

JUL/AUG 2011

# dabble

design • travel • food



*Dabble does*

# SEATTLE

TRAVEL BY DESIGN A guide to Saint-Pierre and Miquelon FOOD A taste of flatbread

# family cottage

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIM MCGHIE

Far from the hectic pace of Toronto and nestled along the northern shores of Lake Erie is the tiny town of Wainfleet. An idyllic spot to spend summer weekends and holidays surrounded by lake and land. Ready to update his 1920s family cottage, Mark Narsansky turned to his designer and longtime partner **Philip Mitchell** for help.



ABOVE French doors lead from the living room to patio and adjacent sandy beach.

RIGHT The graciously renovated cottage hosts frequent and large gatherings.

Today, the refurbished cottage boasts ample room for entertaining family, friends and even frequent overnight guests. But that isn't how it started out. The challenge for transforming Mark's childhood vacation home was to rework the footprint to accommodate larger gatherings while preserving the cottage's vintage personality.

To maximize seating for evening and weekend gatherings, the bright and cozy living room is smartly laid out with comfy sofas, plump armchairs and large coffee and occasional tables. A long pillow-topped banquette borders the front windows. Fabrics are a mixture of durable woven textures and kicky cottage stripes and prints.

The linen window treatments from **Kravet** play a dual role: they cool the air in summer by controlling light levels while adding visual and physical warmth during the winter months.





A banquette is a practical addition to the space, providing more seating in the smallest possible footprint. Plus, overnight guests can sleep on the window seat as its dimensions are similar to two single beds. "When the beaming sun and collage snacks conspire to make sleepy guests," laughs Philip, "I find this the perfect spot for a catnap."

In another corner of the room, an eclectic display of crocks sits atop an antique storage cabinet. The sconce is a vintage gas lantern. The turn-of-the-century Canadian landscape painting sits against cream wainscoting and below soft gray-green on the walls.

All kitchen tools—pots, pans, plates and cooking utensils—are easy to grab from the storage shelves on the island and the wrought iron racks hanging above. Architectural trim details, vintage lighting and hardware are inspired by the cottage's original 1920s architecture. The island features a marble surface, ideal for baking as well as sturdy counter space. Cabinetry finishes are hand painted and, if they chip, can easily be touched up. "This kitchen is made to accommodate lots of people activity," says the designer.

To accommodate large dinner parties, Philip chose a dining table that extends to serve 26 guests, perfect for holidays, birthdays and special events. A distressed finish means there's no drama if children or pets accidentally scratch the surface. A sideboard with inset marble inlays accommodates hot serving dishes.

Other traditional accents include a vintage chandelier which gives off a warm glow above and reclaimed antique floors.





The cottage has three additional bedrooms on the newly built second floor, though there is nary a bulge on the cottage exterior to reflect the change. Why? "Because the rooms are tucked behind the roofline and concealed behind discreet shed dormers," responds Philip. Clever.

Vintage florals drape the bed with its crisp white sheets in the second floor master bedroom. The roofline dictates an unusual angle above the vintage headboard from Patina Antiques. Twin ottomans in slate blue fabric rest at the foot of the bed.

Philip was eager to replace dark stained walls from the original design with light-reflecting warm colours such as soft green, grey and cream. Philip says he's a fan of mixing different finishes—from stained and painted wood to forged iron, it makes the space so much more interesting.

In the ensuite, Bianco Carrera marble optimizes light and offers an easy-to-live-with surface that ages gracefully.

Philip sums up the renovation this way, "Our cottage is still full of 1920s details and is primed for the demands of the millennium lifestyle." 