

Traditional Waterfront Cottage in East Chop



Text by Susan Catling

Photography by Jeanna Shepard Photography

Aerial photo by Leftfork Photography by David Welch





Snug up against East Chop's Crystal Lake and steps from the shores of Vineyard Sound, this eclectic bungalow known as the Doll House has water views from every side. Intimate spaces throughout the property create pockets of privacy for entertaining, reading, painting or just watching the ever-changing array of wildlife.

Starting life as a fishing shack in 1900 where the kitchen is located now, the home grew to include a master bedroom, dining room, full bath, open living room with a woodburning fireplace and a sunroom.

Across the back lawn, an old shed has become another dining area but could easily be used as a spare bedroom or home office. The floor was raised a foot to make the view more accessible from all four sides.

A separate two-bedroom guest house with full bath perches waterside and provides privacy for visiting guests and family. Attached is an outdoor shower with a picture window so even bathers are never without a view. A one-car garage has plenty of storage space and a room in the back is now an artist's studio.

"This was a labor of love," the owner said, describing the many renovations he undertook over the years that included raising the floor height and adding brick floors in several areas, revamping the kitchen, replacing all the windows and upgrading the plumbing and electrical systems. After frequently crawling up onto the roof with a ladder to

take in the views, the owner decided to install a proper rooftop deck and called on architect Chuck Sullivan and Doug Best of D. Best Construction. "As a builder, we found the work both very challenging and fun with this miniature," Doug said. "The upper deck construction on top of the house required a helical anchor pier foundation approach to support the load because the water table was so high. Additionally, everything had to be proportioned in a much smaller way so as to complement the existing structure. Kudos to the owner and Chuck for helping to make the magic happen and in their efforts for keeping with the beach bungalow style."

With nearly 150 feet of waterfront on Crystal Lake, the property offers views of mallards, swans and turtles on the water and occasionally muskrats and deer on land. Being surrounded by conservation land owned by the East Chop Association guarantees privacy and peaceful waters for kayaking or canoeing. "There's no need for air conditioning, there's always a breeze even when no other place has one," the owner says. He enjoys watching the joggers and bikers pass by out front but loves the contrast of the peaceful side on Crystal Lake.

With downtown Oak Bluffs and Vineyard Haven on either side, activities are a quick bike or car ride away although leaving this charming spot might be hard to do.





Crystal Lake

Ice was harvested at Crystal Lake from 1906 into the mid-1940s and used to cool food. Cutting ice was cold, hard work requiring long two-handed saws, giant tongs, chains, ropes and horse-drawn ice plows to score the ice and wagons to haul it to storage. Blades on horse drawn sleds made a light cut on the ice, then a gas powered circular saw blade cut large sections that were chopped by hand into smaller chunks and moved into the ice house by conveyor belts.



Photos from Reflections in Crystal Lake,
courtesy of Richard L. Pease

Offered at: \$1,695,000

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