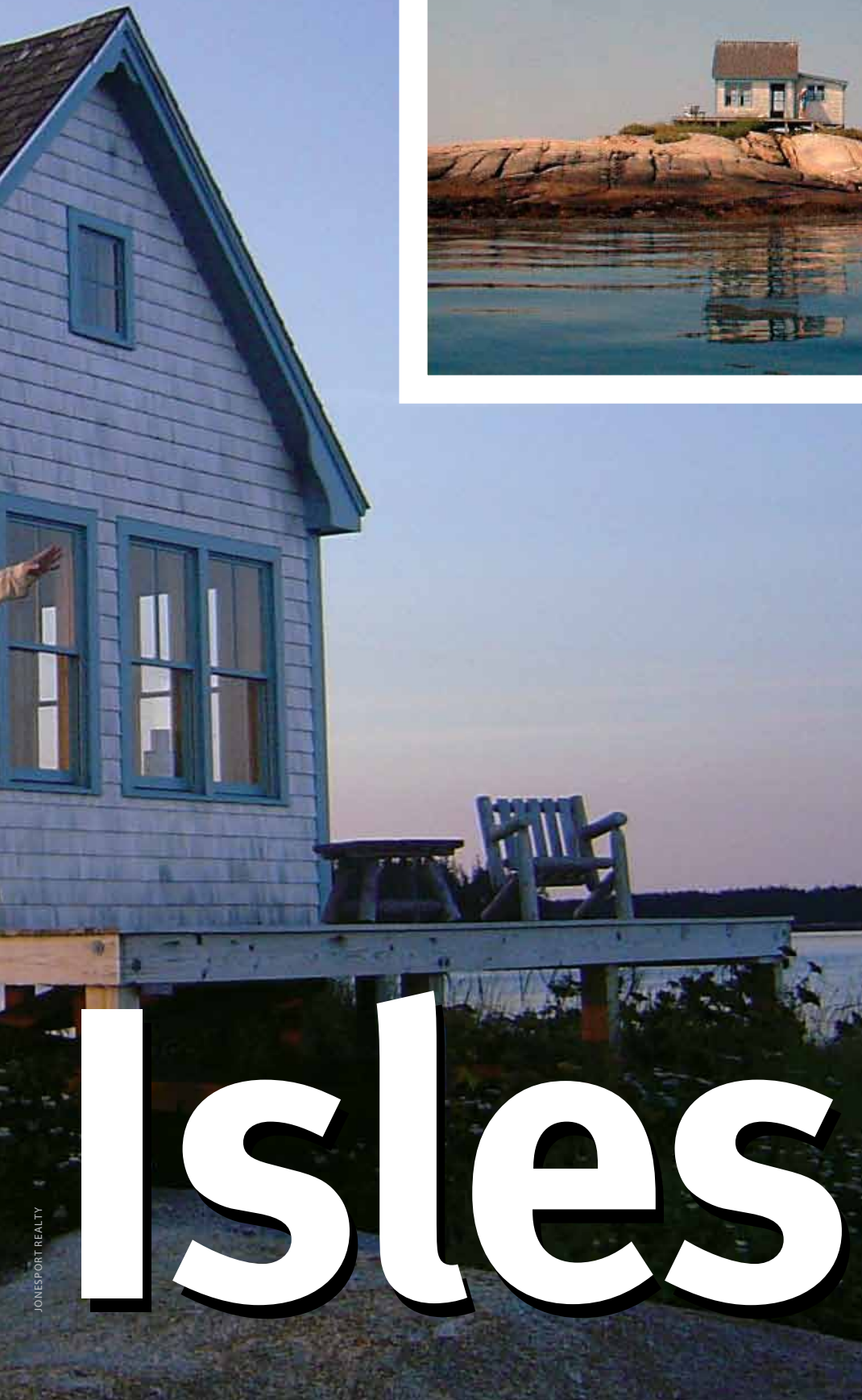


What if there were a place where the sun shone, the stars danced, and the ocean murmured just for you? Off Maine's rocky shores, such places do exist, places where it's all about *you*.



Private



Offered at \$190,000, Calf Island in Jonesport is like a one-act play for a couple to enjoy a moment of solitude. The contemporary shelter was built here in 2004 on pink granite ledge; kayaks arrive to join the fun.

BY DONNA STUART

Tired of the boss nagging, the children screaming, and the dog demanding a walk? Ever wonder when it's going to be all about *you* for once? If you're looking for that special 'me' time, we've got a solution: Buy your own island.

Not a celebrity, you say? No problem. You can still snag your little piece of heaven for as little as \$54,500—or as much as \$5.75 million. Expansive or miniscule, ritzy or rustic, one of Maine's private islands has *You* written in the sand.

DAVIS ISLAND
St. George, \$5,750,000

Wiscasset disappears in your rear-view mirror as you cross the mile-long bridge to Davis Island. Home to Fort Edgecomb (1808), this Shangri La also boasts shell middens and excavation sites documenting visits by Penobscots and Abenakis across innumerable summers.

Imagine sunrise as the 360-degree panorama unfolds around this charming shorefront residence. Sailboats and buoys dot the water around you as lobstermen sneak a rough cup of coffee while chugging out to their traps.

"They really pushed the boat out," the Brits would likely say about the ex-

Isles

OBSESSIONS

From top: This contemporary home on Casco Bay Island has stunning views of Campobello, where Ken Burns is shooting a new documentary this summer on the life of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Ram Island off the shore of Saint George



traordinary, 48-acre island property. It's as complete an island paradise as Maine offers, with two substantial deepwater docks, a mooring field for protected yacht storage, and all the comforts of a mainland estate. Set amid acres of groomed lawn and impeccably maintained English country gardens, the home has expansive spaces for entertaining, a large wing with luxurious master suite, office, sun room, deck, and a guest wing with two bedrooms.

CASCO BAY ISLAND New Brunswick, Canada, \$1,400,000

Mike Kaiser fell in love with the coast of Maine "during a windjammer cruise out of Boothbay." Then, after buying a shorefront house on Deer Isle, he found a deeper love offshore. "We bought this island and built the house in 1994," he says of 41-acre Casco Bay

Island, barely in Canadian waters off Maine's coast and within "peekaboo" distance to Campobello Island, the famous retreat of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

"I was working for a software company in San Francisco and thought I'd retire," he laughs. He and his wife, both dreamers, "built the house right away," including high-tech internet conveniences appropriate to their backgrounds. "It's an all-season house, and yes, we've been out here for Christmas," to view monster waves.

"It's on a cliff and sleeps four. Our plan was to build a larger house on one of the bluffs toward the lighthouse. What drew me to this island is the whales in the Bay of Fundy, though we love the moose and deer that swim here from Campobello every fall to feed on our cranberries.

"A researcher visited us and told us there used to be a summer fishing colony of Native Canadians out here. People have filled jars with the projectile points they can pick up on our beach, almost like sea shells. We call it Arrowhead Beach."

With beauty on this level peering in, the extraordinary is the ordinary. "There was a two-week period last year when you could hear the whales at night—not just splashing but grunting.

During the first week of September, I woke up at 6:30 a.m. to hear our Labrador and Labradoodle barking. I thought they were just barking at the eagles (we have four nesting pairs), but then I walked out the kitchen door and saw a humpback in full breach between our island and Campobello. Completely in the air. My wife was still asleep!" There's a pause. "But she believes me!" Property taxes are "about \$5,000 US."

**BARNEY'S ISLAND
Beals, \$54,500**

If living large includes owning an island but your budget doesn't run to six figures, take a look at Barney's Island, named for Tall Barney Beal, the nearly seven-foot-tall local "Paul Bunyan."

Tall Barney lived in the town of Beals until he died in 1899 at the age of 64. Ancestors of Barney's still live in the area, perhaps contributing to the area high school's successful basketball seasons over the years. The three-quarter-acre island is set just off Barney's Cove, near where Tall Barney's House still stands. Broker Bill Milliken of Jonesport Realty says there's no buildable area on the is-

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OBSESSIONS

land, but you could but in a dock for access. "I'm marketing to kayakers or those who want to go out there and camp. Other uses might be possible."

If you go for a look, be sure to stop at Tall Barney's, the local diner known for its "Liar's Table," at which the tales told are almost as tall as the town's famous native son.

RAM ISLAND

Saint George, \$2,000,000

A compound of four pagoda-style buildings on Ram Island is not visible from shore, but from the wooden decking connecting them, the waterfront is in plain view. "This is the most remarkable island. It's zen-like from your first step onto the island," says Kathryn Jackson of Legacy Properties/Sotheby's. "[The buildings] are very Eastern and organic in their feel. In one building, there's a great room with a massive stone fireplace; in another, an exquisite library." The owner, who winters in Greenwich, Connecticut, designed the buildings to be environmentally sensitive, with solar power, a compost system, and a design for a septic system he'll install or es-crow at his expense.

Set in a protective cove, Ram Island is just a quarter-mile off Rackcliff Island, which is connected to the mainland by a causeway.

HIGH ISLAND

Saint George, \$1,350,000

High Island lives up to its name, rising 52 feet—twice the height of its neighbors. "It's tall and imposing, made up of ledge rock covered with trees and wild raspberries," according to Kathryn Jackson of Legacy Properties/ Sotheby's. "But the view from the highest point is absolutely breathtaking." The island is set just a quarter mile off the mainland in Tenant's Harbor near the Northern and Southern Islands (the latter is owned by Jamie Wyeth). To the south is the far Atlantic; to the east, Matinic Island and White Head Light. On the shore, there's a primitive camp once occupied by a hermit.

CALF ISLAND

Jonesport, \$190,000

Being primarily a ledge doesn't necessarily mean this one-acre island can't support an adorable doll house! Perched on this dollop of pink whipped cream is a beautifully crafted, one-room cottage built using a grandfathered

(Continued on page 178)

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OBSESSIONS

Private Isles (continued from page 112)

footprint just steps from the ocean on all sides. It has a good anchorage as well as a gangway and float. It's easy to imagine spending the summer kayaking between islands, or watching osprey, bald eagles, and harbor seals from the cottage deck. "The island is just a two-mile paddle from Beals Marina in the Eastern Bay, the kayaking capital of Downeast," says the seller's agent, Bill Milliken of Jonesport Realty. "With an island like this, it's not so much about what's going on *on* the island, but what's *around* it: the seals, seabirds, and the views. There's never a dull moment out there."

TINKER ISLAND Tremont, \$3,650,000

Just west of Mount Desert lies Tinker Island, one of the larger islands in the Acadian archipelago. Once called Seaville, the island was a center for shipbuilding from the 1830s to 1850s, when eleven ships with names like *Dirigo*, *Watchman*, and *Gulnare* set sail from its shores. The latter, under the command of Captain John Tinker, sank off Cape Hatteras in 1845. Stones marking Tinker's passing and that of Captains Jonathan and James Tinker are in a small cemetery on the south side of the island.

Today, the northern end of the island is owned by Maine Coast Heritage Trust, so it will stay "forever wild." The remainder—200 acres, 56 of which are fields—includes an estimated two and a half miles of beach, a three-bedroom main house, two-bedroom cottage, barn, boathouse, and stocked trout pond.

"It's idyllic," says Story Litchfield of LandVest, "and the ideal family compound. There's a penciled list on the refrigerator in the main house, clearly written by children of the owner. *Things to do on the island...find sand dollars, catch fish in the pond, paint paintings, watch the stars, and eat carrots out of the garden...*" Who needs iPods and the mall?

New owners can choose to keep it as a family compound or subdivide it; there can be up to three owners and two additional homes.

LOWER BIRCH ISLANDS Addison, \$1,295,000

Finding and buying an island can take persistence. "It took me three offers and six months to buy these two islands, in 1985," says Bob MacDonald.

Connected by a sand bar at low tide, the

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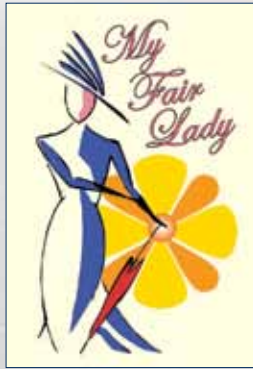
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OBSESSIONS

larger of the two Lower Birch islands is 23.6 acres, the smaller 4.4 acres. MacDonald is to finish upon purchase: a nearly complete, three-bedroom, post-and-beam home that—thanks to bankruptcy by the former owner—has never been lived in.

“Being out here on your own—totally self-sufficient, away from other people, it’s a very relaxed life,” MacDonald says. “You live by the tides.”

He and his sons have blazed trails crisscrossing the island, and found joy in measuring the outer perimeter of the larger isle roughly “one mile.”

The property features a solar power system, a three-acre mainland lot in Harrington, and a 22-foot lobsterboat with trailer and dinghy.

RAM ISLAND

Saco Bay, \$495,000

“Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?” Walter B. Gibson certainly did. A magician who traveled with Harry Houdini and invented many magic tricks, Gibson also wrote for *The Shadow*, a sinister radio show

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that aired in the 1930s. A prolific writer, he disappeared one summer to write on Ram Island, staying in the tiny cottage here with its stone fireplace. No doubt he came to escape the "evil hearts" and find some peace. Not that it's so far from the mainland it's out of earshot. As Charlene Farley of Maine Coast Properties puts it, "The first time I was out here I thought, *This is what life should be. It's so peaceful.* In the distant background, I heard the ice cream truck at Camp Ellis and realized that you're removed, but not isolated." Another sign of civilization: "There's a nine-hole putting green on the island!"

Set east of Camp Ellis, north of Biddeford Pool (where you might run into author Anita Shreve) and northwest of Wood Island Lighthouse, one-acre Ram Island might just be the writer's (or golfer's) retreat you've been looking for.

FOSTER ISLAND
Narraguagus Bay, Harrington,
\$1,900,000

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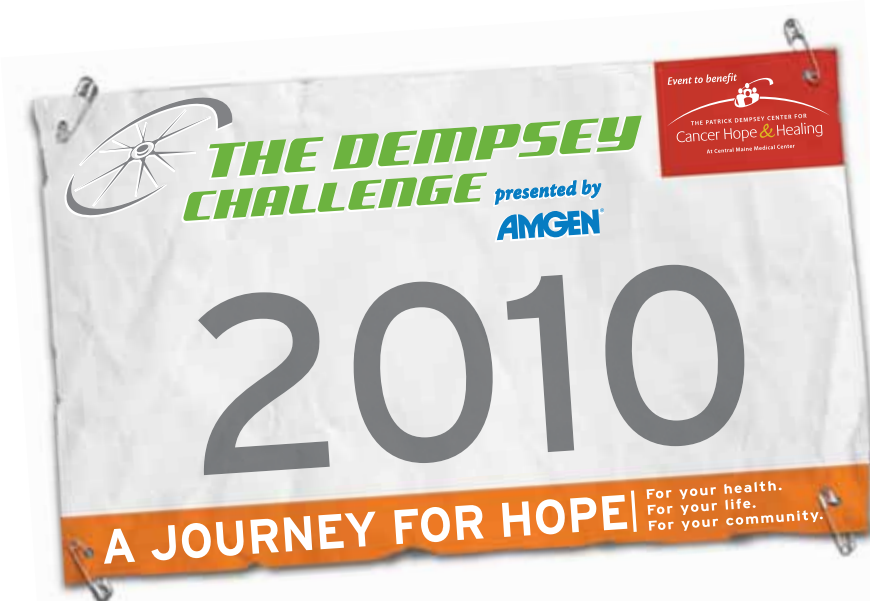

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Once an inspiration for painter Andrew Wyeth, Stone Island is a starkly beautiful hideaway.

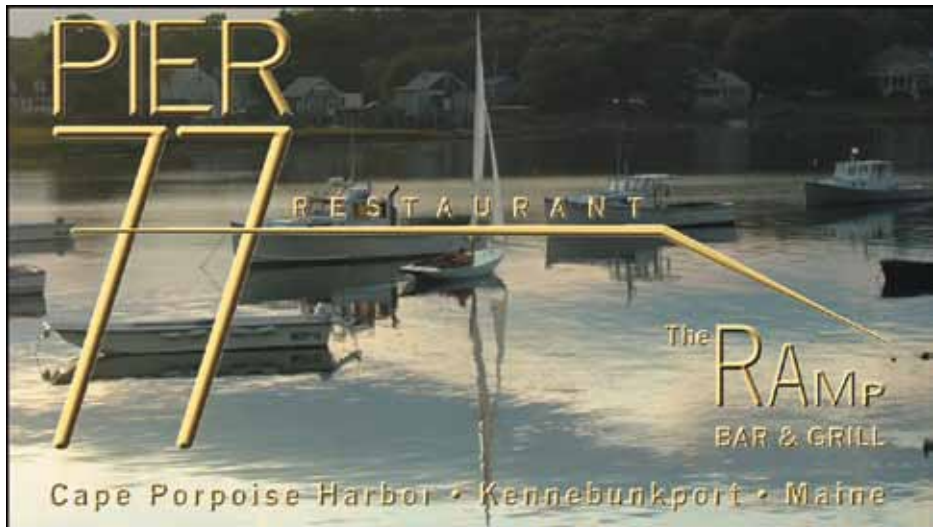
is owned by David Rockefeller, Jr., who has placed a conservation easement on the 300-acre island. It remains largely untouched, save for a small cabin sheltered by a small cove on the southeast side. Rockefeller sometimes sails out here for picnics, according to Mia Thompson Brown of the Knowles Co.

"I always come back calmer and happier after visiting," says Brown. "The shore ranges from granite to sand. The southern end has a lovely point that looks out onto the bay; it would be a great spot for a residence." From there, interior paths wind their way through the center to the northeast and northwest ends of the island, where the rocky shore transitions into a sandy beach. There were once four cabins here; the current conservation easement allows up to a total of five homes to be built. "The hope is that the buyer is conservation-minded and will enjoy adding some additional easements that might translate into some tax benefits, as well."

STONE ISLAND Saint George, \$800,000

This is the elemental island experience: no creature comforts, just the island, sea, and sky. If you're a fan of Andrew Wyeth, you might recognize Stone Island. Dramatic, starkly beautiful, and barren of trees, with a primitive cottage snug on its shore, the 17-acre island has figured in Wyeth's work. Kathryn Jackson of Legacy Properties says, "From Stone, Andy could see his house, Eight Bells, in Port Clyde."

No doubt, Stone Island provided more peace and solitude than busy Port Clyde. The island's owner, Dennis Young, says, "Good thing 'bout an island is there ain't no



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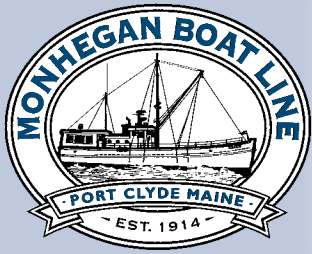
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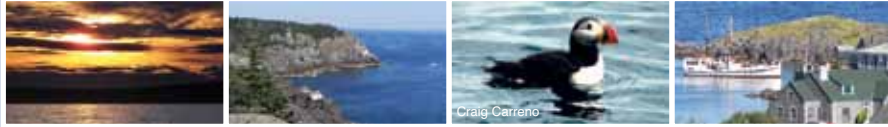


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OBSESSIONS

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MIDDLE HARDWOOD ISLAND

Jonesport, \$1,450,000

"Seven-acre Middle Hardwood has all the conveniences of home," says Bill Milliken of Jonesport Realty. "Its finely crafted, one-bedroom home and two guest cottages were built around 2003. There's pressurized water, solar electric backed by a diesel generator (which runs very little, if ever), and a deepwater dock." The home and cottages are connected by cedar walkways.

"They're well-elevated, so you have 360-degree views of the island-dotted ocean and back toward the village."

Located in Eastern Bay between Great Wass Island and Head Harbor Island, Middle Hardwood is surrounded by magic "waters for kayakers," Milliken says. There's a public marina with parking, but "prospective owners might want to consider purchasing an oceanfront lot on the mainland for parking and storage."

GREER ISLAND

Vinalhaven, \$595,000

"Our family has owned this place for more than 100 years, since they first immigrated to Vinalhaven from England," says Elizabeth Arey. "My late husband's grandfather sold it to him when Jim was a young boy. It was barren when we married in 1961. Together, we spent the next 40 years planting trees out here by hand—carrying water to each seedling and nurturing its growth. Today, these trees stand 60-feet tall."

Greer has 5.1-acres and is only two-tenths of a mile off Vinalhaven, across from a public park. "You can look over to Camden Hill and Isle au Haut; the views are just magnificent," says Arey. While the only building on the island is a weathered studio at water's edge, Arey has a building permit and approved site for a 34-by-18-foot home; foundation footings are already in place.

NARROWS ISLAND AND BAR ISLAND

Harrington, \$1,600,000

Why buy one island when you can have two?

Like many Maine islands, 14-acre Narrows Island and adjacent three-acre Bar Island have been handed down from generation to generation. Narrows offers a main cottage, two guest cottages, three sand beaches, and walking trails through open fields and spruce forests. Built in 1913, the cedar-shingled main





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OBSESSIONS

cottage, lovingly maintained by three generations of the same family, is classic New England, with a white porch and picket fence. The cottage sits on a bluff, affording sweeping views of the outer islands and the Atlantic. At low tide, a walk across the exposed sandbar takes you to Bar Island.

Living here is rustic: no power, no septic system, and well water for the kitchen. George West of Drop Anchor Realty says, "The present owner's father put conservation easements here. The surrounding islands also have conservation easements, so the character of the area will stay the same."

NORTON ISLAND South Addison, \$3,250,000

With 60 acres, a 3,000-square-foot main house, a 1,000-square-foot guest house, solar power, and a five-acre shore lot with boat-house, Norton Island is a turnkey package. But owner Simeon Locke isn't looking for just any buyer—he's looking for an ecologically-aware person who will continue his thoughtful stewardship.

"My wife and I lived on the island [seasonally] for 30 years; it was a great privilege to live here and care for it. It's such a special place, with two sandy beaches, rocky beaches, bold cliffs on the southwest side, a protected mooring on the north side, raspberries, strawberries, gooseberries, cranberries, and blueberries, and interesting vegetation and wildlife. We're a quarter mile from Eagle Island, so there's an eagle nesting site here. In consideration of what the market is doing, I'm willing to consider any reasonable offer from the right person, with up to \$250,000 negotiable in exchange for easements." Those interested can reach Locke at 978-887-5143.

WEBBER ISLAND Georgetown, \$230,100

"The marsh divides the eastern and western halves, so it's really two islands," says owner Julie Morse. "Our western half is 14 acres, and that doesn't include the marsh, since the marsh belongs to the public. There's a wooden camp on it that could be winterized and a small bunkhouse we used for our kids. The camp has a screened-in porch where you can lie in a hammock and see dramatic views of Hockmock Bay. No inhabited properties are in sight—no developments, no eyesores. Just beautiful views." For a showing, call Morse at 978-470-0668.

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HARDWOOD ISLAND
Addison, \$1,150,000

When the first geologic study of Maine was published in 1837, granite quarries were already established across the state, including a spangle of island quarries. The sanctuary columns in the Church of Saint John the Divine in New York City were made of Vinalhaven granite, while more recently, Deer Isle granite from Crotch Island was used in the new Yankee Stadium.

Nineteen-acre Hardwood Island hosted a quarry for nearly 50 years. The nine-bedroom, turn-of-the-century colonial home here housed the granite workers. "It's been unoccupied for a decade and a half, but it's very charming and quaint," says agent Bill Milliken of Jonesport Realty. "There's plenty of room for expansion. The house does need cosmetic and structural work, in addition to major systems like a septic and a drilled well."

HARBOR ISLAND
Frenchboro, \$1,800,000

Vance Gray of Downeast Properties, who's sold many islands during his career, calls

Harbor Island "a jewel. The island is spruce-clad, with ledges and dispersed beaches, and it's located off Bass Harbor and Mount Desert Island, on the best sailing lanes on the East Coast." Perfect for the sailor looking for an island base, it includes a modest cottage with two bedrooms, a full bath, a fresh-water supply, and offshore mooring. Preserve the 30-acre island as it is, or build your own dream island home.

SCABBY ISLAND CHAIN
Machiasport, \$890,000

"You have to walk these islands to appreciate the views they afford," says Vance Gray of Downeast Properties. The three undeveloped islands that make up this chain—Petrel, Haul Out, and Laridae—are treeless, with beaches, elevated [lookouts], and views to the Libby Islands and Libby Island Lighthouse, Cross Islands, and Roque Island.

The seller has also decided to sell "Point of Maine," a mainland 10.4-acre parcel that's accessible by tide. Priced at \$1.5 million, it has 295 feet of shorefront, 100 feet of elevation for sweeping views, a 32-by-44-foot

barn, drilled well, and septic in place. It's the perfect jumping-off point for visiting your island chain.

MOUSE ISLAND
St. George, \$899,000

If you're worried about gaining access to your island, three-quarter-acre Mouse Island is connected to the mainland by a scenic stone causeway. The three-bedroom, shingle-style house here looks like the background for a Ralph Lauren fashion shoot, and the views are timeless.

"It's surround-sound ocean," says Diane Hall of True Hall Realty. "There's always a parade of boats going by and something to see, including bald eagles, moose, and deer—and there's not a window that doesn't have a view." You can rent it for about \$3,200 per week in season if you want to give island living a try.

BIG RIPLEY ISLAND
Harrington, \$189,000

"It's pin-drop quiet here. At night, the vast dark bowl of the sky with all its stars takes

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your breath away," says Dana Grossman, the seller's daughter. All 1.06 acres are available for showing through Deb Henderson of RE/MAX Advantage Realty Group.

The undeveloped island, a perfect place to search for mussels and picnic, is located in Harrington Bay at the mouth of the Harrington River, just off Ripley Neck.

"When you're on the island, you feel more away there than at the most remote place on the mainland."

FISHERMAN'S ISLAND Addison/Jonesport, \$995,000

Four miles off the coast, Fisherman's Island has views of open ocean and Great Wass Island (one of the most celebrated islands in the region, owned by the Nature Conservancy). Suitable for a family compound, the 50-acre island currently includes a rustic cabin formerly favored by fishermen. There's plenty of room for animals, and Downeast Property's Vance Gray speculates, "Since the island is flat and treeless, it may be large enough for a private plane to land on."

FRESHWATER ISLANDS

CHASSE ISLAND Wadleigh Pond, Lyman, \$449,000

Russ Chasse says of his eponymous, two-acre property, "It's 20 minutes from Biddford and Saco, but it's totally secluded. [Man-made] Wadleigh Pond is completely surrounded by private roads, so it's not really open to the public." There are no buildings out here, but Chasse says it could accommodate a three-season home. Twelve hundred feet of waterfront make it especially appealing to boaters and anglers. Access is from the right-of-way at a private boat launching area on Wadleigh Pond Road. For a showing, contact Chasse at 283-1818.

GENTHNER ISLAND Pemaquid Pond, Nobleboro, \$350,000

Wake to the sound of loons on Pemaquid Pond in this rustic Maine camp on seven-acre Genthner Island. Built in 1950, there are two bedrooms, an expansive screen porch, a large living room with wood stove, and, "believe it or not, on an island in the middle of nowhere, it has a bathroom!" says George Feus of Drum & Drum Real Estate.

"Pemaquid isn't terribly developed, but

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you can see a few other camps along the shore," says Feus. Just 400 feet offshore, the island, the first to be included in the Pemaquid Pond conservation easement, is at the northern end of the lake and provides fetching, south-facing views. Also included: a deeded right-of-way on the mainland for vehicle parking and boat access.

BROWN ISLAND
Nicatous Lake, Hancock County,
\$725,000

With a main house and four guest cottages, Brown Island is "not too big, not too small, but just right." It comes with all the creature comforts, including a custom kitchen and library. John Colannino of ERA Dawson Bradford Co. says, "With five acres, kids have so much to explore. There are several boats, docks, a swim float, and decks." Don't worry about a place to park your cars on the mainland; a small area near the public landing is included.

PINE ISLAND
Long Lake, Naples, \$999,500
PHOEBE ISLAND

Sebec Lake, Bowerbank, \$649,000
 Jay Bailey owns two islands, but he's only interested in selling one—which one will be up to the buyer. "I keep Pine Island like a park," he says. "I like the privacy and full panoramic view; from sunrise to sunset, you can follow the sun all the day just by moving to different spots on the island. There's bass all around and great snorkeling; you can see lots of big fish." He admits the one-acre island is rustic; it has only "an octagon-shaped camp and an outhouse," a refreshing oddity in a neighborhood where multi-million dollar mansions are the norm.

Tiny Phoebe Island—just an eighth to a quarter acre, depending on the lake level—makes up for what it lacks in size with absolute charm. A white cottage, built in the 1930s and meticulously renovated by Bailey, perches atop the rocky promontory just 100 feet from shore. "At Pine Island, you're on the island, looking out through a cathedral of trees. At Phoebe, when you're in the house, you look out and see water; it's almost like being on a boat. You'll be having dinner and see the loons swimming by," says Bailey. Included in Phoebe Island's price is 21 acres on the mainland.

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OBSESSIONS

Buyers start your engines, as there will only be one sale here. Contact Deb Henderson of RE/MAX Advantage Realty Group.

BERRY ISLAND

Lake St. George, Liberty, \$199,900

According to Fran Riley of United Realty, there are several potential locations for a cottage on this six-acre, undeveloped island. "On the west end, where the elevation is higher, the water is deep, reaching 65 feet in some spots. On the other end is a beautiful beach where you can pull your canoe up to the shore.

"In the middle, there's a stand of virgin white pine which provides shade along a natural walking path that meanders from one end of the island to the other."

Lake St. George is spring-fed, with sparkling, clear water for excellent fishing, swimming, and boating.

WHITE'S ISLAND

Big Lake, Washington County, \$3,850,000

With over two miles of shoreline (including several small sand beaches) and 143 pristine acres of old-growth forest inhabited by wildlife, White's Island is an unspoiled gem. (As a potential bonus, a timber survey states that thinning the property would yield \$400,000 in timber.)

Big Lake covers 16 square miles and is known for its excellent bass fishing, along with landlocked Atlantic salmon and brown trout. Listing agent Deb Henderson of RE/MAX Advantage Realty Group says, "White's would make a wonderful family or corporate retreat."

UNNAMED ISLAND

South Twin Lake, Millinocket, \$239,000

Walk across a footbridge from the designated onshore parking to this petite (approximately one-sixth of an acre) island that includes a two-bedroom cottage, 22-foot sailboat, paddle boat, kayaks, wind-surfing gear, wood-fired hot tub, docks, and sand beach. According to Kim Cochran of RE/MAX Advantage Realty Group, "This cottage has the most incredible view of Mount Katahdin. It's also unique in that it's one of the few camps here that includes the land; the majority are on leased land belonging to the paper companies." ■



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