

East Meets West



BY BARBARA EDIE
Photos by Merlin Braun

Arriving at Pye's Landing from the water, you're struck by a modern boathouse and cottage with curved rooflines and a simple style suggesting a slightly oriental design placed within a western environment.

Owners Rob Dzisiak and Debora Mazur say they wanted to build something unique, but didn't intentionally plan the cottage to have the oriental feeling its rounded roofs, pergola entrance and minimalist lines might invoke.

"We didn't want a traditional cottage style, but something contemporary, built to be an architectural statement, yet blend into the environment," Dzisiak says.

"I think it looks like a west coast sort of place ... lots of natural pine, dark wood and earth tones."

In any case, this east-meets-west lakefront bungalow and impressive boathouse are distinctive features on the shores of Deception Bay.

It's a part of Lake of the Woods that's familiar and well-loved by the owners, who used to have a cottage on Zig Zag Island, about three minutes from their current spot.

Their former cottage had spectacular lake views, Mazur says, and when they decided to move to the mainland, they searched almost 10 years to find a place offering the same great vistas of the water.

Their search ended when this property, with a spectacular southern exposure to the lake, came up for public auction.

"It seemed like the right time to leave the island, and this gave us an opportunity to build an all-season place," Mazur says. "We love it out here, to have a year-round place to snowmobile and spend time in the fall."

They purchased the mainland property in 2008 and began renovations in September 2009. The cottage is remodelled after the original one, built in 1980 and made up of two buildings with dome-shaped roofs joined by a breezeway, and that included a gazebo and storage area. The boathouse is a completely new building.

For its time, the original site was quite architecturally unique, Dzisiak says. Rather than tear it down, they hired Kenora-based architect Claude Lord to draw up some plans,

A custom-made glass garage door is a rolling wall for the sunroom.





Debora Mazur and Rob Dzisiak roll up their sunroom wall while doing crafts with their daughter, Madison.



Jurassic granite surrounds the fireplace.



The back of the cottage got a makeover that features distinctive rounded rooflines.



The pre-construction back of the cottage (above) and the lakeview side of the cottage before renovations (right).



The boathouse has big views and a kitchen.

which they then adjusted to meet their own design tastes and lifestyle needs.

They gutted the old cottage and took it down to the studs, but maintained the theme of the barrel-shaped roofs, juxtaposed with traditional pitched ones.

The result was a contemporary 2,600-square-foot cottage with an open design, vaulted ceiling and a pine cross beam that ties the former and new living spaces together. The exposed wood beam is not only aesthetically pleasing, but structurally supports the walls.

The former fireplace that was located in the centre of the living area was moved to the west wall to open up the room and its views of the lake. A sleek, modern kitchen adjoins the living area, with its pale wood cabinets and striking black granite countertops giving it a cool elegance.

The granite is an unusual pattern called Jurassic, made of multi-coloured stones fused within black composite. The same type of stone surrounds the fireplace and adds both continuity and luxuriousness to the space.

The cottage has three bedrooms and three bathrooms, including an ensuite off the master bedroom complete with a steam shower.

The owners also added a partial basement, which has a small playroom for their nine-year-old daughter, Madison.

However, it's the new three-season sunroom that contains the most unique feature in the home and truly dazzles the eye.

In this spacious screened-in room that overlooks the lake, the front "wall" literally rolls up to bring the outdoors in. The wall is in fact a custom-made glass garage door that lifts automatically, and with the press of a button the enclosed room becomes an open-air terrace.

Mazur had seen the door on other buildings and had the idea to install one at the cottage.

She says she had to convince her husband to go for it, but he now "loves it." She often got her own way when it came to the cottage's design elements, she adds with a chuckle.

The rolling door may be a little over-the-top, but you can see how one might become attached to this novel, high-tech feature. From the waterfront, many people stop by to look at the unique glass wall and take pictures, Mazur says.

While the lakefront home has all the amenities,

and many luxuries, incorporating green building materials and systems was also important to the couple. They installed geothermal heating (and cooling), a UV water treatment system and put in low-flush toilets. Throughout the cottage, they also installed durable vinyl flooring that looks like reclaimed wood, but is much easier to maintain.

And as much as the couple and their daughter love the cottage, the boathouse is an equally important building.

"For us, it's all about the water," Dzisiak says. "The deck of the boathouse is my favourite place to be."

"We spend so much time on the water, we built the boathouse as large as we could for the property size, with a big deck."


And big it is. The boathouse and deck comprise about 4,700 square feet, he says, which includes space for two boat slips, a kitchen and its own bar area.

The style of boathouse, with its barrel-shaped roof and wood exterior, was designed specifically to tie in with the main cottage. The two buildings make a stunning duet on the long lakefront lot that's approximately two acres.

A former teacher, Mazur spends the entire summer here with Madison, while Dzisiak, who works in financial services and travels a lot, joins them on weekends and during time off. The lakeside property is also a special place where lots of friends and family gather.

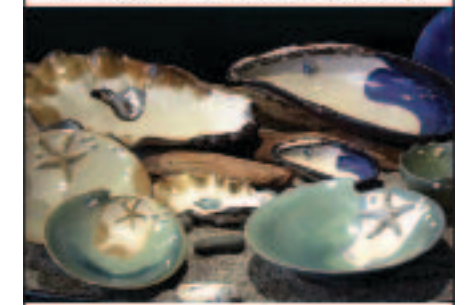
Construction went fairly smoothly and was completed by May 2010, which the couple credits to the hard work and "outstanding craftsmanship" of local builder Jamie Boychuk.

"We are extremely happy with the renovation," Mazur says.

"The architect and builder made it easy for us," Dzisiak adds. "We love it." 



Serve up something special in Canadian handmade pottery



L A K E L I F E
the essence of relaxed living
440 Academy Road Winnipeg 204-256-9875
E-mail laklife@mts.net
 find us on Facebook



Quality • Affordability
Personal service • Integrity • Fairness



Milne Homes

Phone (204) 654-1424
Fax (204) 668-7807
Email Milnehomes@mts.net
Website www.milnehomes.ca