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The magic of Hidden Pond

+



Each cottage at the resort has a name that recalls a Hidden Pond experience. *Thank You* (left) is not only an expression of gratitude for Maine summers, it is also the name of the cottage designed by Beverly Bangs of Antiques on Nine in Kennebunk. The screened porch extends the living space into the outdoors, where the sights, scents, and sounds of the surrounding woods can be fully appreciated.

At the very heart of the resort is the lush fern grotto (above), encircled by fourteen cottages, each with its own color and character. "I wanted a feeling of wildness and an emphasis on the beauty of abundance," explains landscape designer Ted Carter of the Carter Design Group in Buxton. He and colleague Gina Marianacci massed large groupings of native plants throughout the grounds for maximum impact.



The Discreet Charm of the Maine Woods

Making a magic connection at Hidden Pond

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by Candace Karu
Photography François Gagné

Hidden Pond, New England's newest and arguably most innovative luxury resort, opened in July with dramatic style to great acclaim. Located near Goose Rocks Beach in Kennebunkport on more than sixty acres of pristine Maine woodlands lush with balsam and sweet ferns, birch groves and exposed granite outcroppings, Hidden Pond is an inviting study in contradictions. The destination offers guests an experience that is at once rustic and luxurious, simple yet refined, a vacation outfitted with every modern convenience in a setting that serves as a nostalgic reminder of times gone by.

Developers Tim Harrington and Juan Urtubey fell in love with the land when they first saw it in 2006. The pair knew they wanted to create a tranquil retreat in Harrington's beloved Maine woods, where they could share their own delight in the state's abundant natural gifts with vacationers from around the world. Shortly after purchasing the

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property, Harrington and Urtubey traveled to the Spanish resort town of Ibiza and stayed at one of the area's most popular hotels. "It is located in the middle of a huge orange grove, and guests stay in casitas, or cottages," Harrington remembers. "It was simply a magical place. I wanted to bring that feeling back to Maine." And so, on a small island off the coast of Spain, the concept for Hidden Pond was conceived.

Harrington's goal in creating Hidden Pond was to distill the essence of Maine's unique appeal and foster a sense of community, as well as forge an enduring bond with the land and the water. Housing guests in cottages—each complete with a screened porch, full kitchen, and gathering room—helps to capture the feeling of home away from home. As Harrington and Urtubey's vision began to coalesce, they began to put together a team that would help them take Hidden Pond from concept to reality. Their first call was to their friend and colleague Ted Carter of Carter Design Group in Buxton. The three have worked together on projects for more than fifteen years, most recently at the Cabot Cove Cottages in Kennebunkport, where Carter was the garden and landscape designer. Hidden Pond proved to be a project that spoke not only to Carter's design sensibilities, but also to his deep spiritual connection to the natural world.

"I wanted to create a space that was not about escape, but about connection," explains Carter. "Connection to the spirit of the land and forest, as well as a connection to family and friends." Carter treated the land as a living entity and came up with a landscape design that was consistent with the existing growth. His colleague Gina Marianacci worked with Carter throughout the process. "Ted creates the canvas with his ideas and design," says Marianacci. "Then I can come in with the details that complete it."

Respecting the natural beauty of the land was a priority for everyone involved in the project. Many developers, in an attempt to save time and resources, will simply clear-cut trees and undergrowth during construction, and then replant around the new structures. At Hidden Pond, all the buildings—the cottages, outbuildings, and lodge—were nestled into the natural contours of the land in ways that left the established growth undisturbed. Carter and Marianacci also worked to make the environment as interactive as possible. Along with Harrington and Urtubey, they designed a two-acre farm at the entrance to Hidden Pond. Guests can "shop" among the garden rows, which are dense with vegetables and flowers in the summer. A small farm stand operates on the honor system; shoppers pay for their purchases by leaving money in a jar on the counter. There



The lodge at Hidden Pond (above) is a study in comfort and contrasts. Developers Tim Harrington and Juan Urtubey wanted it to combine the best qualities of their two homes—Maine and Miami. They worked with designers Darcie Bundy and Jane Fox of Bundy Fox Design in Kennebunkport to achieve a feeling of Maine tranquility informed by Miami style.



Tucked into a clearing in the balsam-scented woods is the spa tent (above) with a raised wooden platform and birch-trunk tent poles—the perfect place for a couples massage or a relaxing spa treatment.

A quiet corner of the lodge (left) invites guests to sip morning coffee or read on a rainy afternoon. Bundy and Fox drew inspiration for their design from the surrounding woods, incorporating the mossy greens, airy blues, and soft browns in furnishings and finishes.

Outside the lodge, the pool area (below) is outfitted with sleek chaises and canopied daybeds, an enticement to lounge with impunity.



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The living area in *First Light* (left, top) is Pamela Burgess's take on cottage chic. The Kennebunk designer was inspired by food colors like dark chocolate and *crème fraiche*, with accents of lime and blue Curacao.

Louise Hurlbutt and Annie Detterman of Hurlbutt Designs in Kennebunk used natural fabrics and materials in rich tones of brick red and burnt orange, earthy brown and deep green in *Silent Pine* (above). The twin beds in the second bedroom have hand-finished headboards and bright John Robshaw linens.

A thick carpet of grass with slate stepping stones (left, bottom) anchors this sleek porch design by Nicki Bongiorno and Anna Greenglass of spacesnb in Kennebunkport. *Lucky* is both a name and a feeling in this cottage's witty blend of contemporary and organic elements that combine to create a sophisticated retreat surrounded by balsam and birch trees.



are hundreds of blueberry bushes on the property, and the fat berries are ready for picking from mid-July to the end of September.

Christy Reid and Pete Giles, the husband-and-wife team that manages the resort with help from their dog, Scupper, direct the activities at Hidden Pond from their office in the lodge. On this day, there is a small Russian flag flying outside the front door, to honor a family from Russia visiting Maine for a wedding. Reid is checking the contents of a breakfast basket before it is sent to a cottage, the smell of warm muffins and coffee trailing in her wake. Giles has gathered kits for making s'mores around the lodge's fire pit, an evening ritual loved by children and adults.

"This is the ideal scenario to get to know the people who stay here," says Reid. "Because the cottages are like homes, guests can stay longer. We all start to feel like part of a community." Hidden Pond is emphatically and intentionally seasonal—the resort is open from May through October—encompassing Maine's fleeting spring, its glorious summer, and the state at its autumnal best. "Maine has become a year-round destination, but when I was growing up, the season had a beginning and an end," explains Reid. "It's like that here, and I think it makes the experience even more special."

Harrington and Urtubey wanted each of the fourteen cottages at Hidden Pond to have a unique sensibility, so they invited their favorite local designers to interpret the Maine cottage style. The result is a range of decor choices from classic to contemporary, each cottage reflecting



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the Hidden Pond philosophy and the designer’s personal aesthetic. The lodge, which is the first stop when checking into Hidden Pond, also serves as a communal gathering place, and guests are often found in front of the massive stone fireplace or on the sweeping porches and poolside decks. “I wanted the lodge to have a cooler, hipper feeling, but still be rooted in Maine traditions,” says Urtubey.

Certain details are consistent throughout the property—every cottage has two bedrooms *en suite*, a screened porch, a fully equipped kitchen, and a working fireplace surrounded by granite stonework. The linens are Frette and the flowers are fresh. There are even Hidden Pond candles that capture the scent of the surrounding woods: sweet fern and earth with a top-note of balsam.

If the philosophy of Hidden Pond revolves around connection—to nature, family, and the magic of Maine summers. While planning for the grand opening, Harrington and Urtubey decided to create an extended Designer Showcase. The event would benefit three of their favorite local charities and would allow visitors to explore the resort before guests began arriving. During the event, the fourteen cottages were open for tours to showcase the work of the participating designers. Proceeds from ticket sales were divided among the Child Abuse Prevention Council, River Tree Center for the Arts, and the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust.

On the night before the Showcase began, the developers staged a Preview Gala, inviting everyone who worked on the project, from

The living room of Hurlbutt Designs’s *Silent Pine* (above left) uses the earth tones of the Maine woods accented with rich orange to create an inviting room replete with ferns and pinecones, wood and wicker. A whimsical moose head tops the working stone fireplace, ready to take the chill off a cool summer evening.

The young designers of Favela Chic in Kennebunkport created a kitchen in *Lazy Days* (above right) that is both playful and practical. They used open shelving to hold dishes and accessories, both antique and modern. A pair of floral chandeliers tops a table that calls for meals shared with family and friends.

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Mark Spiker, *One Damned Designer*, from Kennebunk believes that “it’s gotta be fun or it’s not worth doing.” His design for *Day Dream* (above) makes his point with wit and charm. In the bathroom he used trompe l’oeil stonework for the walls and deep-red boat oars for towel bars. Spiker juxtaposed a corrugated metal wall with the cottage’s traditional beadboard in the living room (below). Antiques, custom furniture, and humorous details combine for a unique take on rustic luxury.

Darcie Bundy and Jane Fox decided to think green in *Sweet Fern* (right) and recycle—furniture and accessories. In the powder room, they repurposed a baptismal font set on beach stones to create a sink topped by an Eastlake mirror and flanked by an antique garden statue.





The fireplace in *Sweet Fern* (above) is topped by New England artist Shawn Allen's landscape. Jane Fox designed the whimsical fishing rod that incorporates an antique reel and a curly willow branch. An antique Nepalese iron bird graces the oak mantle.

Designer Beverly Bangs repurposed antiques for the master bedroom of *Thank You* (right, top). The headboard was created using a section of a pressed tin ceiling from a Victorian-era building. An old window frame is transformed into a mirror, and a vintage factory roller is reimagined as the base for the bedside lamp.

Designer Brett Johnson of Maine Street Design Company in Gorham drew his inspiration for *Firefly* from his personal history—generations of mariners from the coast of New England. The decor incorporates classic cottage style with deep Maine influences. The writing nook (right, bottom) waits for a rainy afternoon spent on correspondence—postcards from paradise.



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Beverly Bangs
Bundy Fox Design
Darcie Bundy
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Brett Johnson
One Damned Designer
Mark Spiker
Pallian & Co.
Cynthia Pallian
spacesnb
Nicki Bongiorno
Anna Greenglass



The two-acre farm (above) is part of landscape designer Ted Carter's plan to make a stay at Hidden Pond a truly interactive experience. Guests are invited to pick a fragrant bouquet from the cutting beds or fat, ripe tomatoes for a dinner salad, or simply take a stroll through summer's bounty.

A bike trip might be the perfect way to explore Goose Rocks, and there are bikes galore at the resort (left). Whether it's a quick trip to the garden or a leisurely ride to the beach, two-wheeled transportation suits the relaxed pace at Hidden Pond.

designers to subcontractors, as well as representatives from the three beneficiary charities and friends from near and far. The party gave Harrington and Urtubey a chance to thank all the people who helped make their dream a reality. Guests strolled around the property and gardens and through the cottages. The winding lanes were dotted with serving tables constructed of birch logs and laden with hors d'oeuvres. Waitstaff served champagne-infused lemonade, and partygoers danced under the stars, a few finding their way into the pool before evening's end.

In July, after the Gala and the Designer Showcase, Hidden Pond opened for business. The first group of guests arrived to celebrate a very special occasion—the joyous union of Tim Harrington and Juan Urtubey. For many years, they had been partners in business, but on this clear summer afternoon, in the fern-scented shade of balsam and birch, surrounded by friends and relatives from around the world, they were joined as partners in life. **MH+D**

See Resources for more information.

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