

Lake House Chic

Everything but the water.

By Susan Kehoe, Ph.D. | Photography by Beth Singer

A family was looking for a cottage on a lake Up North. When they found it, their excited 2-year-old son named it “the codge” because he couldn’t say “cottage.” Twelve years later, it’s still the codge.

In cottages where kids spend summers learning how to swim in the lake, the decorating is more about finding

space for kids’ friends and guests. Loads of shelves for board games, books and puzzles, as well as wet towels and sand become the typical decor.

That might be the Up North dream for many people, but what about when the kids leave or for those couples who just want a second home to park the boat or a

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One of the original homes in Bay Harbor, this Cape Cod was modernized so every room has an extraordinary lake view. See the interior designs by Michael Coyne on the following pages.

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summer get-away and entertainment haven. That means decorating that's comfortable, casual and "lake house chic."

A HOME WITH A VIEW

Michael Coyne, a high-end designer with a studio in the Michigan Design Center, shared tips and photos of a lakeside home he decorated in Bay Harbor. His client wanted a design that reflected his 80-foot vintage Hacker Craft docked outside.

On the lower level, Coyne started with mahogany wood and beams, materials that mimic the yacht. Windows resembling portholes immediately signaled the theme and added interest to the paneled wall.

Blue carpeting continues the lake into the room as it flows through floor-to-ceiling windows. White linen covers slip over pieces in the casual space where the family watches TV and has direct access to the beach and boat. White leather chairs trimmed in blue piping surround a circular table with a polished chrome cylindrical base; it introduces a sleek high-tech look.

Mahogany cocktail bridges have Teflon undersides to slide over ottomans for placement in conversation groupings. Blue accents and pillows scattered throughout the room pull the space together. A kitchen and butler's pantry found on this level extends the yacht feel with dark-colored, wood-slatted flooring, white tongue-and-groove ceilings and stainless steel appliances.

Yacht inspiration continues into the office that features a leather-padded wall and matching leather insets on the credenza. A spectacular tray ceiling with hand-applied silver leaf is completed with a round chandelier hanging from the ceiling.

A mahogany staircase with steps covered in a leather-bound sisal runner leads to another level in this three-story lake house. Approaching the second level, one experiences a slight shift from the whimsy of the lower level. A beige and gray color palette is neutral and sophisticated so as not to distract from the lake views. No walls block the 4,000-square-foot great room and open-plan kitchen. Tongue-and-groove wood, painted white, marches along the walls.

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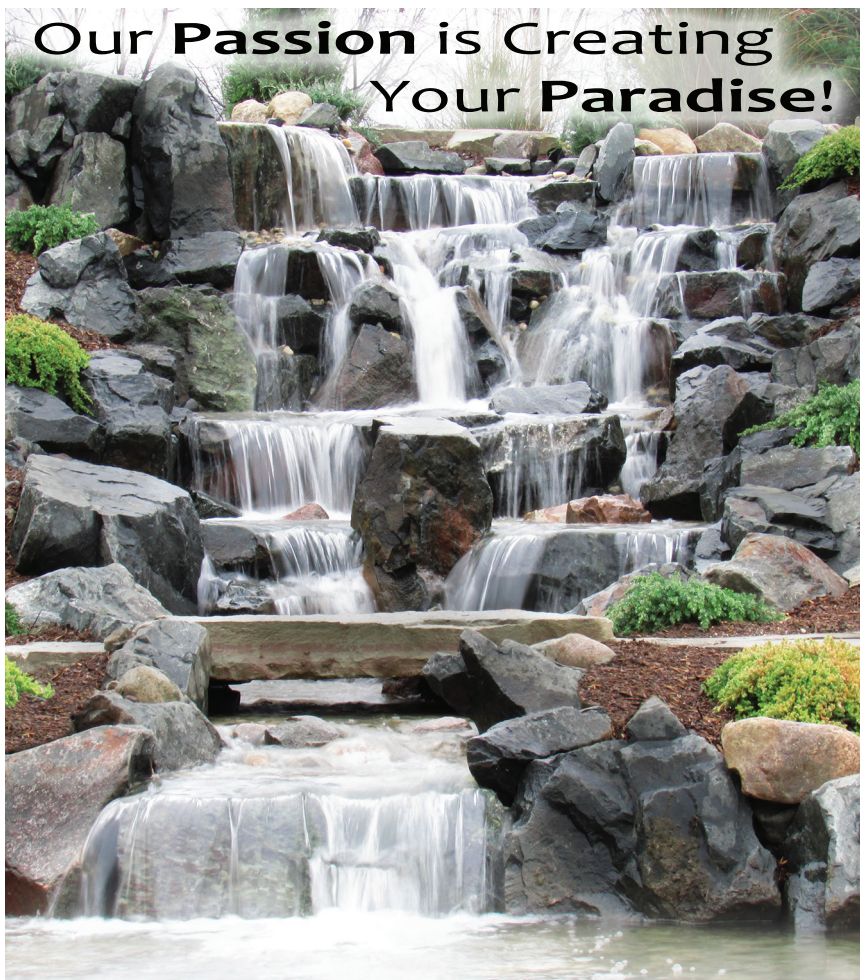
Above left: The sophisticated second level invites lake views that reflect in 3-inch glass tabletops.

Above right: The first level was designed to echo the client's 80-foot vintage Hacker-craft docked outside. Mahogany wood cocktail bridges slide into place as needed in this casual setting.

Bottom: The office has a leather-padded wall and matching leather credenza inserts. Hand-applied silver leaf covers the tray ceiling and a chandelier throws light on a contemporary glass, wood and polished metal desk. Mahogany walls and trim continue into this first-floor room.



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Table tops 3-inches thick reflect the ripples of the water. Furniture upholstered in linen and embellished with nail heads are placed comfortably for breathtaking views. A fireplace, displaying a barn painting by Streeter Blair, juts sovereignly over the lake.

The owners can walk into this home and kick off the stresses of the

day along with their shoes. This is lakeside living at its finest. **NS**

FOR MORE INFO

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Janet Genn, designer and owner of Extra Oomph!

The Cozy Lakefront Cottage

If you're thinking about a distinctive "cottagey" look for your place on the lake, wonderful options abound. Many smaller lake houses need a special touch that only a unique piece of furniture, an accessory or luxurious faux fur for cold northern nights can provide.

Janet Genn, owner of Extra Oomph!, has lived on lakes all of her life. As an interior designer, she shops the markets around the U.S. to hand-select furniture and decor items that "take the ordinary to story-worthy."

She has one-of-a-kind pieces not found anywhere in the area. For example, after four weeks she tracked down an Amish furniture maker to bring back marvelous wood pieces that were tucked away in his pole barn. Her gallery on Orchard Lake Road in Sylvan Lake also displays room vignettes that provide ideas for customers who want to personalize or refresh their home.

One of the cottagey trends she mentioned is multi-functional furniture for a small space that opens when needed. For instance, Genn displays a 20-inch Japanese drop-leaf kitchen island that expands to seat six when company or grandchildren visit.

One of her innovative ideas is slipcovering a headboard with custom material. Genn says, "It can be washed instead of needing to be reupholstered, and it adds unexpected decor to a plain wall. It can be a new look, whenever you want one, and easy to make yourself."

Accessories also fill the gallery because, according to Genn, "It's the details that make a house a home."

Embrace your individual lakefront cottage dream, whether you use professional assistance to decorate or enjoy finding your own treasures. The many lakes of Michigan are calling. **NS**



A vignette from Extra Oomph! featuring a headboard covered in fabric.