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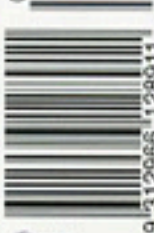
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Clad in cedar shingles, the Cape Cod-style house sits on a promontory of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, with spectacular views over the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

JOURNEY'S END

TWO PERPETUAL RENOVATORS WERE WON OVER BY
A STUNNING LOCATION THAT CAPTURED THEIR HEARTS.

WORDS ALI GRIPPER PHOTOGRAPHY LUCAS ALLEN



*The interiors are a refrain of the gold, green
and blue pageant outside their windows.*



Lime-green pots and chartreuse French goblets add a splash of colour to the kitchen. The maple table is surrounded by Gio Ponti 'Superleggera' chairs. An Autoban light hangs above. **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP** Eliot and Alexandra with toddler Elefe and Tibetan terriers Augustus and Sturtevant; the family can walk across the fields to rocky coves and beaches.



IN HER LOS ANGELES office, interior designer Alexandra Angle would often fix fabric swatches and paint samples to her pin board as she mulled over a project. But several years ago, surrounded by freeways and the fast treadmill of LA life, Alexandra began arranging something quite different on the wall: pieces of bark, bunches of wild flowers and photographs of grass shading from green to gold.

The botanical collections were freshly plucked from a 21-hectare chunk of coast in far off Nova Scotia that Alexandra had bought with her husband Eliot. During her busiest days, dealing with demanding clients and tight deadlines, gazing at these invocations of a little piece of eastern Canada would help keep her sane.

The Angles had already transformed a string of homes, including a 1920s Hollywood apartment, a New York loft, a hillside bungalow in California and a 19th-century Maine farmhouse. They were used to buying, selling and flitting to the next project. Unattached was the way to go.

That was until their land at Cape Breton Island put the brakes on their relentless search for something better. The original idea, says Alexandra, was to "build a farmhouse, play with it, and then move on". But such was the power and resonance of the place that their relationship with it quickly deepened. This was somewhere they wanted to call home — home for life.

"It's a small detail, but I remember when we were driving out to look at the site, and I just loved the way the sides of the road weren't mowed — all the wild flowers just draped all over the road," Alexandra recalls. It reminded her of her childhood, growing up on a farm in Vermont. >





"It gives you a sense of infinity being up here. You can look right down the shoreline in both directions."



Alexandra and Elliot's love of contemporary design is evident in the living room, with winged 'Foglia' chairs from Vittorio Bonacina, Christien Meindertsma's 'Flocks' pouf and a custom-made Fedora Design rug.



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT The bathroom includes an Italian sink and refinished antique tub; made from corrugated cardboard, this Piet Boon desk has prime position in one of the bedrooms; a Le Klint '332' wall light hangs above a table Eliot made from driftwood; hanging out the laundry.

"I think we knew pretty quickly that this was going to be our 'always home'."

"I think we knew pretty quickly that this was going to be our 'always home.'" Part of the powerful attraction is the view. The Angles have built their house on such a high promontory that it appears to float over the coast. Rolling hills, cliffs and ocean spread before them like the map of an ancient kingdom.

As Eliot says: "It gives you a sense of infinity being up here. You can look right down the shoreline in both directions — and also westwards to the sunset..." And the view is full of details that demand closer inspection. Telescopes and binoculars are brought out as regularly as knives and forks to spot wildlife that includes whales, eagles and deer.

While Cape Breton is a four-hour flight from Los Angeles, and home for only two or three months over summer, this place anchors the couple, giving them something to look forward to over the rest of the year.

The Angles first worked with an architect on a glass and steel structure, but then realised that a snug shingle

cottage would be much more in keeping with the locale — and would more easily withstand the extreme gales that batter the coast in autumn. "We realised we wanted something that looked like it was of the land," Eliot says.

Once the house started to take shape, Alexandra's pin board arrangements began coming to life. The interiors are a refrain of the gold, green and blue pageant outside their windows. Each room is a blend of contemporary and heirloom furniture.

Another life-changing event for the Angles has been adopting a little girl from Ethiopia. Having two-year-old Elefe toddling about has put an end to afternoons curled up on the window seat with a good book. But summers in their "house on the hill" are still unstructured and languid. There's time to take a rest when Elefe has an afternoon nap. Lunch is usually alfresco on the deck. Most mornings, there's an expedition across those yellow and green fields to the beach. This is their true retreat, the place where they can be in tune with nature. *