



A private island is the gateway to a true summer escape. Find your own parcel of paradise on Maine's scattered coastline.

rivate islands dot Maine's rocky coastline, from Casco Bay to Mount Desert. Why buy a home in crowded Bar Harbor when you can own a private island for a fraction of the cost? As one seller put it, on an island, "you are the master of your own kingdom."

Of the 3,166 islands in Maine, more than

BY JACKIE MURRAY & SHERWOOD OLIN

half are privately owned. Below we've listed the best Maine has to offer. After you've finished reading, maybe you'll decide it's time to be the master of your own kingdom.

OUTER GREEN

Sebago Lake, Casco, 9 AcresAt the very top of Sebago Lake there lies

an unsung archipelago known as Dingley Islands. Bring your boat ashore on the sandy crescent beach of Outer Green Island, turn around, and you'll have uninterrupted views across the expanse of Sebago to the White Mountains beyond. Extensive trails wend their way through the mature birch and pine forests to the two-bedroom cot-

tage at the heart of the island's nine acres.

Seller Shawn Flanagan has owned Outer Green for 18 years, finding it "the perfect place to watch the kids grow up over the years." Such are Outer Green's charms, the previous owners also found the island worth a cross-country pilgrimage. "They'd drive their RV all the way from California to live here for the summer," Flanagan says.

espite the undeniable beauty of the landscape, Flanagan admits his favorite place on the island is actually "the living room, with that massive stone fireplace and seating all around. It's a very comfortable place, and we've enjoyed a lot of good moments there as a family." If you can drag yourself away from this cozy den, you'll be spoiled by the numerous swimming spots and sun-dappled paths through the forest. Keep an eye out for the many deer and their fawns that roam here. "You've got the sandy southern beach facing out over Sebago Lake. When it gets stormy and the wind picks up, you can just go to the bay on the north side and you're totally sheltered," Flanagan says. With the diverse landscape and luxurious winterized cabin, you've tru-

SAND ISLAND

Casco Bay, Cumberland, 1.5 acres "Location is everything," Jeff England says. And he should know, as the owner of a private island smack in the middle of Casco Bay for quarter of a century. "Islands this pristine are rare, especially with its sandy beach, rocky coast, and proximity to Portland." Positioned perfectly between Chebeague and Cliff Islands, Sand Island catches stirring views of the mega-yachts and sailboats bound for Portland Harbor from Harpswell. "Generations can pass by before any island like this becomes available."

With expansive sandy beaches more akin to a Caribbean island than a Maine one, Sand Island has drawn attention from House and Garden magazine, who who dreamed out loud, "What is more deliciously indulgent than...sitting in their shirtsleeves and shorts, sifting the sand with their toes, watching the children discover the joy of piling up rocks?"

deepwater The island's anchorage is ideal for a boat owner. There are no lodgings on the island, apart from the "bomba shack," a basic woodcan use Sand Island as your \$2.5M sunbathing spot and make 30-minute boat trips to the hotels of downtown Portland.

According to England, "If Casco Bay is the oyster, then Sand Island is the one and only natural pearl."

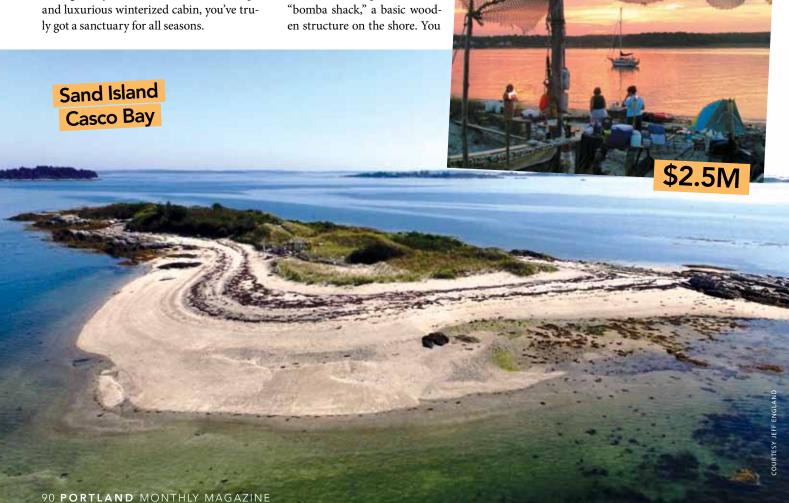
So attractive is it, "Once I took my son to the island and saw that some 'visitors' had had a bachelor party there" the night before. Carefully, "My son and I went around the north tip of the island. I can't tell you what we saw."

ROCKY CREST

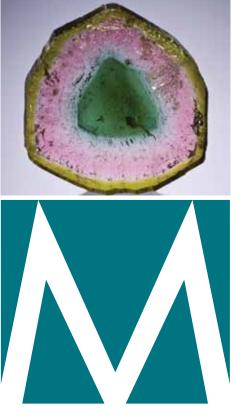
Great Moose Lake, Hartland, 6 acres, \$229,900

"To make a long story short, it'd been broken into by a bunch of kids-it was a wreck." This was how current Rocky Crest Island owner David Dean found the island when he first visited. He convinced the previous owner, who'd been absent from the island for sev-

eral years, to sell it to

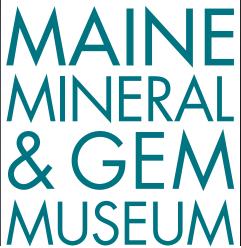














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him. Today, the island's rustic 1920s cabin remains in its traditional rustic state, though updated by Dean with thermal windows and a new roof.

he sunsets are just rip-your-heartout gorgeous," Dean says. "At night after twilight, all you can hear is the loons calling from across the lake. It's very primitive. It's haunting." And the loons might not be the only ones haunting the island. One night, Dean and his friends ventured on a fishing trip. One of his pals owned a local brewery, so he brought a keg along. They enjoyed part of it, fell asleep, and woke to find the keg tipped over and empty. "Overnight, the winds must've picked up," he says, a sense of something spooky lingering in the air.

If a thirsty ghost doesn't scare you, Rocky Crest might be just perfect. "People who buy islands are different," Dean says. "There's something about an island that can really get you in touch nature." With one of the best environments for bald eagles in Maine, warm and cold-water fish swimming in the waters, and plenty of space for island hikes, getting in touch with nature shouldn't be too hard. Aptly named "Rocky Crest," the house is perched just above large, gray rocks that serve as the perfect diving board for a hot August swim. Mid-dive, time stops and you're there forever. "It's really something everyone should experience," Dean said.

LITTLE FREESE

Deer Isle, 7 Acres

When Paul and June Farrow took a boat across the water from Deer Isle to Little Freese with their realtor in 1998, it was a bleak and freezing February morning. "The island was entirely ringed with ice," notes Paul. Regardless, their connection with the place was "spontaneous and emotional."

Visit Little Freese in summer and you'll find conditions a lot more hospitable. In

2000, the Farrows built an airy, gabled three-bedroom house in a clearing in the heart of the island. Pine-paneled, with large thermal windows, the house needs next to no work to make it ready for a family to move in. Expect the kids to fight over the rights to the mezzanine bedroom, accessible only by ladder. The spacious living and dining areas beg to be filled with guests drinking and feasting on a summer evening. Paul recommends interrupting the festivities at dusk to run to the shoreline. "Looking west, you can see the sun setting on the horizon through a gap in the cove."

The island is also a perfect fit for an artist. The original owner, a sculptor, built what is now the boathouse on the southeastern corner of the island, its second floor devoted entirely to studio space. On the mainland, Little Freese boasts a private boat launch off Sunshine Road. Next to the launch is a large barn with sliding glass doors, which Paul says "would make an ideal gallery space."

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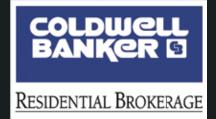
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But you don't need to be an artist to appreciate the natural beauty of the island. Over 2,600 feet of coastal paths ring the island's diverse shoreline of pink granite rock, sandy beaches, and muddy mussel beds. A favorite spot is "The Rock," a granite outcrop jutting from the southwest point of the island. "We carry chairs and sit there watching the sun set, facing the Deer Isle thoroughfare. You'll see windjammers and sometimes two- or threemasted ships sailing into the bay." You might even have some impromptu company. "There are loons, eagles, mink. Often, a mother seal will leave her pup on the rocks for hours while she hunts."

Stretch your legs by taking a stroll across the causeway to "Freeselet," a tiny additional island on the eastern shore. Completely undeveloped, it's the perfect place to take a picnic break from your painting studio.

CLAPBOARD

Casco Bay, Falmouth, 22 acres

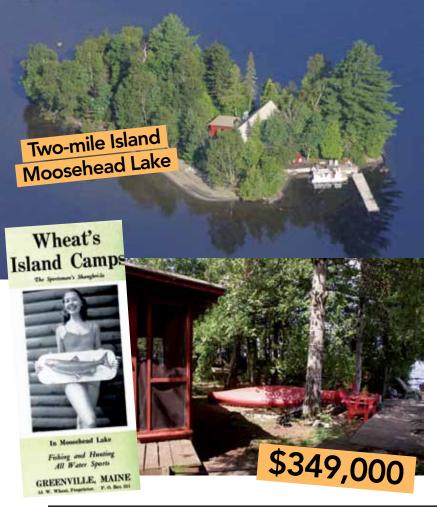
uilt in 1898, the historic estate on
Clapboard Island West boasts 10
bedrooms, 13 working fireplaces,
seven full baths, two half baths, and a large
stone pier. A mere six miles north of downtown Portland, it's just a short boat ride
from Falmouth Town Landing or the Old
Port. If you're traveling from further afield,
never fear: The property has its own helipad.

Six miles may not seem far from the rest of civilization, but the island is surrounded by 40 sheltered square miles of Casco Bay, perfect for deepwater sailing. According to a 1929 ad for the island, this body of water was recorded as "several degrees warmer than at nearby ocean resorts." This is Maine, so it's prob-

ably still pretty cold.

Philadelphia philanthropist Samuel F. Houston commissioned 100 artisans to build the home in 1898. His father ran the Pennsylvania Railroad, allowing him access to swift transportation of materials from all over the United States, including beautiful Oregon pine that still glows in the vast structure today. Since then, modern amenities have been added to the property, including solar-powered electricity and a genera-





tor. But you can still enjoy the original, classic feel of the place with the authentic period furniture that fills the house. Outside, take your pick of five swimming beaches and stretch your legs along the maintained trails that follow the 3,200 feet of shorefront.

If one island isn't enough for you, Little Clapboard Island, accessible from the mainland at low tide, is included in the price. For less than a Manhattan condo, you can own two beautiful islands in Casco Bay.

TWO MILE ISLAND

Piscataquis County

wo Mile Island, true to its name, sits just a couple of miles from several boat landings on the shores of Moosehead Lake. Which, incidentally, also lives up to its name: "One day we looked up to see a moose on our lawn. It must've swum over," owner Austin de Groat tells us. "We had to make the dog chase it away. It swam right back across the lake." Nature comes alive here. "The beavers took down all our white birches one summer. And it was a bat nursery for a long time. It was home to hundreds of bats." But don't let that put you off–De Groat assures us the bats are now long gone.

The island became a local recreation destination in the 1940s when Al Wheat, a retired Seabee who'd served in the Pacific in World War II, turned it into a camp for hunters and fishermen. Fishing remains a favorite pastime for visitors. "The lake is crystal clear, deep, and a great habitat for lake trout, salm-



on, and bass, among other species," de Groat says. The rich waters of this part of the lake, known has Lily Bay, carry the nickname "salmon shoal."

If fishing isn't your forte, the island's uniquely sandy shores provide a sunny outdoor alternative, perfect for a midday picnic. The lodge itself boasts solar power, high-speed internet, spacious rooms, and a stone fireplace made up of rocks and shells that the original owner brought back from his tour of duty in the Pacific.

PHOEBE ISLAND

Sebec Lake, Dover-Foxcroft, 2.11 acres, \$339,000

Looking from the southern shore of Sebec Lake, you'll spot a large cottage that appears to be floating on the water but is in fact perched on .11 acres of ocean granite. Finally, a secluded nook where you can eat your lunch in a spacious, pine-paneled kitchen before diving from the granite rocks on your front step, straight into the glassy waters of Sebec Lake. With its own two-acre

(Continued on page 221)

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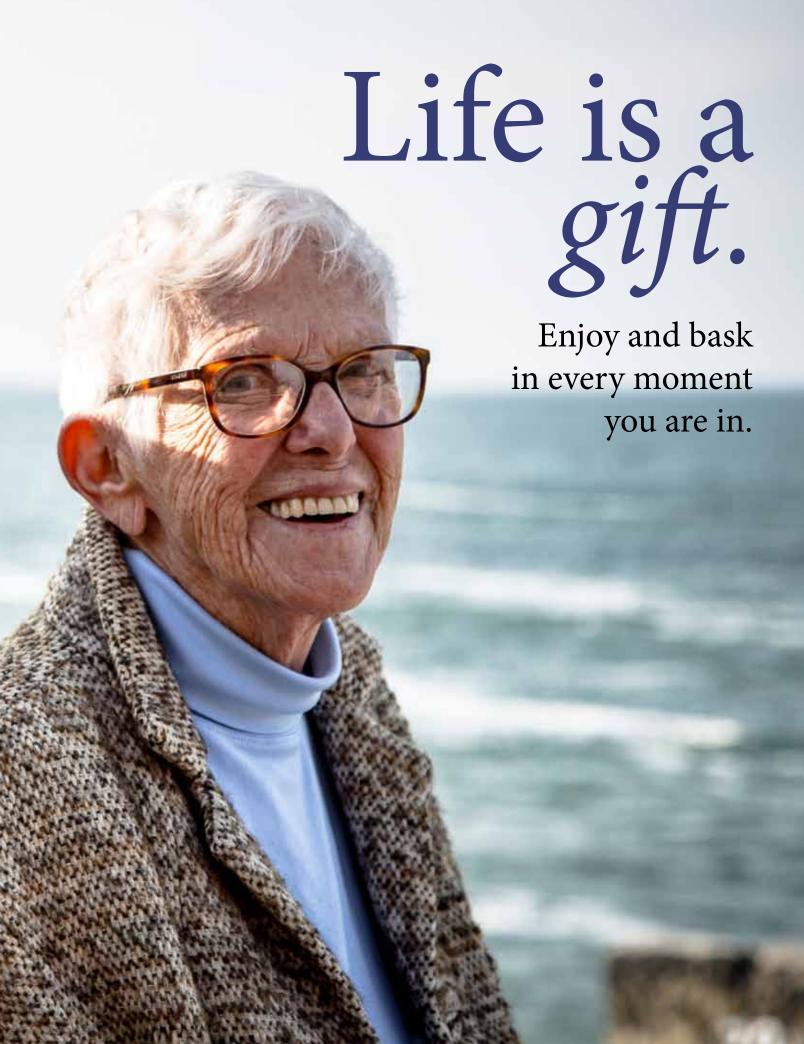
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74 Leisure Lane

Spectacular property located on the west side of Island w/99 ft of sandy frontage & deep water access on Sebago Lake! Fixed deck & dock at the water's edge w/panoramic lake views. Set back from the road. Living room w/ gas heating stove, dining area, kitchen, main fl bdrm, hot tub room & 2 bdrm's up. Shed. Gorgeous frontage! *499,900K*

Come see why families from across the country have chosen Frye Island as their summer residence; unique homes and unrivaled character make the island the perfect place for all ages, especially those looking for a quiet hideaway to bring their family.

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Dream Islands (continued from page 97) mainland lot, the island is a just few minutes' row to shore.

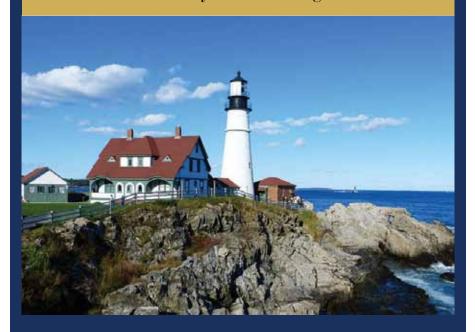
hoebe Island is...very spiritual," says owner Jay Bailey, who believes Phoebe summons "a sense of oneness with your environment. Baby eagles fly across the lake and land on the house. You can hear them clunking around on top... and you can watch the eagle's nest on the island across the way. We've decided to sell the island now because our kids aren't visiting as often, and it's funny-as our babies are growing up and leaving our nest, I've noticed this generation of eagles is leaving the nest, too." Nature on the island seems to act in harmony with the families who re-



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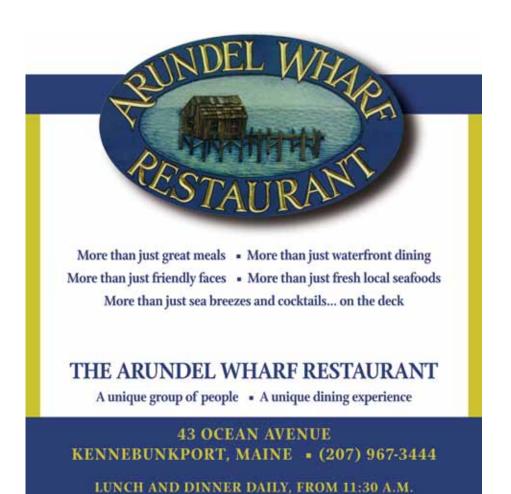
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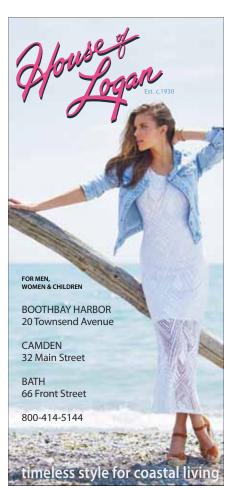
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side here.

Jump into the water and you'll see even more wildlife. "The island is great for snor-keling—it's all fragmented glacial rock. We see fish-mainly bass-and I've seen eels, loons underwater, and beavers."

NARROWS ISLAND

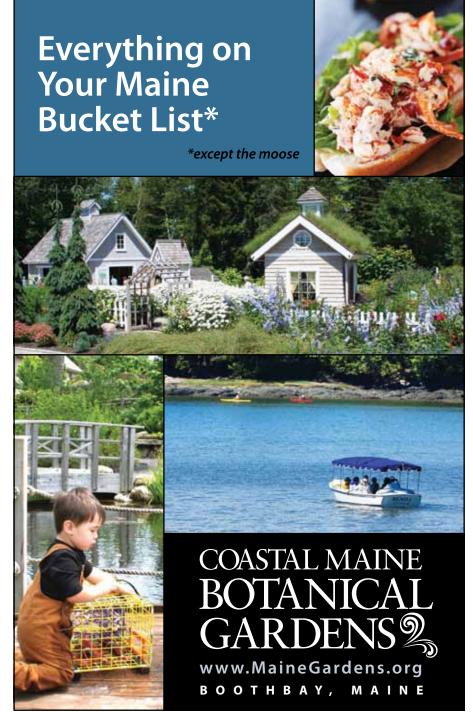
Pleasant Bay, Harrington, 14 acres

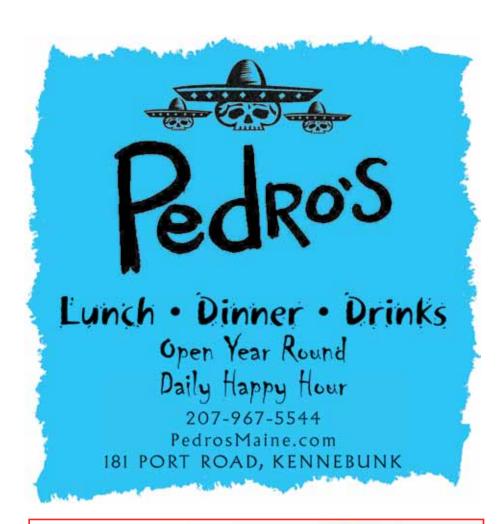
rive an hour northeast of Bar Harbor-far enough for tourists not to bother you-and take a right at the Circle K in Harrington. Then drive down Marshville Road until it becomes Ripley Neck Road. If you see signs directing you to "West Bay Seed Mussel Conservation," keep going until you hit water. Then go further. Switch to a boat and weave your way past Hen and Hog Islands. The next shore you hit will be Narrows, your new island home. "Untouched...a step back in time," is how owner Charles Milmine describes it.

"My great-uncle was a bit of a romantic. His great-uncle, Joseph Parsons, bought the island in 1911. Parsons's father, George, made his money by investing in the street











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OBSESSIONS



railways in Savannah, Georgia in the late 1800s. The wealth George accrued allowed his son Joseph to spend his adulthood traveling, managing properties the family owned in Savannah and, here in Maine, Kennebec County. Joseph came across Narrows Island while spending time camping on Ripley Point. He went for a boat ride around the islands surrounding the point, found Narrows, fell in love with it, and purchased it immediately. Later, Parsons brought his wife to the island." He'd written down where he wanted to build a camp in his logbook, but he wanted to get his wife's unbiased opinion before commissioning a cabin. "When she unknowingly decided on the same spot" as he had, he knew luck was with them.

Fast-forward to today, and the island remains largely the same as Joseph Parsons found it over a hundred years ago.

t's a little rustic for some people," says owner Milmine. "The house doesn't have electricity, so it's lit by kerosene lamps. The water for the house is collected in a tank and runs in a homemade piping system, meaning there's no hot water, and a simple outhouse." The only 'modern' extravagances added since the house was built are a refrigerator and stove, both run by gas.

There are two sandy beaches, one on the east end of the island and the other on the north. A fire scorched part of the island when Joseph Parsons owned it all those years ago, turning that section of the island into a clearing Milmine has worked to maintain to this day among the mature trees that make up the rest of the island.

You may have to share your island with another inhabitant, however. "Gimpy the elf was an invention of my great-uncle. I heard stories about him growing up." Milmine pauses to collect his emotions. "When I was eight and I went up to the island, my great-uncle arranged the very important task of



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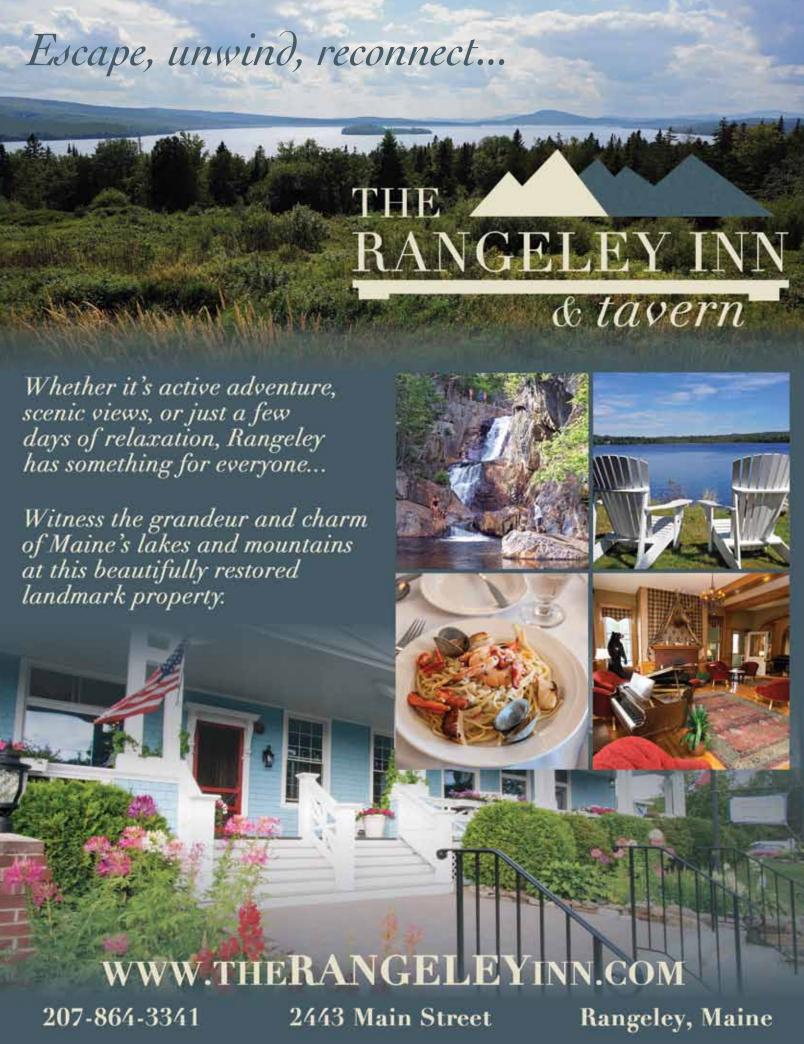
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'catching' Gimpy. He used a doll and helped me set a trap for the elf. And I did it! It's a tradition that we continued with all my kids." Those in search of a little seclusion with some elfin enchantment will find Narrow Island to be their nirvana.



FOSTER ISLAND

Harrington, 300 acres,
20-minute boat ride across Narraguagus Bay from Milbridge Town
Landing leads to a pier in a hidden cove on the southeast side of 300-acre Foster Island. Or, like the island's former owners, you could arrive in style by sailing your yacht down from Mt. Desert Island. These former owners? The Rockefellers.

"Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefellers purchased Foster Island in the 1960s," says realtor Mia Thompson. "In 1973, they placed a conservation easement on the property that's currently held by the State of Maine. The easement allows you to construct up to five homes here." Currently, there's one simple homestead nestled in the heart of the island, with the structures of four or five buildings from the 1900s dotted here and there, begging for exploration.

Fields, trails, and forests of pine and birch cover the interior. Along the shore you'll have your pick of sandy coves and bold granite coastline. Wander along the meandering island trails to the east side, where seals sun on granite ledges at low tide. Or take a deep breath, stand on the southernmost shore, and gaze at the stunning views across Narraguagus Bay as osprey soar overhead.





