

The Great



Escape

A FAMILY COTTAGE WITH PLENTY OF HISTORY, BUT LIGHT ON CHARM, TRANSFORMS INTO A VIBRANT RETREAT, PERFECT FOR HOSTING FRIENDS AND GETTING SOME SERIOUS R&R

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Photography by SIAN RICHARDS



At the annual Crowe-lympics, which takes its name from Crowe Lake in Marmora, Ont., the water-hose obstacle course is a crowd favourite—when big kids take the lead over younger ones, they're blasted with water to level the playing field. There's also a treasure hunt, a race, croquet, badminton, soccer and the moms' dock-to-shore sprint. The summer event is a popular one, so in 2015 its host called on Toronto-based interior designer Emily Griffin to make his cottage a more guest-friendly space.

The lakefront retreat was purchased by the owner's father for \$3,000 in 1953, when it wasn't much more than a fishing shack with two bedrooms and a fire-place. Running water was added in the '60s, along with an extension on the back. In the mid-'90s, the owner started spending weekends at the cottage with his growing family. By then, the community was changing — Tim Hortons had arrived and the local IGA became a Valumart — and so were the family's needs.

They levelled the old cottage and bought the property next door to build a larger, more livable space. They also installed Wi-Fi, two dishwashers and electric heat. But the cottage's interior was missing both charm and comfort, so Griffin was asked to transform it into a laid-back retreat. She added touches of beachy blue, soft grey, cream and white throughout and placed new furniture and cushions in the entertaining areas (slipcovers are key, since they can be chucked in the washer). Griffin also paid homage to the cottage's past with finds from Peacock, a local antique shop. Now there's plenty of space for summer-weekend visitors—including all those Crowe-lympians, who have a perfect place to unwind after an exhausting day of gold-medal wins.

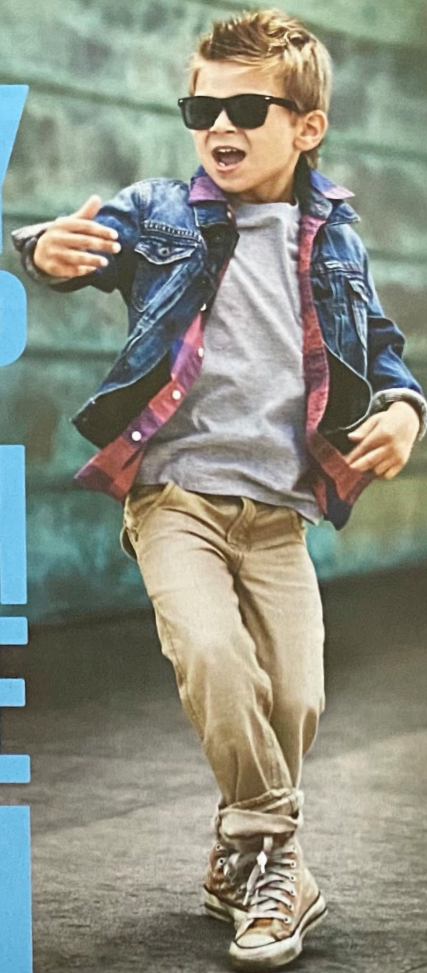
ABOVE: Griffin opened up the kitchen, which was previously tucked in a corner with a high island and a separate dining area. She swapped the island for a large harvest table, perfect for entertaining. As a nod to the home's history, the shelves are made of wood from the original cottage and the cabinets are finished with an antique glaze for a rustic feel. *Kitchen table, restorationhardware.com. Dining chairs, crateandbarrel.ca. Pendant lights, thedoorstore.ca. Antique tins and plateware, Peacock Antiques, 613-472-2848.*



LEFT: Interior designer Emily Griffin. **BELOW:** A few vintage *Chatelaine* covers in the guest room.



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CRUNCH ON



MASTER BEDROOM: Taking inspiration from the owner's colonial bed, Griffin chose a classic wallpaper to complement the dark wood. *Wallpaper, farrow-ball.com*. **LIVING ROOM:** Griffin replaced the drywall behind the fireplace with Ontario granite stone and added floor lamps. *Chairs, couch, potterybarn.com*. *Cushions, egdesign.ca*. *Floor lamp, coffee table, crateandbarrel.ca*. *Elephant side table, latelierhome.com*. **MASTER BATHROOM:** Griffin bought the little bowls on a trip to Cambodia, and the beautiful Turkish towels are from Morocco. The shiplap walls provide lots of texture. *Vanity, restorationhardware.com*. *Basket, serenaandilly.com*. **SUNROOM:** This is where the family usually gathers to relax, so Griffin placed a sectional couch along one wall, then layered in a comfy chair, inviting pillows and a low coffee table (perfect for board games). *Sectional, shelterfurniture.ca*. *Coffee table, westelm.com*. *Rug, potterybarn.com*. **GUEST ROOM:** Knotty pine on the walls lends lots of personality, as does bright bedding, striking lamps and mirrors and a geometric rug. *Mirrors, lamps, ikea.ca*. *Rug, urbanoutfitters.com*.

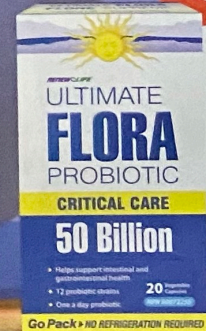


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