



This historic cottage with a stone foundation enjoys a dramatic location on the rocky cliffs of an island near Brunswick, Maine. “We do a lot of cooking and hosting in the summer but also love to light a fire in the winter and wear a lot of layers to sit outside,” says Atlanta designer Tanya Lacourse of her family’s second home.



LEFT | Soapstone countertops and a limestone-topped island/table fit the modern-country vibe of the kitchen, with its open shelves and updated lighting.

ABOVE | This little outbuilding holds gardening equipment, yard games, and winter sleds.

Maine Attraction

An Atlanta designer and family embrace the rugged, minimal style of New England at their second home

By **LISA MOWRY** | Photography by **JEFF ROBERTS IMAGING**

OVER A THOUSAND miles north of Atlanta’s pollen-filled backyards, interior designer Tanya Lacourse spends spring weekends starting her garden on Bailey Island, Maine. Rocky coastal cliffs provide a dramatic setting for the vacation home she and her partner fixed up and now enjoy year-round with his two teenagers. “It’s like summer camp for adults,” Tanya says.

OLD CHARM, NEW LOOK
Finding a Maine house for

sale—much less a charming, circa 1904 one—can be difficult, explains Tanya. Her partner, a native “Mainer,” visits his parents in nearby Brunswick often and spotted this house on one of his family visits. Fortunately for them, the property went up for sale during the winter, when fewer buyers are on the hunt, says Tanya, herself from New Hampshire. The house had been renovated in the ‘90s and came with furniture (some of which they ended up donating), so she

was able to concentrate on smaller projects with major impact. “We changed countertops, tiled bathrooms, and switched out light fixtures, and that made a big difference,” she says. “We also took down a wall so we could see the ocean.”

RELAXED FURNISHINGS “We wanted the look to be casual, nothing fussy, and sort of modern,” says Tanya. “The kind of place for dogs and kids.” A black-and-white color palette has a few blues mixed in, but, for the most part, there’s not a lot of color, she says. Pine walls and ceilings and a fir floor provide the warmth of wood as a backdrop. When possible, Tanya shopped locally for items, occasionally bringing up things from Atlanta that could fit on an airplane.

FOUR SEASONS GETAWAY “We spend the biggest chunk of time there in the summer,” says Tanya, but she and her partner go in the spring to open it up. They also enjoy Thanksgiving and Christmas at the coast, sometimes even bundling up for New Year’s Eve around the firepit. Their flat lawn accommodates archery and badminton, although their favorite activities involve the Atlantic Ocean in one way or another: boating trips, quick dips in the chilly water, sitting along the cliff, or watching a storm approach.

TRANSPORTATION TACTICS The family flies into Portland, Maine, from Atlanta (a direct flight that is just over two hours) and then drives the hour north to their cottage with a car they keep at the grandparents’ house. On the island, the pace is slower, which appeals to the Atlantans. Says Tanya’s partner, “When people up there complain about traffic, it’s six cars slowing things down at the ice cream social.”



Black Windsor chairs and a white pub table continue the laidback look of the house in the dining area, illuminated by a chandelier with a nautical flair.



A low white sofa and coffee table with a weathered wooden base anchor the living room, with its peaceful outdoor views. Floor-to-ceiling wood wraps the historic house in warmth.