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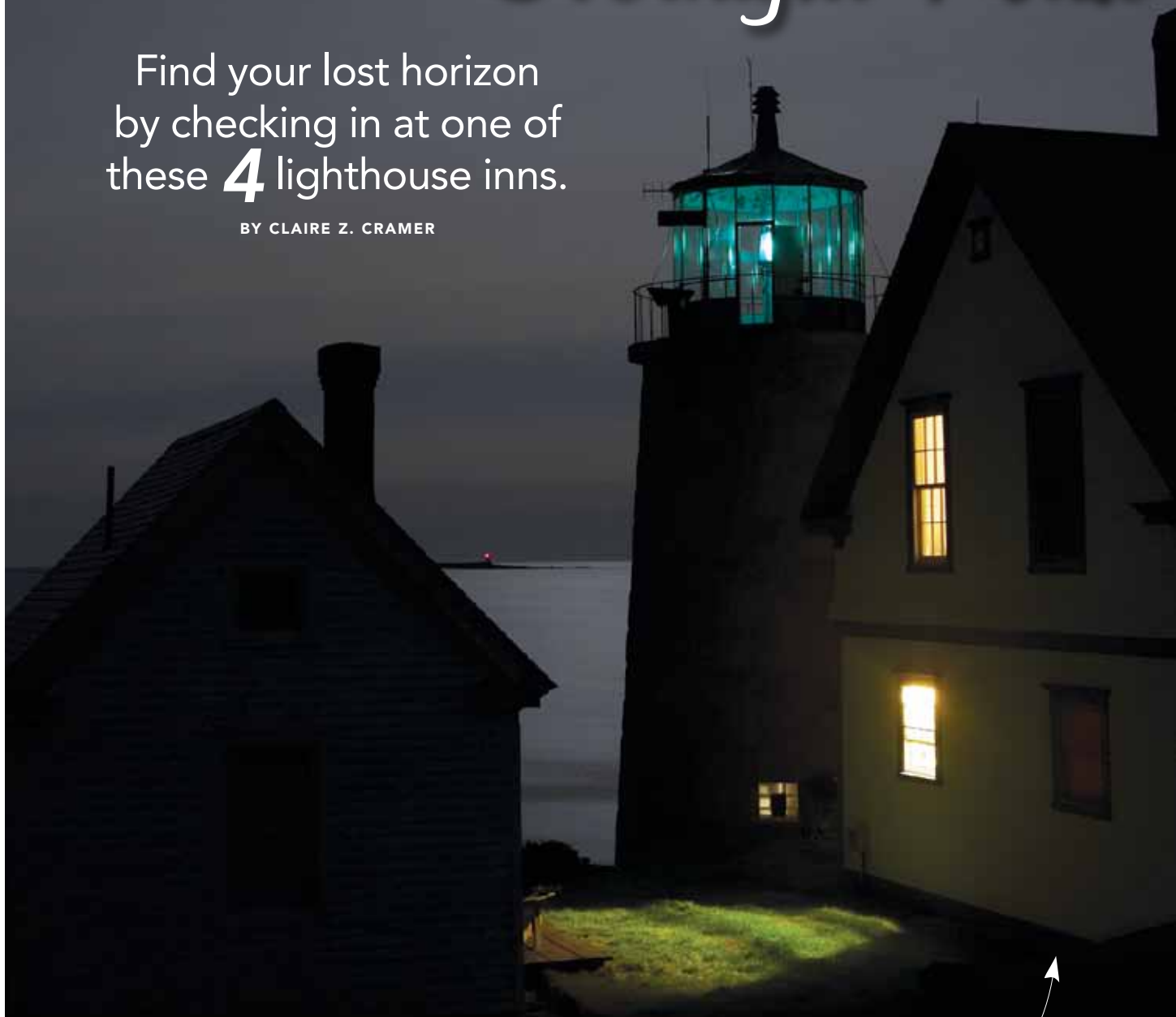
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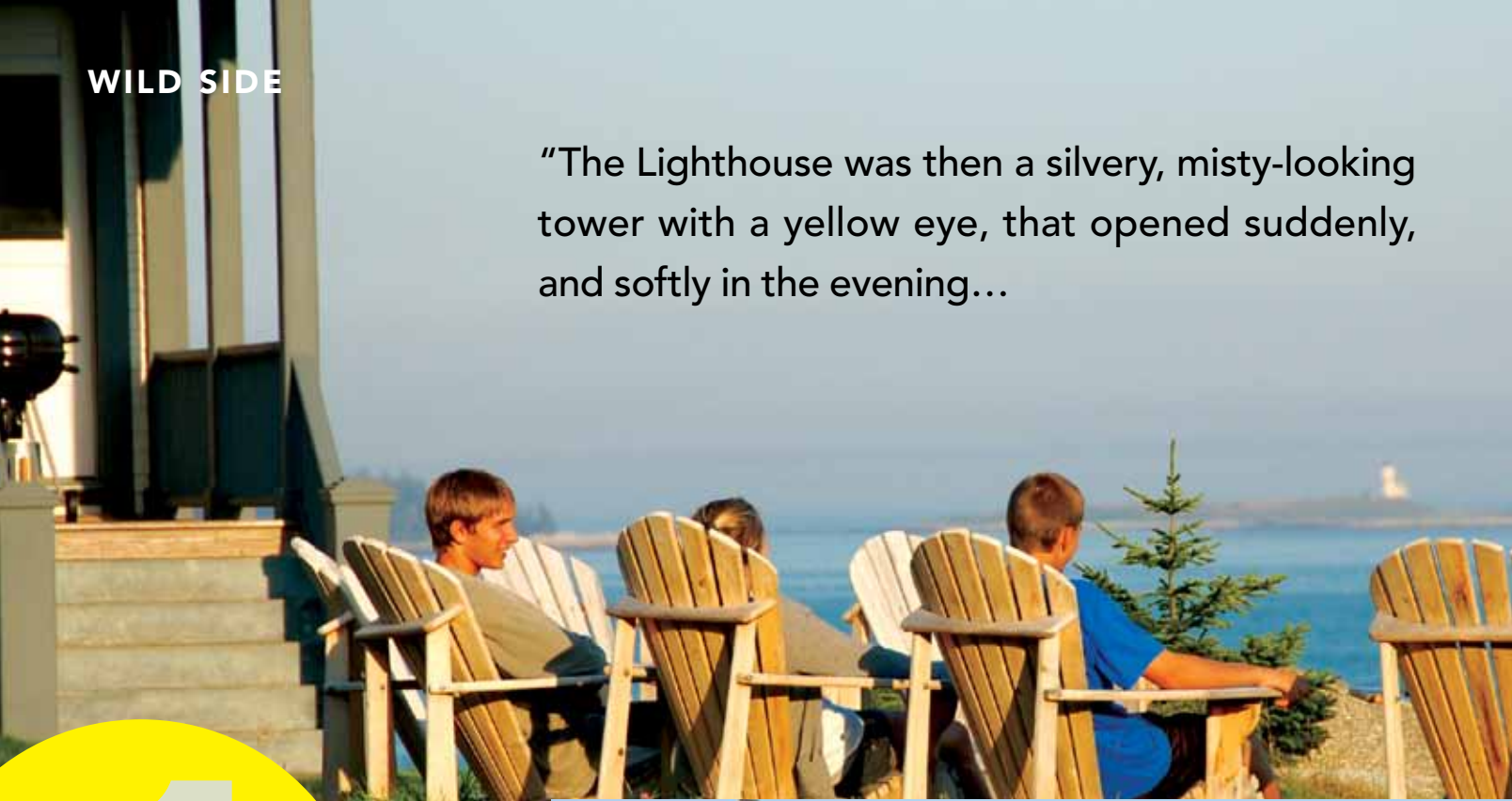
BY CLAIRE Z. CRAMER



Whitehead Light: 7 bedrooms, all ensuite. All-inclusive weekend for two-\$629. Rent the whole place-\$4,900/week

COURTESY OF WHITEHEAD LIGHT STATION

“The Lighthouse was then a silvery, misty-looking tower with a yellow eye, that opened suddenly, and softly in the evening...”



1

WHITEHEAD LIGHT
 43.9787° N, 69.1243° W
 Opened: 1804, Automated: 1982

whiteheadlightstation.org, 200-7957
 Rates: From **\$629** per weekend



Whitehead Light Station is one lucky lighthouse. Commissioned in 1803 as the seventh oldest lighthouse in the U.S. by President Thomas Jefferson, it received a 12-year make-over starting in 1997 when non-profit Pine Island Camp of Belgrade Lakes acquired it via the Maine Lights Program. Since 2009, the landmark has hosted retreats and entertains guests throughout the year.

Whitehead sits on 11 acres of 70-acre

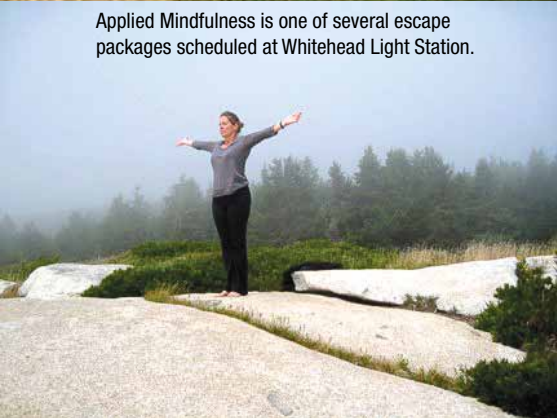


...Now—James looked at the Lighthouse. He could see the white-washed rocks; the tower, stark and straight; he could see that it was barred with black and white; he could see windows in it; he could even see washing spread on the rocks to dry. So that was the Lighthouse, was it?

No, the other was also the Lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing. The other Lighthouse was true too.” —Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*, 1927



Applied Mindfulness is one of several escape packages scheduled at Whitehead Light Station.



Whitehead Island off Spruce Head, three miles northeast of Tenants Harbor. "The innkeeper's house was built in 1891 as a duplex because two families took turns keeping it," says Gigi Lirot, the island's manager as well as a licensed USCG captain, single-engine pilot, and avid scuba diver. Today, there are seven bedrooms, each with private bath. It's \$629 per couple for all-inclusive theme weekends such as cooking, wine and food, knitting. The entire cottage also rents by the week from \$4,900.

Be prepared for splendid isolation. Whitehead Island averages "80 days of thick fog per year," according Jeremy D'Entremont, historian for the American Lighthouse Foundation.

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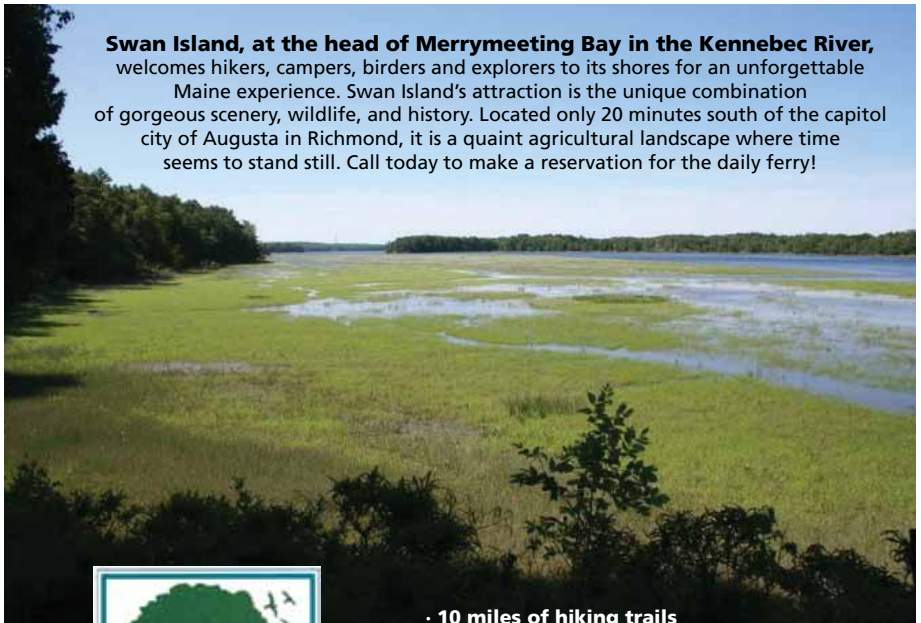


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WILD SIDE

Spend the night off North Haven at Goose Rocks Light—it's all yours, starting at \$600. You're on your own, literally. And you might get wet.

GOOSE ROCKS LIGHT

44°8'7.5"N, 68°49'50.4"W

Opened: 1890, Automated: 1963

beaconpreservation.org, 200-7957

Rates: From \$600 per night

“There are no half-hearted guests at **Goose Rocks**. People either get it or they don't,” says Dr. Casey Jordan, whose non-profit Beacon Preservation maintains Goose Rock, a lonely, lovely beacon in the Fox Islands Thoroughfare half a mile off North Haven Island. “We actually had guests on three nights last week.” Jordan purchased her lighthouse outright in 2006. She created the non-profit because she believed in “the whole ethos—a lighthouse should be about education and preservation.”

Goose Rocks is full immersion: there's no island to roam. It's *just* a lighthouse. You access the almost enchanted accommodations by climbing a vertical ladder. There's solar power, “enough to charge your phone and run the composting toilet.” For the most part, children are not permitted.

“People call and say they want to rent the lighthouse. You don't rent, you make a donation to Beacon. Every dime goes into preservation.

“You feel like the lighthouse *keeper*. This isn't a B&B. There's no room service. You're going to experience terrible weather, you're going to get wet. You're going to bring your own food and grill it outside. You can't call us at midnight for a beer run. I stayed out there five consecutive nights once by myself. It got a little Stephen King. I was soaked in fog, and it wasn't safe to take the boat out.”

What sorts of people seek out this experience? “Ninety percent of the guests are fantastic—they'll say it was the high point of their trip to Maine, they send Christmas cards. We just had a couple in their 60s—it was on his bucket list.”





Jordan was the lightkeeper in 2010 and 2011. This summer, "I have a terrific engineering student, Tim Sweret, taking care of the lighthouse. It's a tough job. You have to strip the linens, take them all to North Haven to launder and then return them, haul gallons and gallons of water."

Up to six people can stay at Goose Rocks for a minimum of \$600.

Casey Jordan also started the Green Light Academy in 2009, a two-week immersion program every summer for students to learn about lighthouses and visit a number of them. The academy is able to utilize the campus of the College of the Atlantic for its base.

In her other life, she's a college professor. "I teach criminology at Western Connecticut University, and I'm a consultant for Investigation Discovery—the crime channel. I work on a show called *Wives With Knives*."

FROM TOP: DAVID JOHNSTON; INSET COURTESY GOOSE ROCKS LIGHT(2); RICK SCHNEIDER



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Goose Rocks Guests Speak Out

So what's it like out here? Recent guests David and Rebecca Johnston take us inside:

“Rebecca and I want to unwind, so we head out to stay overnight. Starting from North Haven at 2 p.m., we chug out in a zodiac with our supplies and reach the light in 15 minutes. Around the last bend, there it is, all 51 feet of it, sticking out of the water.

“As bed and breakfast inns go, this is a singular experience. The views are spectacular, high enough for great 360-degree panoramas. The deck had a gas grill and a marble round table with four cast iron chairs.

“Built in 1890, the lighthouse is a large tube with a steel exterior reinforced with cement and brick. It was manned until 1960. Coast Guard crews lived in the lighthouse on two-year deployments.

“Inside our suite, the first-floor living quarters are furnished with a huge round sofa table. All the décor fits perfectly. Next level up is the guest bedroom, with one full sized bed. On the third floor is the master bedroom, with a queen bed and all the charm in the world. The upper bedroom on the fourth floor has bunk beds. Each of the rooms has lots of character, and it's very clear how much work has been put into the lighthouse to make things so comfortable on all floors.”

—David Johnston, photographer, from his blog treehuggerphotography.wordpress.com



*\$350/\$500 per night per suite,
minimum 2-night stay*

CUCKOLD'S LIGHT

43°46'8"N, 69°39'00"W
Opened: 1892, Automated: 1974

innatcuckoldslighthouse.com,
855-212-5252

Rates: **\$350/\$500** per night per suite,
minimum 2-night stay



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ISE AU HAUT LIGHT

43°9N, 68.3°W

Opened: 1907, Automated: 1934

keepershouse.com, 335-2990

Rates: **\$350/\$375** per night,
minimum 2-night stay

“There are 300 to 400 people on the island in the summer, but only 38 in winter,” says Marshall Chapman, owner and innkeeper of **Isle au Haut’s Keeper’s House**.

Isle Au Haut’s lighthouse and outbuildings were built by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1907 land purchased from Charles Robinson. In 1934, the light was automated and the government sold everything except the actual light, which is just offshore, back to the Robinsons. In 1986, Jeffrey and Judi Burke bought the property and turned it into an inn they called the Keeper’s House.

The island stands seven miles off the tip of Stonington, a mythical beyond in Penobscot Bay, allegedly the last place in America to retire the crank telephone.

Marshall Chapman purchased the property in 2012. In winters, he’s a geology professor at the University of Kentucky. Summers,

he presides over the operation and guests at the Keeper’s House—a four-room inn—and the tiny Oil House Bungalow, and two-bedroom Woodshed Cottage. (\$350/\$375; 2-night minimum; includes three meals a day).

“We have a modicum of solar electricity, and there is one outlet in every room. Each guest is given a candle lantern and a head lamp for reading in bed—we’re not completely 1907. We serve three gourmet meals a day. My cooks are excellent. We have a garden, and lobster and halibut right off the boat.”

What’s in the library? “Oh this and that. I’ve added biographies of Theodore Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and some mysteries. There’s some progressive stuff left from the Burkes’ days, Abbie Hoffman’s *Steal This Book*, that kind of thing.

“Unless there’s foul weather, though, our guests aren’t the type to hang around reading. They’re out hiking or riding our bikes. In the evenings, after a five-course meal, they go to bed pretty quickly.

“There are five mail boats a day to Stonington; the first one leaves here at 8 a.m. and returns at 4:30. Sometimes guests go spend

the day exploring the Blue Hill peninsula.

“Most guests spend two nights and say they wish they’d booked a third. It takes two to find your rhythm. You live by the tide here, and the mailboat schedule, and whether internet service is up.” ■



*\$375/night, 2 nights, includes
3 locally sourced gourmet meals a day*

RICK SCHNEIDER

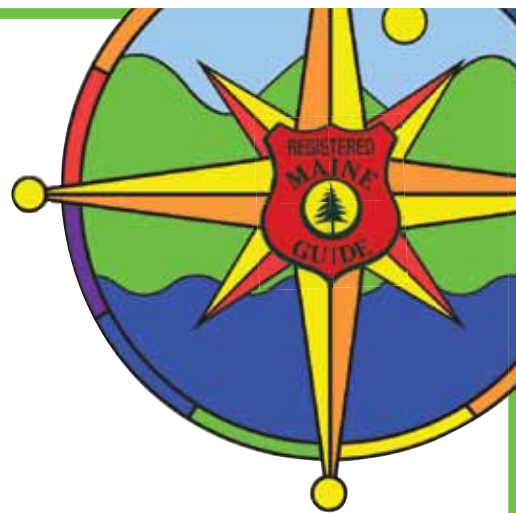
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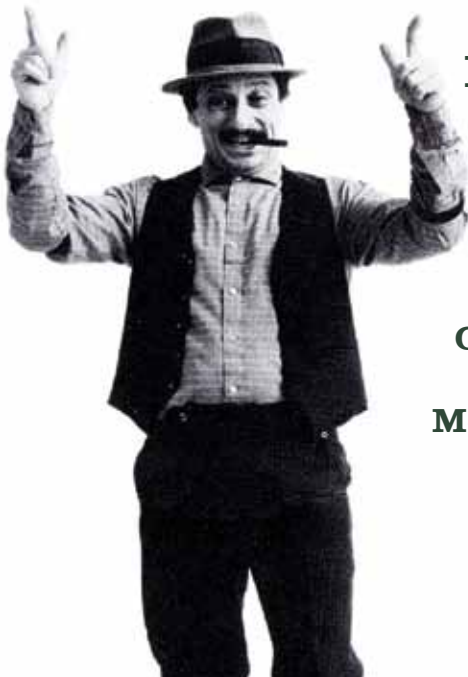
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