

Sunshine

COAST LIFE

PREMIERE ISSUE - SPRING 2007

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A stay in a luxurious Tenthouse Suite is the antithesis of a family camping trip

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Bradley Hunt passes on traditions to his sons

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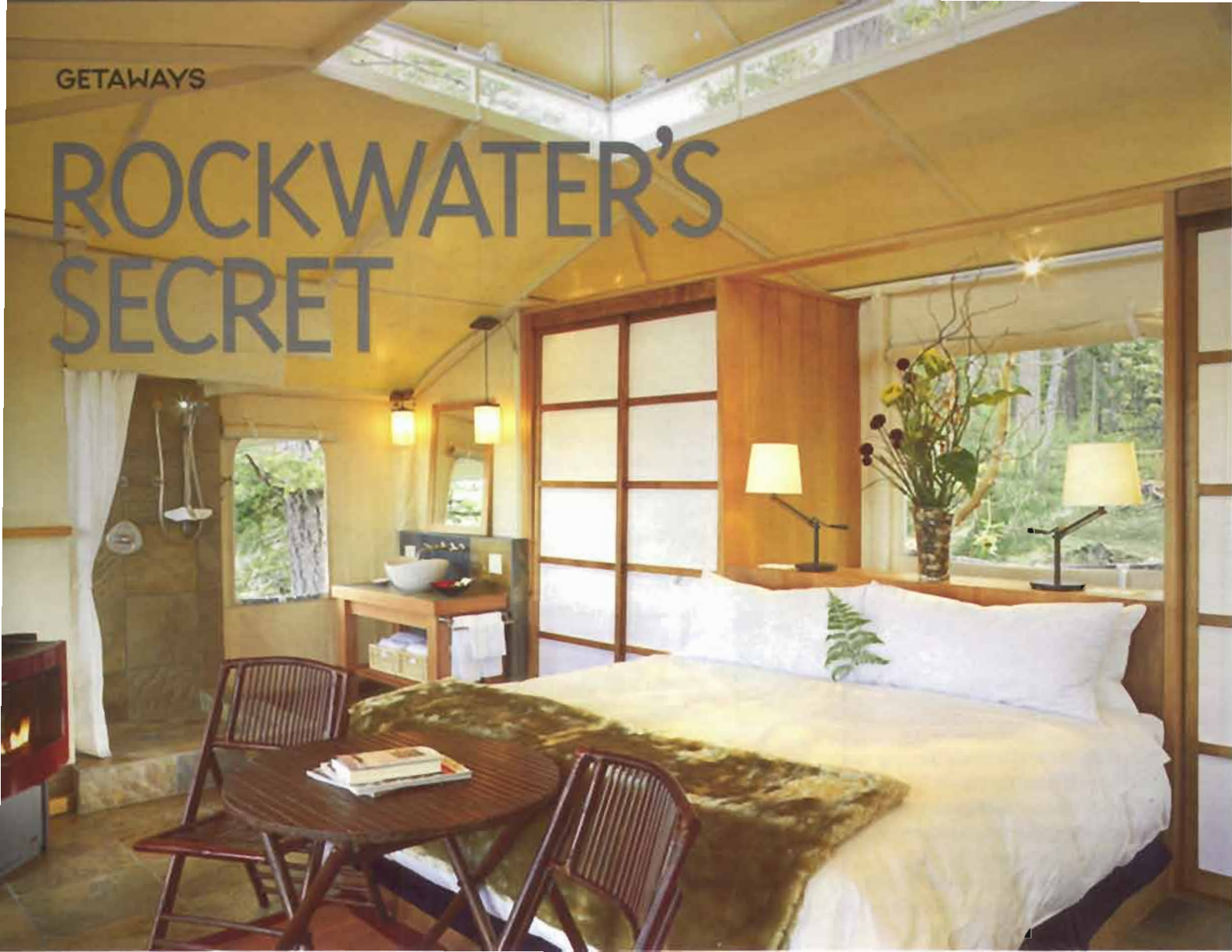
A perfect perch inspired the ultimate West Coast log home

Fluid Abstraction

Motoko takes inspiration from myriad sources



ROCKWATER'S SECRET



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY ROCKWATER SECRET COVE RESORT

A stay in a luxurious Tenthouse Suite is the antithesis of a family camping trip

On a calm day, the first thing you notice is nothing at all — the complete and utter silence. At Rockwater, even the boats slip past the tranquil shore like props in a silent movie. No wonder they call this spectacular destination and secluded cove — which includes a set of rustic family cabins, a poolside lodge, spa and restaurant, plus a collection of luxurious tent houses — one of the best kept secrets on the Coast.

But word is getting out. Rockwater Secret Cove Resort (formerly Lord Jim's Resort) has undergone extensive renovations to rave reviews since new owners took over in 2004. Creative touches to enhance the lodge's extensive natural assets, such as the charming

treetop tent houses are attracting a bevy of adventurous new guests.

Inside, there's a new chef shaking up the gourmet lineup and the indoor spa is also getting an overhaul. By all accounts, the seasonal outdoor spa-without-walls, which perches on a rocky bank overlooking the water, has already achieved sensory perfection and will soon be joined by a tent-house day spa on the edge of forested shore.

Our afternoon at Rockwater naturally begins and ends at the striking Zen stone archway leading to and from an impressive 1,500-foot



BY CHRISTINA SYMONS

treetop boardwalk. From there we tour the resort, sample the restaurant and dip into the spa.

As you step out onto the massive length of boardwalk heading to the Tenthouse Suites you'll be suspended over a fragile ecosystem of chartreuse lichen and moss pockets which blanket the rocky outcrop and hilly slope, just past the main hotel building on the edge of the resort.

"We wanted to utilize this beautiful land without destroying it," says Deanna Toth, of the tented area now under further development. Deanna manages the property with her husband Kevin who is also co-owner of the resort.

The custom wooden boardwalk design enabled builders to weave a floating path through the cedar and arbutus forest without needlessly blasting rock or cutting swaths. Although it runs the length of the shore, only seven trees out of hundreds were removed to construct it. The canvas-walled Tenthouse Suites that dot the rocky slope were designed to be seasonal, shut down for the coldest months of the year, but guests won't hear of it. Demand for the secluded forest hideaways has continued right through the winter and early spring.

"Luckily there is radiant heat in the floors and a fireplace that you can control by remote from the bed," says Deanna.

Lest you picture family camping trips of the past, rest assured, these are not your average pup tents. The wood- and metal-framed canvas-wrapped structures have a tranquil Japanese feel, with interior sliding shoji screens, cedar decking, modern rattan loungers and contemporary finishing. Heated slate floors, plush bedding, clever storage and spa-worthy bathtubs, kit the tents out in luxury. Room service or spa treatments are just a phone call away and if you book the "Romance Package" in a Tenthouse Suite, dinner is served to you and yours by a private butler. Clearly, even those who may be too posh to pitch a tent will definitely survive in style here.

Were it not for the fact that you are suspended over a beautiful West Coast forest with an endless water view beckoning from the deck, you may be tempted never to leave the tented bath. According to Deanna, the special hydrotherapy tubs inject oxygen into your pores and the light show includes alternating relaxing shades to colour your water from below as you bathe.

"When you get out you have more energy than when you got in," she contends.

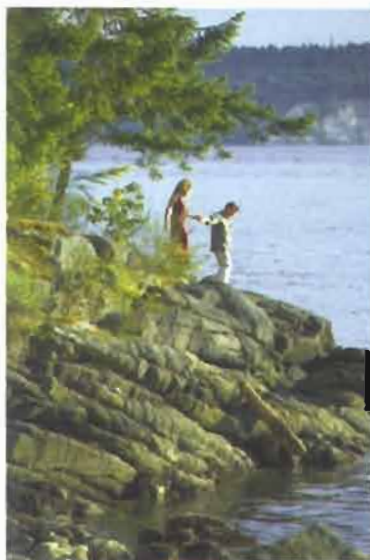
Not surprisingly, the tent-house concept, which was designed by Kevin and his business partner, has caught the eye of temporary shelter aficionados beyond the resort. Three tent houses have been sold to be constructed on private properties off site.

Local residents who may wish to poke around a tent house without staying overnight can book a spa





ALL PHOTOS COURTESY ROCKWATER SECRET COVE RESORT



treatment instead. This spring, the tent house closest to the lodge will be converted to a day spa for all to enjoy.

"This will give guests who are staying in the main lodge or day visitors the opportunity to experience the Tenthouse Suites while having a treatment," says Deanna.

Back on the ground, we head into the main lodge for a tour of the rooms. Remarkably, at Rockwater, each and every room comes with an ocean view overlooking the pool and grounds to the waterfront. Lower poolside accommodations have been fully renovated, bathed in calm beachside tones with built-in fireplaces and cozy touches. Upper units have also been freshened with contemporary paint, fixtures and bedding.

A thoughtful collection of local art is featured throughout the resort and gift display in the lobby. Standouts include abstract limited-edition giclée prints by Garden Bay artist Motoko, lighthearted glass art by Wayne Harjula and Miyuki Shinkai from Mellon Glass Studio in Langdale, and colourful Blue Dot Pottery from Sechelt.

The restaurant is cozy and inviting with a handsome fireplace, coffee and lounge area and large private special-event space with adjacent outdoor patio. Cuisine is decidedly West Coast, with contemporary twists on classic gourmet dishes by Chef Steven Ewing. Breakfast, week-

end brunch, lunch and dinner are served by friendly wait staff, with tantalizing specials to tempt locals during the quiet season.

Families are attracted to the eleven original waterfront cabins still on offer at Rockwater. These rustic, well-equipped retreats provide all the charm of a vintage seaside log cabin with modern appointments, comforts and conveniences. Recreation opportunities abound with onsite kayak rentals and close access to fishing, golfing and hiking. For those looking for a little wave action on their stroll, Skookumchuk Narrows is just a short drive away.

"Horseback riding is another favourite family activity," says Deanna, a former rider and barrel racer, who recommends guided horseback riding at nearby Malaspina Ranch.

But no visit to Rockwater would be complete without a personal appointment at the spa. When weather permits, on the bluff in the spa-without-walls, you can lay back in all your glory with nothing between you and the ocean but your towel and spa professional. Guests enjoy massages, nail and skincare pampering and signature spa treatments. These treatments may also be enjoyed at the indoor spa in the lodge or in your room or tent house.

Visit www.rockwatersecretcoveresort.com for more information, rates and reservations, or call 604-885-7038 or toll-free 1-877-296-4593 for information and reservations. **CL**

Opening page:
Rockwater's Tent Suites are well-appointed inside and out.

This page: Rockwater is a fabulous destination for warm summer evenings and oceanside walks, or saying yes on your special day.