

PROJECT PROFILE

Wild Coast tames recreation-home expense

\$129,900 buys lot and pre-fabricated cottage on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island

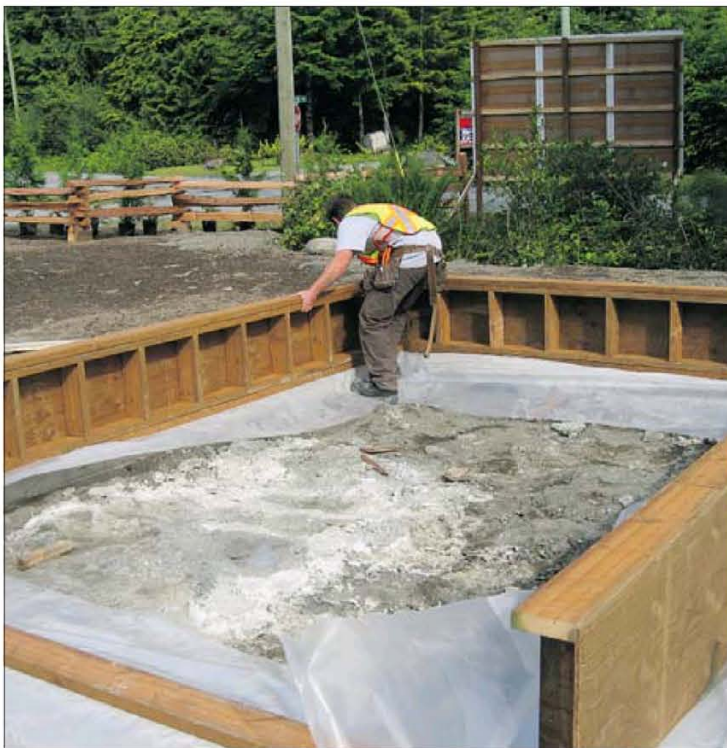


ORIGINALITY TAKES WORK

A dwelling as original as a Wild Coast cottage asks a lot of questions. Dan Melville of Westco Construction, Victoria, is the builder and took on the job of providing answers. Yes, the front exterior of the buildings in the photographs is clad in select #1 cedar shingles, pre-stained with a Sunfast stain. The side and rear exteriors are clad in Certain Teed fibre cement board. The trim is cedar, mostly 1 X 4. The bottom sill is a dado cut 2 x 8 to fit the sill flashing detail. Underneath the exterior cladding is Tyvek house wrap, which Dan describes as a breathable waterproof membrane commonly used for commercial construction, and a 'commercial-grade rainscreen detail consisting of 3/4-inch strapping, eight inches on centre.'

The roof is a snap lock metal roof made by Westform and comes with a 50-year manufacturer's warranty. The windows are from Jeldwyn professional series. They are double-paned and 'low e,' or low emissivity. The doors are fir, stained. Is the foundation a departure? It is. 'To minimize impact and disruption to the natural cabin locations, we have utilized an innovative foundation design. 'This consists of concrete footings, with a pressure-treated-wood, insulated crawl space wall. 'This method allows for minimal excavation and thus minimal site disruption,' Dan reports.

'The insulated pressure treated wood crawl space walls are wrapped with a thick polyurethane plastic and then covered with a galvanized metal protective layer. No soil ever comes in direct contact with the wood. There is crawl-space access at the rear of the cabins, which means the space can double as additional storage space.'



Wild Coast Cottages Oceanside

Project location: Port Renfrew

Project size: 40 properties

Prices: \$129,900 – \$159,900, lot, cottage and HST)

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Developers: Three Point Properties

Architect: Peter Hardcastle, Hillel Architects, Victoria

Interiors: Inoui, Victoria

Occupancy: from August

BY SUZANNE MORPHET

A cottage used to be a simple thing: a place to sleep, a retreat from the bugs or the weather, but nothing fancy, and often with an outhouse for a toilet. But in the last decade or two, cottages have gone upscale and price tags zoomed up along with them.

So you might be surprised — and intrigued — to know that you can purchase a brand new, fully furnished cottage on the west coast of Vancouver Island with waterfront access for about \$140,000. And yes, that includes the land and the HST — and even an indoor loo!

The catch is that these cottages are tiny, but they're high quality, designed by an architect and furnished by professional interior designers.

'This is an opportunity for cottage ownership in one of the best recreational areas of Vancouver Island for people who never thought this might be an option for them,' says Ben Mycroft, project manager for Three Point Properties.

Three Point is a Victoria-based company that was involved in the early stages of Dockside Green, the eco-community that aims to be the first development in North America to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) platinum for each of its 26 buildings on Victoria's Gorge waterway.

Wild Coast Cottages Oceanside are on a vastly smaller scale, but that's also what partly makes them "green." Each micro-cottage is about 400 square feet, so their environmental "footprint" is small.

To help keep prices low, the cottages are being pre-built in Sooke,

then transported 70 kilometres northwest to Port Renfrew and installed on what was formerly a campground and RV park.

Mycroft says that because they need to withstand moving, they've been "over-engineered." One cottage has made the trip so far without "even a crack in the drywall. They're really strong, really well-built units," he says.

They're also attractive, with shingled fronts, metal roofs and covered decks. They come in two styles: one a more traditional A-frame, the other with a "breezeway"-style middle deck that connects living and sleeping spaces.

Three Point Properties hired interior designers Amber Kingsnorth and Kyla Bidgood of Inoui Design Collective in Victoria to come up with furniture packages that would make the small cottages as functional as possible.

The design partners also chose the interior finishes, including the flooring, cabinets, countertops and paint colours, along with the plumbing and light fixtures.

The optional furniture packages include everything from a pullout sofa to draperies to kitchen cutlery, which buyers can purchase in tiers to suit their needs.

'It took careful space-planning and diligent sourcing to find each item, as well as custom designing some pieces for the perfect balance,' says Kingsnorth, adding that all of the furniture and artwork comes from local manufacturers and artists, "which gives buyers great value for this price point."

Versatility is also key, with some pieces playing more than one role. Kingsnorth points out, for instance, that the upholstered cubes in the living room are on castors, so they can easily convert from ottoman/coffee tables to extra seating at the dining table.

When all is said and done, she says the cottages "look more spacious with the furniture than without." The overall look and feel? "A warm and welcoming mix of contemporary lines with cosy cottage materials. Everything is durable to fit with the cottage lifestyle, but comfortable and easy to care for."

Perhaps most important, a family of four, or four adults, can live in the one-bedroom, one-bathroom cottages and not be in each other's faces.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



"Last weekend, our family stayed in our suite for the first time. As soon as the door was closed we jumped up and down and did our happy dance... at the end of our trip we all agreed that we were the luckiest people on earth to own such an amazing recreational property and started the countdown to our next return." - happy Watermark owner

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