The Next Chapter

When it came time to build a new family cottage on a sentimental piece of land, a Canadian author embraced the assignment with equal parts nostalgia and imagination.

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Privacy is no issue at Christabel Homewood and Loren Shifrin's vacation home in North Kawartha, Ontario. The newly built Craftsman-influenced home sits on 1.25 acres, with woods on three sides and a lake on the other. With its stone-and-cedar-shake exterior, it thoughtfully complements the landscape.

Kate and Christabel decided to forgo window treatments in the breakfast nook to maximize the view of the lake. They introduced color and interest with a mix of decorative plates that line the walls and an antique rug (*elte.com*) beneath the custom table and chairs.

LEFT: An antique rug layered over durable travertine floors stands up to all the wet feet and pine needles that come through the back entry. **BELOW:** Comfy seating in warm-toned fabrics (*gresham housefurniture.com* and *kravet.com*) invites family game nights—and the occasional building of a fort—in the living room. "I wanted the room to feel elegant but relaxed enough to put your feet up in," says Christabel. For the mirror above the rustic stone fireplace, she found an inexpensive wooden frame on Amazon and had it wrapped in a vintage fabric she scored for about $8.

LEFT: With its plentiful shade trees and comfy wicker furniture (*rh.com*), the back deck is Christabel's favorite place to curl up with a book. The property's feathered creatures love it, too: "There is a hummingbird feeder in the nearby tree, and the little birds often keep me company there," she says.

Out with the old, in with the...old? Author and Toronto resident Christabel Homewood (*@falling.for.home*) managed to accomplish both when she set out to build her family's vacation home in the Kawartha Lakes region of Ontario, Canada. For more than 30 years, her parents had owned a perfectly fine two-bedroom house perched on a 1.25-acre parcel they had purchased because of its picturesque lake setting. But after Christabel married Loren Shifrin, a serial entrepreneur, and had daughter Lark (now 8) and son Aiden (now 5), the cozy little home started to feel, well, a smidge *too* little.

When Christabel's parents gifted the property to her a few years ago, she knew she wanted to build something new there, a house that the whole extended family could enjoy that would still pay homage to their shared history (her mother's family is from the area, and her father's family, though they live in England, has spent much time there). "There are so many memories of loved ones imprinted on the land," she says. "Every inch feels alive with them. It was important to keep them close and continue layering on our own story for years to come."

To that end, Christabel first worked with architectectural designer Louise Mackenzie (*mackenziedesign.ca*) to create a cottage that felt as if it had long been nestled into the land. She then collaborated with Toronto-based designer Kate Stuart (*tomdesigncollective.com*) to populate the new 5,000-square-foot North Shore shingled home with cherished furniture, objects, and art handed down from various family members, including her grandfather, who had been an antiques dealer in England. They also commissioned custom furnishings inspired by English antiques (Christabel describes the home's style as "Cotswolds meets Coastal Colonial") that would feel right at home in a centuries-old estate. "The goal was never to create an instant cottage," says Kate. "We collected things over time, layered in meaningful pieces, and designed furniture that feels like it could have always been there."

Christabel brings in different natural elements every season—in the fall there are foraged branches, dried grasses, hydrangeas cut from the surrounding gardens, and crafts the children make from pinecones and acorns. The result is a year-round retreat where past, present, and future coexist in the best possible way.

School House White
Farrow & Ball

Warm Neutrals

For the kitchen's cozy and layered look, Christabel found inspiration in the Russells' kitchen on HBO's *The Gilded Age*. Creamy white wood ceilings and tiled walls are paired with stained wood floors, cabinetry, and accent pieces such as a display shelf and the hood's corbels. The warm wood tones are complemented by additional rich elements such as brass hardware, a terra-cotta-hued antique rug, and café curtains in a botanical-print fabric ("Katherine"; *lulie wallace.com*). A favorite feature: The custom roll-away island that can move as needed to accommodate family cooking and baking sessions.

Fuss-Free Fabrics

In the dining room, chocolate brown plaid draperies ("Woodland Plaid"; *schumacher.com*) set a timeless tone while flanking a custom hutch filled with Christabel's collections. Washable chair cushions in a block-printed fabric (*fabritual .com*) and a stain-resistant rug can hold up to the happy chaos of family gatherings. The extra-long custom table, which seats up to 12 for holiday celebrations, showcases a collection of mismatched candlesticks as well as two bowls filled with the children's ever-changing treasures (think leaves, moss, and nuts come fall).

Sweet Motifs

There's whimsy aplenty in daughter Lark's bedroom, where wallpaper featuring woodland creatures ("Voysey Park"; *lewisandwood.com*) mingles with bunny-bedecked pillows on the bed. "Lark loves rabbits, so we included bunny details in ways that can grow with her over time," says Christabel. The recessed bookcase next to the window nook holds pieces special to Lark on its mulberry-colored shelves.

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Because finding just-right bedspreads for the guest room proved to be a challenge, Christabel finally had a large hand-stitched cotton quilt (*rejuvenation.com*) cut down into two twin-size coverlets. The custom wooden trunk is by U.K.-based furniture maker Titchmarsh & Goodwin. Adorned with flora and fauna, the powder room wallpaper ("Papyrus"; *lewisandwood.com*) speaks to the cottage's surrounding landscape, and the hand-carved mirror (*fleurhome.com*) adds a whimsical touch. Mocha tile (*adexusa.com*) gives the primary bathroom a sophisticated moodiness, while the glossy finish and the sheer café curtains help keep the scheme from feeling heavy.