inside the front entrance and flanks the foyer. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Builder Darcy Sheppard of Sheppard Construction.





Caesarstone covers the kitchen counters and charcoal island where barstools align for breakfast and light meals. The board and batten style wall finish is made of drywall and medium-density fibreboard.

RIGHT: A dinner table of reclaimed elm sits on pine salvaged from a barn in Quebec. **BELOW:** Plenty of natural light illuminates the kitchen.



Nautical motifs of anchors, sailboats and mooring ropes, vintage maps of Muskoka, handmade one-of-a-kind local driftwood art, and a 24-hour ship's clock with brass hands all play supporting roles to the focal point of Lake Muskoka. Coastal-look rattan seats in the guest bedroom and rich brown leather club chairs in the master suite are positioned for savouring the view. "It's always nice to have a couple of chairs so that people can just wind down before they retire or sit in their robe to enjoy their morning coffee," says Elise.

The key is not to clutter. "Choosing the right furnishings for the space is so important," says Elise, who was assisted by Veranda product specialist **Elizabeth Calvert**. "Rather than putting in something that looks good but absolutely has no use, we always want to put in just what's needed. It has to have a use, it has to be comfortable, it has to be beautiful – three things."

In the living room, swivel gliding rockers enable guests to keep an eye on the action, whether it's inside the cottage or on the waterfront – and for added comfort, they also recline. Backless kitchen island seats made from reclaimed elm also swivel toward kitchen activity or to take in the view. They are adjustable to move up or down on rustic iron barstool frames.

Scale in proportion to the room is also critical, emphasizes Elise. "People like to see how spacious the place is, so we do not overdo it with too many items," she says. "Our main job is to make it look accommodating." *Continued on page 98*

Veranda owner and principal decorator Elise Boyer (right) with product specialist Liz Calvert.



home & builder

In the master bedroom, horizontal upper windows on the back wall set the stage for a linear element of design. Veranda's RuffSawn Tempus collection furniture with its clean lines and profile was ideal for mimicking the long windows. A Goudy Golden Oak stain was chosen to finish the Canadian handcrafted maple bed, nightstand and dresser. Mica-shade nightstand lamps share the same straight lines and square shape. Most of the furniture is handmade, Canadian and high quality.

In the sunroom, durable aluminum-frame outdoor furniture crafted with wicker-look resin was chosen. "It's used typically in outdoor rooms and will never fade or break down," Elise points out. Cushions in this room are made with Sunbrella, an easy-to-clean fabric that's water-and-fade-resistant. Club chairs with an ottoman from Veranda's deep-seated, outdoor Portofino collection complete the look.

In the guest bedrooms, solid maple furniture from Veranda's Durham collection was painted white. "In this case, the whole



ABOVE: Cedar shake walls, cedar flooring and fir beams create a country look in the Muskoka room. **LEFT:** A stylized sailboat graces the mantel. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The living room in a tiny, comfy cottage at the front of the property provides guests with a lake view. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Two bunkies hold additional private sleeping space for overnight visitors. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A high vaulted ceiling and large windows in the living room make sunsets a spectacular sight.



house is painted white and pale grey – just soothing colours – we have a whole collection of those colours pretty consistently," says Elise, who excels in providing furnishings and recommending paint or stain finishes for the pieces.

Jute runners offer a coastal feel. "It's important to use natural fibres," she explains. "It looks good, gives you texture, and it's a little bit more casual in a cottage."

The seven-foot reclaimed elm dining table – with 18-inch extensions for extra guests – is flanked by skirted fabric chairs that soften the look of an abundance of natural wood in the room. Sea grass armchairs with cushions add variety at each end of the table.

Flooring throughout the cottage is a masterpiece created by the builder working with reclaimed pine from a barn in Quebec. Stone masonry and pillars by **Tim Smith of Set in Stone Muskoka Inc.** add character. Quality cabinetry in the kitchen, dining room and bathrooms is by **Woodsmiths of Muskoka** and Northern Granite Works provided Caesarstone counters.

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Darcy Sheppard built sliding barn doors for spots such as the en suite shown in the photo, right. Doors in this bedroom open to the deck at the front of the house.



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RIGHT: The great outdoors is ever-present at this cottage. **FAR RIGHT:** Shaker-style cabinets furnish the bathrooms, kitchen and dining room. **BELOW:** Horizontal windows over the bed brighten the master bedroom.



ModTech HVAC Services and **Nevis Electrical Systems Inc.** extended their expertise on the build.

For Elise, it's all about enhancing the workmanship. "Because you want the rooms to come alive for what they are, and for people to enjoy the natural materials, the fireplace and floors. We don't want to detract from all of those details by crowding. It has to be comfortable, liveable, beautiful and useful."

The relatively monochromatic scheme was intentional. "If somebody wanted to add colour – red, blue – it's very easy to do because this is all neutral," Elise says. "Whoever is going to live here can add colour to their own taste." The property is listed with **Cayman Marshall International Realty Inc. Brokerage**. "Whoever moves in here is going to want some window coverings," Elise notes. "I can do that – some nice Roman shades that go up and down or drapes to frame the view – that can be pulled to have it dark at night; that's what I would do," she says. "But for now we don't do anything. We just want them to enjoy the spectacular views." **OH**

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