

Dream

Don't just get away, maroon yourself on the private





Islands

paradise of your choice. It's your home, after all.

BY DONNA STUART

What better way to luxuriate in your sense of detachment than to buy an island off the coast of Maine?

Step lightly across the gangplank to visit no fewer than 27 islands for sale this summer, priced from \$275,000 to \$7.995 million.



**OAK ISLAND
North Haven, \$1.795M**

"I don't believe any place this beautiful should have a 'No Trespassing' sign. Instead, my sign reads, 'Take only pictures; leave only footprints,'" Fred Dodd, owner of Oak Island, says.

Most of this Shangri-La is open fields with oak trees, beach roses, wild cherry trees, and a few stoic clumps of spruce.

"I also own an island in Belize, where I lead educational ecology tours," so he considers it his obligation to maintain a series of trails that guide visitors to Oak Island's freshwater pond and five beaches, including Skip Rock Beach, "covered with flat, round stones" perfect for that purpose.

"I'm simply the caretaker of this absolutely magical island, along with the seals, porpoises, sea birds, and bald eagles" who feel the same way about the place.

A modest one-room cottage perches on a 60-foot knoll. With windows on all sides and a wrap-around deck, it affords spectacular

views of Camden, the full sweep of Penobscot Bay, and neighboring North Haven Island. Inside, a cushioned bench doubles as a bed and runs under the windows so you can wake to the magnificent view.

If you have the gift of gab, you can arrange for transportation out here in Barney's Lobster Boat, departing from Camden or North Haven. To take a leap like this, of course, you'd first have to convince yourself. **20 acres, taxes \$5,153.**

**OUTER GOOSE &
GOOSE NUBBLE ISLANDS
Addison, \$565,000**

"It's a two-beer ride out to the islands," owner Gary Chard says. "It's pretty wild out here. From the wharf, we watch baby eagles take flight. Last summer, when the remains of a whale washed up, we saw them feed on it. The area's lousy with eagles; they nest over on Inner Goose, which is state-owned and a designated eagle habitat."

In fact, it's an avian convergence zone out

here, quite a flap:

"We get the arctic birds when they come south and the southern birds when they migrate north. Great blue herons, plovers, and loons are frequent visitors, and pelagic birds including puffins aren't far away.

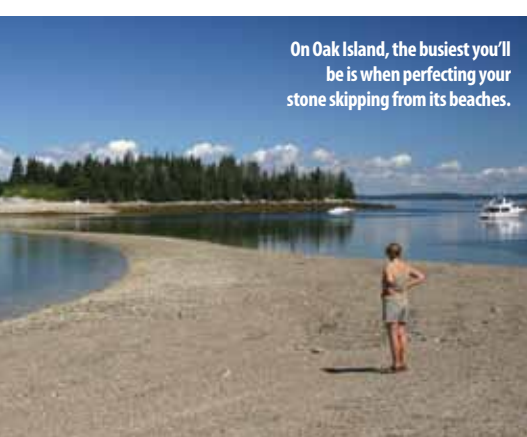
"The cove between the two islands has a beach glittering with sea glass—and last summer my son found an arrowhead. Mussels and clams are plentiful. For lobster, just hail a passing lobster boat if you don't want to put out your own pots.

"We've seen 13 sets of fireworks at a time on the fourth of July from the towns and other islands."

A timber framer whose work has been featured in *Old House Journal*, Chard built



Watch the sun rise over Deer Isle and Stonington from the deck of Oak Island's cottage in East Penobscot Bay.



On Oak Island, the busiest you'll be is when perfecting your stone skipping from its beaches.

the island's 1,300 square-foot, three-bedroom post and beam home with wrap-around deck himself. "I used a reclaimed 1840s barn, recut the frame, and used ships' knees to support the timbers." Everything shows this woodworker's skill, from the hardwood plank flooring to the wide pine countertops.

Still, Chard refers to the experience as "deluxe camping," since the only power is from a generator. If it feels like rainwater when you're washing, it's because it is rainwater. And for those too metropolitan for the outhouse, there's a composting toilet.

"When I got here, there was a henhouse, wharf, and outhouse. There used to be lobster camps on a lot of islands out here. Norman Chandler told me his family



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At low tide in Wohoa Bay, Outer Goose & Goose Nubble islands are joined by a private land bridge.

used to head out to Goose the day school was out in June, and they'd stay there until school started up again in the fall. They'd fish for lobster and bring them to Beals once a week to sell. After his family left, someone else leased the island, but when the owners didn't renew his lease, he floated his house

David Rockefeller, Jr's Foster Island in Narraguagus Bay is three-quarters the size of Monaco. \$1.65M.

off and took it to another island."

A 36-foot lobster boat, as well as deeded parking and a mooring on the waterfront in Beals, all convey. "It's a sweet boat, built right near where it's moored by Mariner Beal, a well-known wooden boat builder, in 1964." As the saying goes, "If you want a lobster boat, go to Beals Island, because

you can kick over a stump and find a boat-builder there," and Mariner, nicknamed "Love," was one of the best. **2.9 acres, taxes \$2,390.**

HARBOR ISLAND Bucks Harbor, Brooksville \$3.95M

From the air, heart-shaped Harbor Island looks like a valentine to Bucks Harbor. "From the southern side of the island where the cottage is, you can watch schooners, yachts, and windjammers heading in to anchor in Bucks Harbor, a favorite stopping point between the mid-coast and Mt. Desert Island," LandVest's Terry Sortwell says.

"While the island's just a quick skiff's row across a protected cove to the deepwater dock and float, it's utterly private, very beautiful, and teeming with wildlife—ospreys, bald eagles, fish hawks, harbor seals, porpoises, and deer." Its 4,800 feet of shoreline runs the gamut from granite ledges to tidal pools and a pebble beach. Dating to 1957, the shingled cottage here is simple but comfortable, with a propane generator for power and a wood stove. **25 ± acres, taxes \$9,194.56.**



Harbor Island's deep-water dock is the magic carpet to your island vacation.



**RAM ISLAND AND SCRAGGLE POINT
Saint George \$1.35M**

Wilson Ailing had never set foot on Ram Island when he bought it more than 30 years ago. He had, however, seen it from the air, "a spectacular piece of property...fully wooded with a safe mooring, southern exposure to the open ocean, and even a small, sandy beach."

Originally, Ailing dreamed of building a grand summer 'cottage' but soon concluded a tiny constellation of buildings would provide privacy as well as support each other for single-season construction. The resulting compound of four low-slung, solar-powered structures connected by wooden walkways disappears into the landscape, yet all have wonderful water views.

"Have you seen the work of Andy Goldsworthy, the contemporary artist of the ephemeral? This whole island is like his sculpture," Ailing says. "It changes and grows whether I like it or not. Trees blow down, we clear them out, and a new vista is revealed that in five years may disappear. New ferns spring up, the raspberries are always spreading, the shoreline drifts. Most islands are a

FROM TOP: ACADIA REALTY (2); LANDVEST (2)

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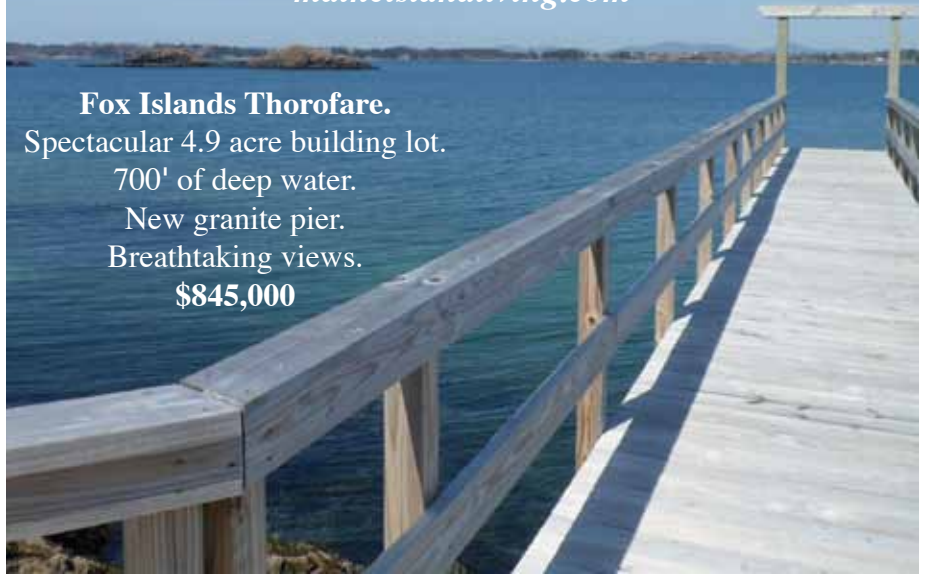
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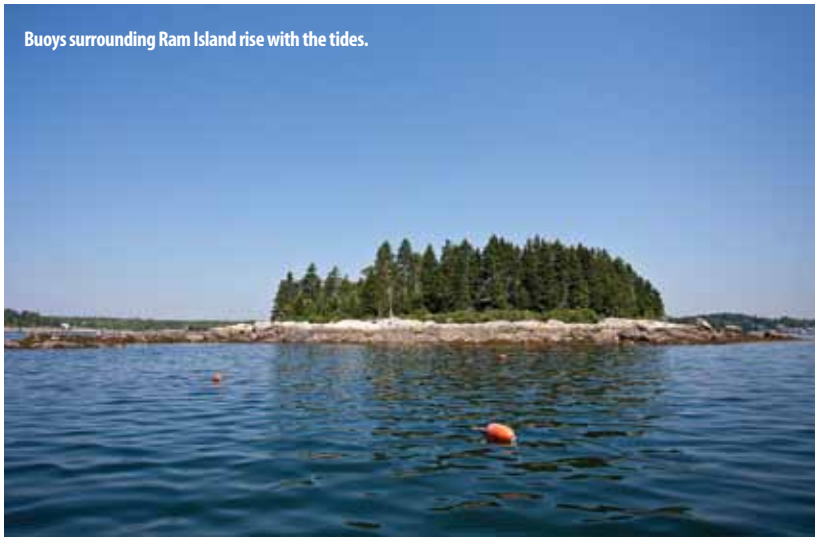


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Buoys surrounding Ram Island rise with the tides.



young family's adventure. I know [the next owners] will change it." Likely, Ram Island will change them, too.

Five island acres & 1.5 mainland acres, taxes \$6,775.

RAM ISLAND

Mouth of Machias Bay, \$550,000

It takes a brave man to buy an island sight unseen, but that's what Bill Stanhope did on the strength of its description: a windswept isle of grassland and granite with deep crevasses and rugged cliffs. "The island rises to a height of 60 feet, and the tide drops a good 18 feet. The island is constantly changing," says Stanhope, who's camped on the island with his family every summer since buying it in 1970. Seven miles from Machiasport, the island has northerly views of Foster, Stone, and Cross is-

lands, and open ocean to the south. At night, the double beam of Libby Island Light rakes Ram from the east.

With the exception of a tent platform, the island is as wild as Stanhope found it more than 40 years ago. He has a site for a three-bedroom cottage and will use the height of the hill to protect it from the north winds. Mainland access and a boat aren't included—but then the price has come down a third since three years ago.

16 acres, taxes \$3,300.

GOOSEBERRY ISLAND

Kittery, \$2.95M

A quarter mile across the harbor from Kittery Town Dock, lights fitted to a boardwalk guide you to a brown, shingled saltbox with a

broad covered porch. "It's the only inhabited private island in Portsmouth Harbor," owner Jim Austin says. "Our family has owned it for nearly 90 years."

Views include "historic Whaleback Lighthouse, Fort Constitution, Fort McClary, and in the distance, the Isles of Shoals.

"Twenty years ago, we built the house to look like it'd been there for far longer. I used it to entertain foreign business associates." Which accounts for the high-end oak floors, cherry cabinets, and granite countertops. "You can live here year round" under its exposed beams.

Sure, you can tie a 50-foot boat to the dock, or try kayaking in the harbor and head to Chauncey Creek's famous lobster pier.

1.4 acres, taxes \$4,317.

MIDDLE HARDWOOD

Jonesport, \$1.45M

Blanketed by low bush blueberries with scattered stands of spruce, beaches, and pink granite bluffs, Middle Hardwood offers views of Great Wass and Head Harbor islands in Eastern Bay. "You look out towards Great Wass, and there's no civilization in sight," says Alan Pederson, one of the owners, who has seen



Gooseberry Island's two-bedroom home, built in 1994, is perched just across the bay from Fort McClary State Park.



Rain or shine, Whaleback Lighthouse winks at Gooseberry Island.



The exposed beams of Ram Island's cabin add a familiar sense of camp.

"mink, eagles, and porpoises" out here.

Three shingle-shake cottages, trimmed in sky blue and linked by cedar walkways, are simply elegant inside, with antique pine floors, classic Maine cottage-style furnishings, and stone and tile baths. "There's solar power, a back-up generator, and a drilled well."

Eight acres, taxes \$6,410.

DAVIS ISLAND

Saint George, \$3.95M

Stepping onto your private island dock, stroll past green lawns and English country gardens in riotous bloom to your elegant three-bedroom main residence. Ascend your spiral stairs to the observatory for 360-degree views of the Camden Hills, Muscongus Bay, Port Clyde, and your closest neighbors, the Wyeth-owned Allen and Bernier Islands. Meander along paths through raspberries and blackberries to sitting areas and pocket beaches.

Once a self-sustaining farm, today Davis includes a two-bedroom guest cottage, a caretaker's apartment, various outbuildings, two docks, a mooring field, several skiffs and boats, and power from the mainland.

48 acres, taxes \$17,006.

CHANCE ISLAND

Machiasport, \$1.8M

"From the rocky knob that's 123 feet high, you get a 360-degree view of Machias Bay," Dean Bryfogle, who owns 44-acre Chance Island with his two brothers, says. "If you look toward Machiasport, it's amazing how little things have changed since my parents bought the island in 1969. The peace and quiet is total; there's just no noise once the lobster boats go in." Just half a mile off Chance's

(Continued on page 194)



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REAL ESTATE

Dream Islands (continued from page 71)

northeast shore is Sprague Neck, designated in 1990 as the Department of Defense's first Watchable Wildlife site and now a U.S. Navy Ecological Reserve.

Chance is all about open fields with luscious raspberry and blueberry bushes. Rocky cliffs provide a place to climb, and on the eastern shore at high tide, the ocean roars up a spume hole—a tiny version of Acadia's Thunder Hole.

The family has erected two buildings on the north side overlooking the sand and gravel beach: a camp with a deck, and a larger two-story house that's unfinished. You might even be able to get the brothers to include the 25-foot Grady-White they use to access the island from Bucks Harbor.

44 acres, taxes \$4,995.

SCABBY ISLAND CHAIN

Machiasport, \$510,000

Sure, an island's fun. But how about three? United at low tide, the treeless islands that make up Scabby-Petrel, Haul Out, and Lari-dae—become wild and individual with the rising tide.

Petrel, the largest and highest with a 93-foot elevation, has a small freshwater pond as well as the most sheltered landing spot on its western shore.

"Their allure is their remoteness and utter privacy; they're true wilderness islands," listing agent Jeff Allen of Downeast Properties says. **18 acres, taxes \$4,131.**

LOWER BIRCH ISLANDS

Addison, \$1.25M

Life on Bob and Barbara MacDonald's island in Pleasant Bay is idyllic. "Everything you could want is here, except milk," Bob says. "There are fruit trees, high-bush blueberries, and raspberries. When we lived in the East and could spend more time here, we even had a vegetable garden. You can dig mussels and clams, and if you want lobster and crab, just flag down one of the local lobsterman."

Barbara, who often spent time alone on the island, says, "You get into a rhythm with nature. You watch the tide to see when you can cross to the little island. Sometimes early in the season I'd see some of the herd of deer that spent the winter on the island before they'd swim to the island just north of us for the warmer months."

There's already a stalwart solar-powered

post-and-beam house on the larger of the two islands, and Bob says the smaller island can be built on as well. Both islands and the mainland lot offer deep water anchorage.
23.6 and 4.4 acre islands, three mainland acres, taxes \$7,416.

NARROWS ISLAND AND BAR ISLAND

Harrington, \$1.6M

Separated from Bar Island by a short paddle (or in low tide, a short walk), Narrows, the larger of these two islands, is spruce-clad with a rocky shoreline, three sand beaches, and trails that wind throughout. The main cottage—more like a camp, since there’s no power or electricity—sits on a bluff at the southern end of the island, looking straight out on open waters, while two guest cottages perch above one of the protected beaches overlooking the mainland and Ripley Point. According to George West of Drop Anchor Realty, conservation easements are in place.

17 island acres and 0.79 mainland acres, taxes \$7,410.

NORTON ISLAND

Addison, \$3.25M

“You find a different experience on each beach,” Steve Shelton of Acadia Realty Group says. “Two are sandy, others are rocky—and the weather you see is awe-inspiring.” There’s a protected mooring on the island’s north side, stony cliffs to the southwest, and golden fields with raspberries, strawberries, gooseberries, cranberries, and blueberries in between.

The island comes complete with a solar-powered post-and-beam main house with sunroom and floor-to-ceiling windows. Not a bad place to pull the stars over your head. A guest house is tucked amid the spruce as well. Included in the price is a mainland lot with private boathouse.

60 island acres and five mainland acres, taxes \$13,001.

FISHERMAN’S ISLAND

Beals, \$699,000

Just off the southern tip of Great Wass Island, Fisherman’s Island is a blank slate: a level island just 19 feet high with a mile of coastline and beaches—and not one tree. Stand at any point on the island for unobstructed views of the mountains of Acadia National Park and the islands of Western Bay. Experienced sea kayakers call the beautiful and wild Great Wass Archipelago the best place in Maine to paddle, but warning: it’s not for novices.

50 acres, taxes \$3,739.

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Claude Monet (France, 1840-1926), *La Manneporte Vue en Aval (The Manneporte Seen from Below) (detail)*, circa 1884. Scott M. Black Collection. Photo by meyersphoto.com.

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NAUTILUS ISLAND Brooksville, \$7.995M

Named for a British sloop of war and once a stronghold for the Brits who used it to control the mouth of the harbor, Nautilus Island was wrested from their grasp during the American Revolution by Continental Marines led by the Midnight Rider, Paul Revere.

Today, five minutes off Castine, the 37-acre island is a mini-kingdom that's as luxurious as many a world-class island resort. Built in 1906, the gracious six-bedroom main house—with its stone palazzo and infinity pool—provides royal, sweeping views of Penobscot Bay. A two-bedroom farmhouse overlooks the vineyard, while the guest cottage is set on the island's protected harbor. Tennis courts, perennial gardens, lighted walking paths, a converted boat-house, and a 300-foot dock with moorings confirm the status: it's *your* island.

But make no mistake: This is a working saltwater farm. Its vineyard will produce 100 cases of wine this year. Maple sap is gathered in buckets, then boiled in the sugar shack to make gallons of maple

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REAL ESTATE

syrup, while the harvest from the organic vegetable and herb gardens is sufficient not only for the island's tables, but could supply restaurants around the Blue Hill and Castine area. Additional land could be reclaimed for livestock pasture—one more step towards making this saltwater farm self-sufficient, as it was a century ago.

The price is down from \$10.6 million last year, but if you'd like to try before you buy, the island is available year round for short- and long-term rental, complete with a full staff, transportation from Castine, and provisions. **37 acres, taxes \$9,171.**

JOE'S ISLAND Friendship, \$659,000

"It's 2.4 acres," says former Ford executive Cam Marshall, who's spent 20 years building and maintaining a summer house, guest-house, and outbuildings out here, complete with solar power and rainwater collection. "But, then, I like building things." It's a turn-key situation, with "a 55-gallon lobster cooker and two boats—a 17-foot Boston Whaler with a 115-hp Mercury engine and a fiber-

glass skiff—included."

Joe's is unnamed on the charts; it's barely a speck off Cranberry Island in Muscongus Bay. "We call it Green Island, because that's how we've tried to live. It's so close to Cranberry Island you can holler across—we used to shoot off a cannon to let folks on Cranberry know they were invited for cocktails." **2.4 acres, taxes \$2,242.**

BROWN ISLAND Nictaus Lake, \$699,000

Even with its four guest cottages, built in the 1920s, you're guaranteed the deepest sense of privacy at Brown Island, once owned by the Butterfield family, whose dominions swallowed the northern two-thirds of the lake. Outside of your main cottage, with its classic log walls and cast iron stove heating from the middle of the living room, everywhere else around is uninhabited. As John Colannino of ERA Dawson Bradford explains, "Nictaus Lake has 76 state-owned islands and nearly 50,000 acres of private and state conservation lands."

Back in the day, the Butterfields knew how to live the life out here. They used a barge to bring cows over to the island so they'd have fresh milk in the summer. Still there's a sense of how *civilized* the island is. A caretaker is available who'll have the island fully stocked for your arrival. And with power, running water, cell phone service, and bathrooms, this is the Hilton for rusticators.

Take the 18-foot outboard motor boat (included) for a 5-mile spin to the northern end of the lake past virgin forests and loons skimming the water's surface.

Five acres, taxes \$697.

WHITE'S ISLAND Big Lake, Washington County \$1.995M

Unless you see it from the air, it can be tough to grasp just how big White's Island is, so picture this: It's bigger than the world's smallest country, the Vatican. Covered in virgin old-growth timber, it has more than two miles of water frontage. It's so big, there are miles of hiking trails to get lost on.

"Much of the land and islands around Big

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Lake are in conservation trusts," says Deb Henderson, who works with Realty of Maine's Maine Recreational Realty Group, "so this area will remain protected."

But when you own an island this large, you don't have to feel marooned. A plan's in the works to bring power out here via cable, so it can be developed as a family compound, corporate retreat, or recreational property.

143 acres, taxes \$1,509.

RAM ISLAND

Saco Bay \$495,000

East of Camp Ellis and northwest of Wood Island Lighthouse lies an island that was once rife with murder and mayhem—at least that's what was in the mind of Walter B. Gibson (author of the radio program "The Shadow"), who secluded himself on Ram Island one summer to write.

His cottage with stone fireplace remains, as does a nine-hole putting green. Charlene Farley of Maine Coast Properties can't get over it. "I come out here, and I never want to leave. It's so tranquil, so calm—but you realize it's not isolated when you hear the bell from the ice cream truck on the mainland."

One acre, taxes \$2,700.

HANNEMAN ISLAND

Big Lake, Greenville, \$598,000

This is an angler's dream destination: a dozen acres on one of the largest lakes in Maine, along with an authentic—admittedly rustic—four-bedroom log cabin, all just a mile from the public landing on Big Lake Road. You're more likely to see bald eagles, moose, and deer than people...and isn't that a big part of the appeal? A sandy beach cools your toes between casts, and the Saint Croix River keeps the river filled with smallmouth bass.

12.5 acres, taxes \$1,012.

BIRCH ISLAND

Moosehead Lake, Greenville, \$550,000

Forty years ago, if Mainers said, "We're going to camp," you knew just what they meant: They were headed to their family's cabin on a lake to wake with the loons, spend all day on the water, and fall asleep sated by the sun.

Birch Island is that Maine camp: comfortably rustic, with 3,000 feet of waterfront. The house has an even-keeled approach to island living: the log-walled interior harkens to the deepest sentimentality of roughing it, but the deck provides resort-like views of Mount Kenno and Moose Mountain. And on top of that,

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it's a bargain-basement stunner: Marge Taggart of Prudential Northeast Properties says, "Three years ago it was listed for \$1.5M—it's a very good value."
Six acres, taxes \$2,205.

MURCH ISLAND
George's Pond, Franklin, \$485,000

Before finished basements, flat-screen TVs, and Sunday football with the guys, there was Murch Island. "The camp—a cabin with a tiny bunkhouse—is the 'man cave' of 50 years ago," listing agent Kim Swan of The Swan Agency says. A weekend on the pine-studded island is like rowing back in time; there's no electricity, the water comes from the lake, and a Franklin wood stove cuts the chill of a wind-swept night.

If 2012 calls (or you need to recharge your iPhone), grab your paddle and kayak to the small mainland lot where there's a dock and parking. Don't worry about turning off the lights; they're taken care of.
8.4 acres, taxes \$3,062.

PHOEBE ISLAND
Sebec Lake, Piscataquis, \$549,900

It looks like a Shel Silverstein illustration: an 800-square-foot white cottage atop a one-eighth acre granite mount just 100 yards from the shores of Sebec Lake. Climb the wooden spiral staircase to the second floor for crow's nest views of the water.

And why not keep an eye out? With a \$60,000 barge that conveys with the house, you can ferry supplies across Sebec for your neighbors.

Need to stretch a little from the one-bedroom house on the rock? The mainland acreage included with the purchase more than makes up for the tight quarters: 21 acres with spring-fed ponds, free for development.
21 acres, taxes \$789.

BURNT ISLAND
Saint George Lake, Liberty, \$275,000

If *The Blue Lagoon* were set in Maine—icy thought!—Burnt Island would be the ideal location shoot. "From the cottage's screen porch you see the shallow lagoon ringed by a beautiful, flat rock wall that was installed in the 1950s," says Donna Barker of Rock Maple Realty. Shallow and sandy, the lagoon is an ideal spot for children to splash and play, with plenty of deeper water also available around the island for swimming and mooring. Play the cast-



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away and pick blueberries and wildflowers. The cottage's two bedrooms and a loft are perfect for sun-soaked children drifting off to sleep.

Three acres, taxes \$2,933.

GENTHNER ISLAND

Pemaquid Pond, Nobleboro \$299,000

Is the two-bedroom camp beneath the pines on Genthner Island. Neverland? With its screened porch and woodstove in the living room, it's rustic but comfortable. "If you want 'simple'—a place where you can turn kids loose—this is it," says George Feus of Drum & Drum Real Estate. "It's a peaceful place that hasn't changed, and it'll be the same in 100 years." Timeless indeed, but when the kids grow up and bring the families, Feus says the house can be expanded up to 25 percent—more room to make your picture-perfect getaway.

Seven acres, taxes \$1,501.

CHASSE ISLAND

Wadleigh Pond, Lyman, \$449,000

A mysterious force draws wildlife to the shores of a shaggy green island in the middle of Wadleigh Pond. It's a magnet for "deer or moose, who swim out to it," eponymous island owner Russell Chasse says. "I've swum out there myself, with someone rowing alongside." Leave your car at a private mainland lot 1,200 feet away on Wadleigh Pond Road, included in the price. Slip slowly into the ice-blue water. Do you dare?

Two acres, taxes \$944.

FOSTER ISLAND

Narraguagus Bay, Harrington, \$1.65M

What do you do when you own an undeveloped island that's nearly three-quarters the size of Monaco? If you're David Rockefeller Jr., you'll live aboard your boat and spend days exploring your 300-acre fiefdom. "Each time I come, we turn in a different direction and discover something new," says listing agent Mia Brown of the Knowles Company. At the southwest end of the island is a protected cove with pier and a sand beach, one of several such beaches on the island. A conservation easement is in place, but up to five homes can be built here.

314 acres, taxes \$7,518. ■

For more, visit portland-monthly.com/portmag/2012/05/islands-extras.





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