

The flag  
“pole” is a  
single tree  
trunk.

the water issue

# Vacationland

Featuring salty finds, no-frills furnishings, and one heckuva view, this formerly drab fixer-upper on Maine's Boothbay Harbor is now a beacon for game nights, lobster bakes, and the requisite vacation puzzles. Here's how the pieces fell into place.

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Mary filled all the "funky little nooks and shelves" with an assortment of nautical knickknacks.

Mary Barrett was 16 years old when her parents bought a vacation home in Maine's Boothbay Harbor. And while the Georgia resident loved summers spent by the shore, she never imagined she'd one day own her own piece of the Pine Tree State, much less a historic place just a mile from where it all began. But in 2009, when an early 1900s home in need of a little love hit the market in an area of Boothbay Harbor

known as Juniper Point, Mary and her husband, Xavier Duralde, took the leap and set sail on a seven-month renovation. "We'd been visiting the area with our four children since they were born, but never planned on buying," she says. "But when I stood on the porch of the little red cottage and spotted my parents' house just across the water, I got goose bumps. It just felt right." Here's how Mary artfully designed a casual coastal retreat in keeping with her state's "Vacationland" slogan.



A rustic living room with a wooden staircase and a white wicker sofa. The room features a wooden ceiling with exposed beams and a wooden wall with a staircase. The sofa is white with a blue and white plaid throw and several pillows. A wooden coffee table in front of the sofa holds a tray with drinks, cards, and a plate of fruit. The wall is decorated with various framed pictures and a nautical-themed lamp.

"We live a lot of life in  
this house. No one wants  
to spend time worrying  
about the upholstery."

*-Mary Barrett*





Vapor  
Benjamin Moore



#### Vacationland Rule #1:

### No Fussy Furniture

Wet swimsuits? Bring 'em on! Mary scoured secondhand shops for weather-resistant wovens—rattan, wicker, and bamboo—that can take a beating indoors or out. “We live a lot of life in this house,” she says. “No one wants to spend time worrying about the upholstery.” Similarly, indoor/outdoor rugs (seen throughout the home) stand up to flip-flop traffic—and errant ice cream scoops. “Our rugs have passed the family reunion test,” Mary says. “Once they’ve withstood 16 sets of feet, knocked-over wineglasses, and a whole spilled platter of pesto-covered appetizers, you know they can hold up to pretty much anything.”

#### Vacationland Rule #2:

### Layer in a Little Kitsch

A vacation home shouldn't take itself too seriously. With that anything-goes spirit, Mary peppers her more curated collectibles with unapologetically playful finds, like souvenir plates (above), sailboat-printed lampshades (living room, left), and state-themed barware (dining room, not shown). And if there's a ship wheel on sale, you can bet Mary will steer her way toward it. “I always have my eye out for all things nautical—sea captain bookends, seagull pencil sharpeners, you name it,” she says.





Saybrook Sage  
Benjamin Moore





#### Vacationland Rule #4: **Run for Cover**

In addition to adding a graphic decorative punch (and allowing guests to warm up to their liking), antique quilts make for an easy grab-and-go for picnics and lawn parties, as well as charming table cloths. "They come in particularly handy in the early morning and late evening on the porch," says Mary. "When Prince William and Kate Middleton got married, it was a chilly April morning, so my mom and I wrapped up in quilts, drinking tea and wearing big hats in honor of the occasion."

#### Vacationland Rule #3: **Sleep a Crowd**

Spare rooms are often, well, spare. To create a truly layered, lived-in sleepaway space, Mary crowded and cozied up the guest rooms with a host of vintage seascapes. "I've been scooping up seascapes for so long I didn't even realize how many I had until I decided to hang them in here!" says Mary, whose favorite local sources for such include Wiscasset Village Antiques ([wiscassetvillageantiques.com](http://wiscassetvillageantiques.com)) and the Nobleboro Antique Exchange ([antiquex.net](http://antiquex.net)). No-frills bamboo shades add warmth and texture without detracting from the coastal elements in the bedrooms—porthole mirrors, buoys, map lampshades—that further the collected, been-around-forever feel.

#### IN WITH THE OLD

A stack of vintage suitcases doubles as storage and a bedside table.





**Vacationland Rule #5:**

## **Rethink Your Rooms**

Mary treats the outdoor areas as an extension of the home, padding the floor with cozy rugs and outfitting a table with casters (far right) so that it can be easily moved to accommodate a larger crowd—or to simply chase the setting sun. Because so many meals are enjoyed al fresco, the interior dining room has morphed into a game room with a simple card table and cane chairs.



### **PERFECTLY IMPERFECT**

In the far corner of the porch, battered windows portion off a seating area and provide respite from the wind.







## ONLY IN THE COUNTRY...

With Mary's mother's home just across the water, the family often kayaks over for visits.

## The Happy Hour Q&A

Drop by Boothbay Harbor at 5:00 P.M. and here's what you'll likely find, says homeowner Mary Barrett.



**We just...**  
came in from kayaking.

**We're sipping...**  
sauvignon blanc or something from Oxbow Brewery ([oxbowbeer.com](http://oxbowbeer.com))

**...out of...**  
vintage beer and wineglasses.

**Song on repeat is...**  
anything by Acoustic Alchemy.

**We'll stay out here 'til...**  
the sun sets or later if we're eating dinner outside.



**We're snacking on...**  
cheese and crackers from the farmers' market ([boothbayfarmersmarket.com](http://boothbayfarmersmarket.com)).

**We're probably laughing about...**  
some family story. My husband is a big storyteller and knows how to make everyone laugh.

**If we're playing cards, it's probably...**  
Wizard.

**But we also get competitive over...**  
Scattergories, Bananagrams, or Scrabble.

**When dinner is served, it will likely be...**  
seafood—salmon or lobster—and a big salad.

**We're about to...**  
head to the puzzle table. Everyone puts in a few pieces when they come over.

**After dinner, we'll...**  
sit around talking—often with another glass of wine!—for hours.

