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Fishing Lodge Charm

Set on verdant Whidbey Island in Washington state, this home gives a nod to its history while showcasing some of the best elements of modern cottage design.

TEXT BY ALICE DOYLE / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN O'HAGAN





❖ When planning their vacation home, Joanne and Bruce Montgomery knew exactly where to look for inspiration. Their property on Whidbey Island in Washington state was once home to a summer inn used by fishermen from 1905 to 1947 when Holmes Harbor was a famous fishing spot. “We wanted the interior to have the look and feel of a classic fishing lodge with a great room like a lobby and the fit and finish to be evocative of the original structure,” Bruce says.

The Montgomerys presented architect Ross Chapin with old photos of the inn and shared its history (the original structure was torn down after a fire). “The historic inn was a classic white clapboard building with a hipped roof and wraparound porch,” Ross says. “Those were our design cues. What’s better than a broad porch to take in the light and life along the shore?”

The home is organized around this main room—a 14x28-foot gathering space with high-coffered ceilings and lots of windows.

Kitchen clean up is made more enjoyable with the many windows that let in light and views.





(Far left) This cozy spot is perfect for taking in beautiful views from the many large windows that flood the house with light all day long.

(Left) Large family dinners often spill out onto the board porch with a picnic table and benches for seating.



(Left) The kitchen was designed to be wider than a typical kitchen to allow room for the cook and helpers to prepare large family dinners. It is anchored by a windowed breakfast area. (Below) This hard-working nook is an ideal drop zone for garden and beach gear.



The porch is a favorite spot for large family gatherings during the temperate months, and the abundance of windows bring in the outdoors year-round. “The interior space is only 1,800 square feet, but the great room is a double cube 14x28-foot design with clerestory windows letting in light that does not come from the main windows that are shaded by the covered porch,” Bruce says. The finishes include mahogany windows and Brazilian

cherry floors, which make the all white walls stand out. “One of our favorite features is the inlaid compass rose in the center of the great room,” Joanne says. The darker, richer colors of the furnishings, rugs, and the more formal fireplace are in keeping with the lodge concept. Framed zoological prints of fish adorn walls, and a 53-pound Chinook salmon floats over the mantel honoring the home’s past just as the Montgomerys chose to do from the start.