

FAR AND AWAY

LIVING ROOM

Three walls of windows provide sweeping views from Sarah Richardson's cottage on Georgian Bay in Ontario. **Rattan chair** and **side table**: vintage, **Miller Island Company**. **Chaises**: **Sarah Richardson Design**. **Pillows**: **Thibaut** on chair, **Kravet** on chaise. **Cocktail table**: vintage. **Woven stool**: **Wayfair**. **Pouf**: **CB2**. **Curtains**: **Tonic Living**. **Rug**: **Loloi**.

Candlelit dinners, picnics on the boat, no neighbors in sight. Sarah Richardson's lake house truly stands alone.

EVERY SUMMER, TORONTO-based designer and HGTV star Sarah Richardson decamps with her husband and two daughters (plus a pair of guinea pigs and a dog) to a cottage on its own tiny private island in Lake Huron's Georgian Bay. Accessible only by boat or seaplane, it's a bare-bones setup—one that would have most teenagers bemoaning the lack of Wi-Fi (not to mention spotty cell phone reception). Richardson's daughters, however, are likelier to complain when she turns the electricity *on*.

"My youngest hates anything but candlelight!" laughs Richardson as she explains how, each night, the family lights candles to illuminate the living and dining rooms—despite the fact that solar panels on the roof provide more than enough electricity to power the house all day and all night.

That's just one of the things that makes the cottage, which Richardson's husband built more than 20 years ago, such a one-of-a-kind place. Not to say that life there isn't cushy: Last year, after realizing that all the windows and doors that Richardson had installed less than a decade before hadn't held up to the elements, she decided to give the whole place a high-style face-lift.

With standard wood windows no match for the constant sea spray and heavy winds that occasionally surpass 60 miles per hour, the designer replaced the existing set with extra-durable, aluminum-clad versions. The house's exterior wood trim, rotted from the damp conditions, was swapped out for man-made Versatex.

A rarely used screened-in porch was transformed into a glass-windowed room, the flooring replaced with easy-to-install vinyl. Since there's no central heating in the house, the addition of a wood-burning stove helps keep the space toasty on cold nights. To add extra room for overnight visitors, Richardson turned the "bunkie"—a small building next to the main house—into a guest room.

When it came to redecorating, says Richardson, "The goal was to make use of what we had as much as possible. It's massively difficult to get anything here—you have to think about everything down to the last peanut!" That meant choosing easy-to-ship furniture, like an Ikea sectional that can be broken down into smaller pieces, and lightweight items made from wicker and rattan, many of them from favorite vintage shops on the mainland. "We used our recreational boats as moving trucks," Richardson laughs. "They were piled so high with furniture, we could barely see out!" ■

Twelve miles from the nearest mainland marina, the tiny island measures around three-quarters of an acre—depending on the tide. "When the water is low, it's about twice that size; when it's high, our cottage is basically a houseboat!" Richardson says.



ENTRY NOOK
Console,
mirror, and
sconce: [Wayfair](#).
Basket: [Ikea](#).

"Nobody ever brings a **hat**, but everybody always needs one!"

For last looks before heading out: an **oversize mirror**.

A **slim console** creates a landing pad for keys and sunglasses.

The Welcome Zone

Since the house lacks formal entry spaces, Richardson used a few smart tricks to create one next to the dining room's sliding doors.

A **rattan basket** corrals sandals and sneakers in style.

KITCHEN

The paneled island is made from wood salvaged from an 1860s schoolhouse. **Backsplash:** Saltillo Tile. **Countertop:** Caesarstone. **Faucet:** The Rubinet Faucet Company. **Stools:** Sarah Richardson Design in Perfect Leather Goods Ltd. leather. **Lanterns:** vintage.



PIVOTING WINDOWS LET THE BREEZE IN FROM ALL SIDES.



PORCH

"I'm a complete vinyl flooring convert now!" declares Richardson. "It works as long as you're not trying to trick anyone." **Sectional:** Ikea. **Pillows:** custom, in Kravet and Lee Jofa fabrics. **Cocktail table:** vintage. **Chairs, side table, and lamp:** Wayfair. **Pendant:** vintage. **The Miller Island Company.** **Flooring:** vinyl. **Fiber & Cloth.**

INEXPENSIVE VINYL BOARDS ARE EASY TO INSTALL OVER EXISTING FLOORS.

DAUGHTER'S ROOM

Richardson made over a vintage nightstand from Elle & Eve with a few coats of Benjamin Moore's Waterfall.

Shade and curtain fabric: Sarah Richardson for Kravet. **Headboard:** Sarah Richardson Design in Kravet fabric. **Lamp:** Vintage Fine Objects.

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DINING ROOM

A pulley system raises and lowers the vintage chandelier for easy candle lighting. **Dining table:** custom. **Chairs:** Sarah Richardson Design, backs in Premier Prints and seats in Perfect Leather Goods Ltd. **Rug:** Loloi.



DAUGHTER'S ROOM
Watery blues and greens comprise the palette for the house. Even the patterned fabrics have a wavelike feeling. **Desk:** vintage, [Miller Island Company](#). **Mirror:** vintage, [Decorum Decorative Finds](#). **Stool:** [Vintage Fine Objects](#) in [Kravet](#) fabric.



BATHROOM
Vanity: [Dezign Market](#). **Showerhead and faucet:** [The Rubinet Faucet Company](#). **Tile:** [Saltillo Tiles](#). **Mirror:** [Ikea](#). **Pendant:** [Arteriors](#).



Meet the Bunkie!

And don't call it a shed. Measuring roughly 130 square feet, this "teeny-tiny building" across the lawn from the main house is actually a *bunkie*, what Ontarians call a small, fully furnished outbuilding that can act as a guest suite. **"It's a really easy, popular way to extend living space,"** explains Richardson, who outfitted hers to double as a home office. "Since we only use it in the warmer months, we didn't need to worry about installing heat, and it's close enough to the cottage that it can share a bathroom." Don't feel like starting a construction project? Shop ready-to-assemble and premade bunkie models at [thebunkie.com](#) and [summerwood.com](#).



GUEST ROOM
Richardson upgraded a vintage rattan nightstand by adding a custom-cut marble top. **Headboard** and **curtain fabric:** Sarah Richardson for [Kravet](#). **Quilt:** [Huckleberry's Home & Cottage](#). **Lamp** and **rug:** [Wayfair](#).



Peek inside some of Richardson's favorite city dwellings and country escapes in her new book from Simon & Schuster.