

Happy Hours

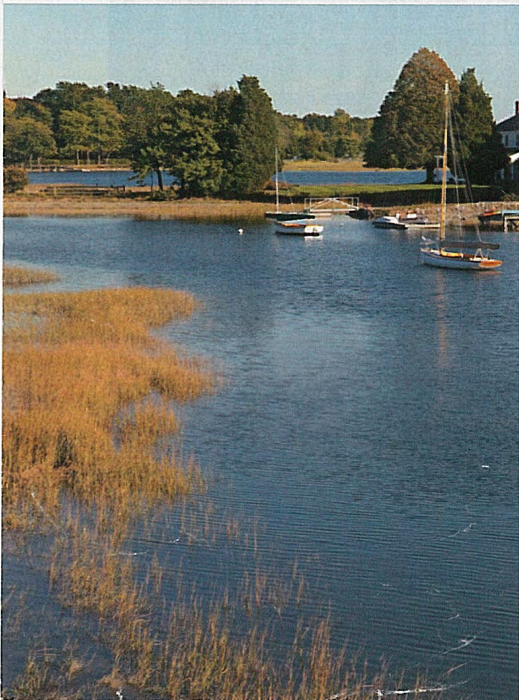
Easy entertaining and a relaxed retro style make this casual beach cottage live like it's the weekend every day.

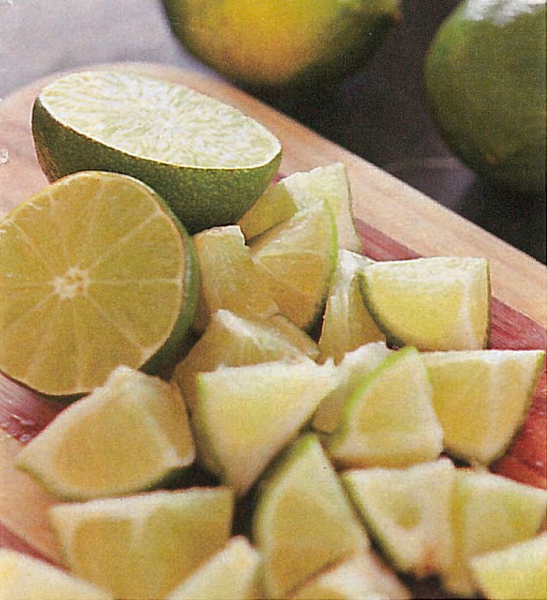
BY SHARON OVERTON | PHOTOS JOHN BESSLER | PRODUCED BY KARIN LIDBECK-BRENT



DD Allen uses her 1978 International Harvester Scout, *opposite*, to haul party supplies to her home, *above*, on the Bluefish River in Duxbury, Massachusetts. She designed her new home to resemble an old Cape Cod cottage with a steep dormered roof, gray shingled siding, and lots of crisp white trim.







DD designed the kitchen cabinets to resemble horizontal shiplap siding; recessed pulls keep the lines clean and uncluttered. The bright yellow barstools, *above left*, are from the 1960s. She leaves upper cabinets open so that guests can easily find what they need—and to show off a collection of colorful tableware, *left*. “I like to cook,” says DD, in pink, “but I like my friends’ cooking even better.”

WEEKEND WORTHY
Deck paint provides a durable finish for high-traffic floors.

When DD Allen’s teal-blue 1978 Scout is parked outside, you can bet a party is going on at her New England beach cottage. “My house is on the beaten path,” she says. “If people see cars in the drive, they feel comfortable popping in. It’s never really planned. It just evolves.”

Impromptu entertaining suits this fun-loving designer, who takes her cues—both in decorating and in life—from the freewheeling spirit of the 1960s when she was growing up. When friends show up for dinner, she orders take-out from the local taco stand. She puts guests to work whipping up margaritas while barefoot kids track wet prints across the painted floors.

“I have an open-door policy,” says DD, whose home was inspired by the classic boathouse. Its simple open spaces, big screen porch, and numerous windows let in the light and views of this charming coastal town, where DD spent her teenage years.

After traveling the world and building a design business, she returned several years ago to be closer to friends and family. Her property backs up to the Bluefish River, where neighbor kids launch paddleboards and spend hours fishing from her dock. Main Street—and the town’s annual Fourth of July parade—pass by her front door. “I live alone, but I really enjoy company,” she says. “And I always love to see what other people are going to bring to the party.”

From the outside, the house looks like a traditional Cape Cod cottage. Inside, the rooms open up to create an easy flow for entertaining. Pale gray walls and butter-yellow floors unify the living spaces. Comfortable lounging areas and tucked-away nooks offer spots to listen to music or curl up for a nap. DD loves to collect modern furniture from the 1960s, but she keeps the look light and inviting—not stuck in a time warp—by layering in fresh fabrics, unexpected color combinations, and quirky finds.

For DD, anything fussy or formal just won’t do. “I don’t want to spend time worrying about details,” she says, “because the party has to start right away.”

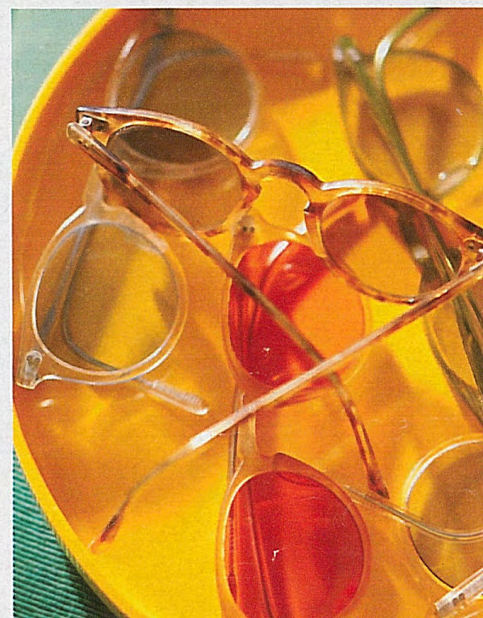
WEEKEND WORTHY

Inexpensive director's chairs can "go anywhere, do anything," says DD. "If you feel like changing the color, just get new covers."





Keeping a room's wall colors and furnishings neutral allows you to add any accent color you like, says DD. In the dining room, *left*, she pairs a pink leather settee with pale gray walls and a rustic wood table. DD turned the extra space under the stairs into a cozy nook, *above right*. In the lounge, *above*, eggplant walls provide a dusky backdrop for vintage rock posters and a colorful rug. DD owns a shuffleboard table, *right*, because "anyone can play and nobody has an advantage."



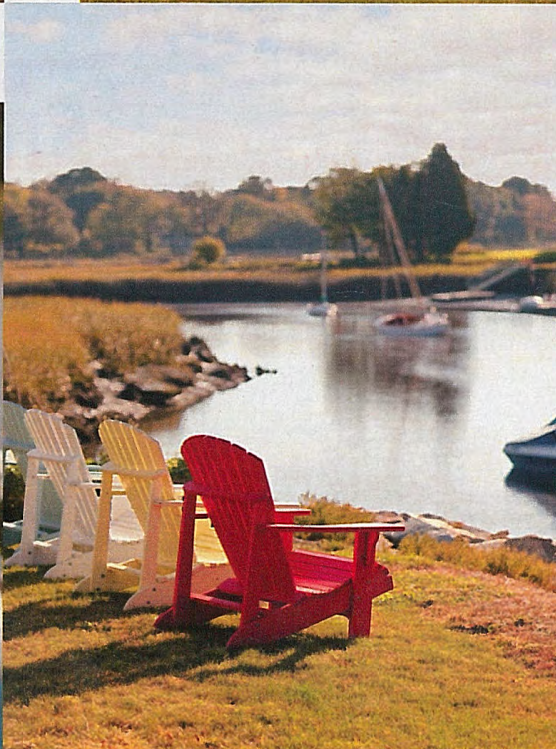
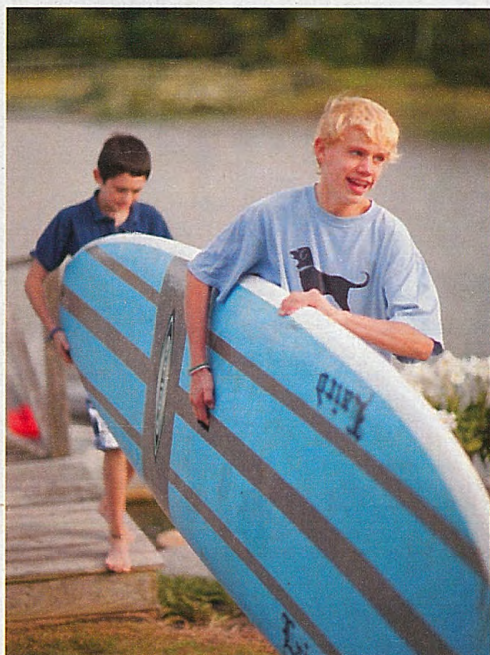
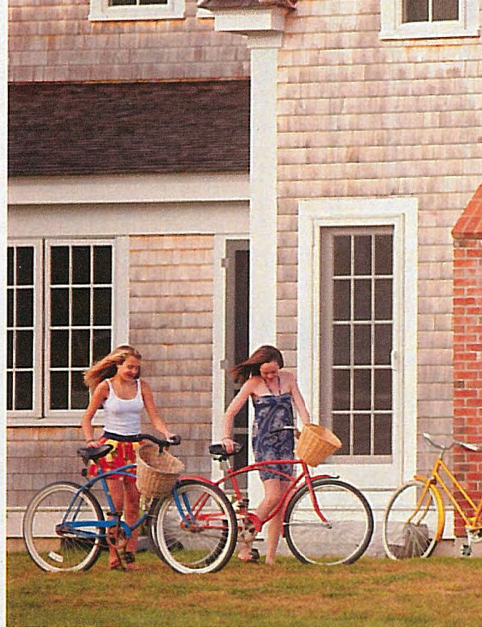




A wall of sliding French doors can be thrown open in warm weather to extend the living space to the screen porch. "It's sort of like a movable party," says DD. She updates vintage upholstery with fresh fabrics and pillows.

WEEKEND WORTHY

Several small tables are more flexible than one large coffee table for serving snacks and drinks.



“Life here revolves around the water,” DD says. She relies on simple take-out tacos on the screen porch, *opposite* and *right*, which leaves plenty of time for hitting the dock. *Clockwise from top left*: Canning jars hold utensils and bunches of bright daisies. Friends arrive by bike, while others prefer to take the water. Watermelon salad is refreshing on a summer day. DD leads pals Myles Olney and Myles Andrew down to the dock. Squire Tearse and Ryan Grace hoist the paddleboard.



“The '60s were such a spontaneous time. That's definitely the way I still live my life.”

DD Allen



WEEKEND WORTHY
Use sturdy sailcloth (or a clean painter's drop cloth) for a neutral table covering, then add color and pattern with fun seasonal napkins. ■