

seattle

SUMMER 2008

street of dreams

Magazine

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A STUNNING HOME-AWAY-FROM-HOME

\$4.95



San Juan Getaway

A STUNNING HOME-AWAY-FROM-HOME NATURALLY NESTLED
IN PUGET SOUND SERENITY

By John Kirkland/Photography by Don Larkin





Growing up in Oregon, Gary Mitchell spent summers with the family of his best friend at their rustic cabin in the Cascades. The cabin, located on Forest Service land near the remote town of Brietenbush, was an idyllic retreat the boys used as a home base for hiking adventures, fishing and exploring.

If ever there was a setting for a perfect boyhood, this was it.

Years passed, and Mitchell became a successful high tech executive in Redmond. But despite his professional accomplishments, his thoughts were never far from those halcyon days in the Oregon woods — a kind of Northwest Neverland.

That was especially true as Mitchell and his wife had children of their own:

two girls and a boy. Then, through what Mitchell calls “the magic of the Internet,” he came across a property on Lopez Island, in the Puget Sound San Juan island chain.

“We fell instantly in love,” he said.

The property that caught their eye was a waterfront lot surrounded by tall windswept conifers, hiking trails, and panoramic views of Puget Sound. On the lot sat an old, dilapidated home. The home itself didn’t strike their fancy, but the location was perfect. Not only was the home site just what they had been looking for, but the island as a whole looked like it would be the perfect home away from home: congenial, bike friendly, and just far enough away from Redmond to feel like a true retreat.

Opening spread: Standing in harmony with the earth, sky and water, this Lopez Island home is the fulfillment of an idyllic dream by its owner, who spent his youth hiking in the Oregon woods.

Above: Architect Don Larkin and interior designer Autumn Donovan used pillars and niches to define spaces in an otherwise wide-open layout.

Right: A box-beam ceiling gives the home a stately feel, while the soft color palette makes it homey and comfortable.

