

THE Sand ROOM



TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION BY ELAINE KEISER

Cool spring days have given way to warm summer breezes and beautiful sunsets on the lake. Children are spending their long-awaited vacation on the warm, sandy beaches and cooling off in the water. Your ideal summer is beginning to unfold and will soon be in full swing. Capturing time with the family is essential and some strategic design planning can help you get more of it. If you are considering a remodel, addition or entirely new cottage, this design idea may keep you and your family having more fun outside rather than cleaning up inside.

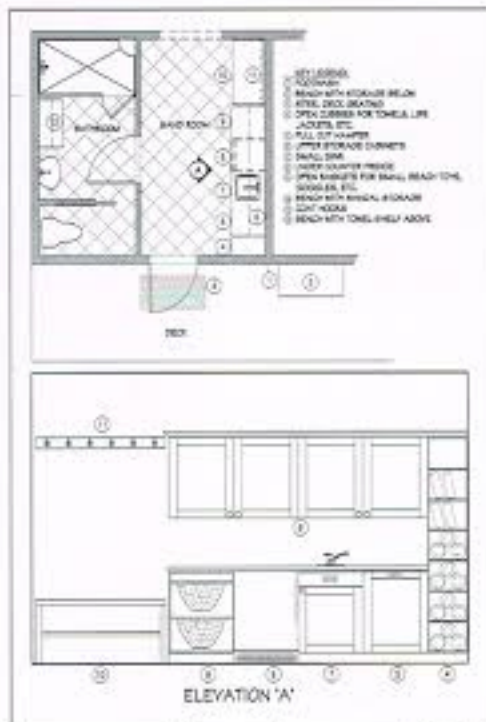
The most common concern with lake cottages is the physical connection of the inside living areas to the outside activity areas. Most cottages have the living or dining room with the prime views of the lake. This therefore become the shortest path to the lake and the place for sand and waterfront gear to collect. This may have worked well in the last century when we only stayed at the cottage for a few months during the summer. Now these cottages are year-round or six months at the least. Given our extended stay, it is time to admit that we have a lot of gear and people to coordinate before we can easily journey out for an evening cruise.

Designing a space that is dedicated as your indoor/outdoor portal is vital to your cottage. The mudroom is designed to handle your daily entries from the roadside into the cottage. This is usually located near the back of the cottage, thus making it more troublesome to use when departing for the lake. What we are designing today is called a "sand room," a room where we make provisions keeping the sand contained, having access to a small bathroom/changing room and keeping all the little necessities at hand for that spur of the moment walk on the beach.

The sand room should be designed to fit your lifestyle, the number of people expected to use it, and it should be sized in proportion to the rest of the cottage. The best location for the sand room is on the side of the cottage preferably off a covered porch.

The first thing the sand room should do is provide resources to leave the sand outdoors where it belongs. One method is to use steel grating recessed flush with your decking directly outside the door. Pair this with a foot wash and a bench to wash the sand away.

The next objective is to have all the little necessities on hand and

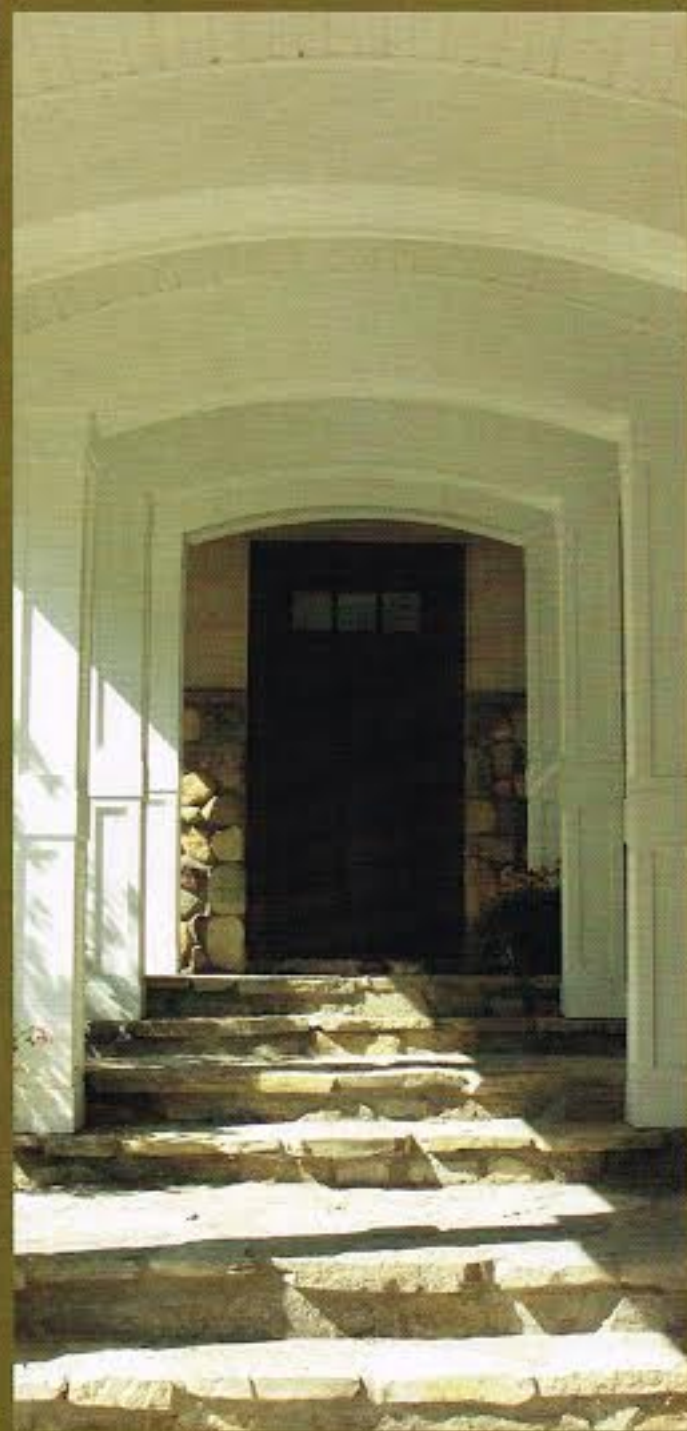




ready for use quickly. For this, I prefer to design a cubby system with drawers, baskets and cabinets located at each end of a countertop. This area will store lotions, bug spray, hats, sunglasses, towels, tote bags, sandals, jackets and watercraft keys in a decorative and organized way. Ideally, a small sink would be placed in the countertop to use for washing up after applying lotion or bug spray. Under the countertop is a small refrigerator or refrigerator drawers for keeping beverages cold and ready. This is also ideal for children to grab a quick snack or drink without having to track sand all the way to the kitchen.

Opposite the countertop and cubbies is a beach bath with a nicely sized shower. The location of this is important, as the beach bath has to be immediate to the outside door. In some instances, the beach bath is entered directly from the covered porch and not connected to the inside at all. The beach bath could also serve as your powder room if space in your cottage is limited. The beach bath contains all the necessities of a standard bathroom with the added convenience of a place to hang swimsuits and a bench or chair to use for changing.

In just a few hundred square feet, you can transform your cottage to handle all of your waterfront outdoor needs in one conveniently located, easy to clean space. You will be spending time with your family rather than looking for your items, trying to remember what you may have forgotten, or fighting the endless battle against the sand. □



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