

# Maine Home

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Summer in the  
Kennebunks

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# IN-TOWN BOUND



**TWO CITY LOVERS BUILD THEIR DREAM HOME IN LOWER VILLAGE**

by Rebecca Falzano | Photography Trent Bell | Styling Janice Dunwoody



**City dwellers** are an adaptable bunch. Fueled by the hustle and bustle, they aren't deterred by a little background noise, and somewhere along the way have made peace with the fact that their personal space is, well, *shared*. And while most of Maine offers quite a different experience, there are places here where city lovers feel more at home. Take Robin and Kelly Kavanagh, for example. "We're city people," they say emphatically during a conversation at their Kennebunk home. After living in Boston for more than 20 years, the couple traded in their single-family South End home, put their furniture in storage, and moved into a 1,000-square-foot contemporary condo downtown—all so they could save up to build their future home in Maine. In Boston they love being able to walk everywhere, having access to countless great restaurants and art galleries, being in the thick of it all. Although Kennebunk is a far cry from a big city, when the Kavanaghs decided to build in Maine, Lower Village was a natural fit—an in-town location, within walking distance to everything they needed. They would be at home here.

Kelly and Robin have been together for 28 years, but long before they met, the two spent their childhood summers in Maine—she at Wells Beach and he in the Sebago Lake region. Since they've been together, they have made annual trips to Goose Rocks Beach, where Kelly's





sister and her family have summered for decades. Somewhere along the way they began dreaming about having their own home in the Kennebunks.

But it was the land that came first. "It was a big decision," says Robin. "There were these beautiful properties near Goose Rocks, but we didn't want to be out that far, and we were not looking for a large three-acre lot in the woods. Our preference was for a smaller size lot that would allow us to walk to the beach and into the port."

Luckily, the search for the right builder was easier. The couple gravitated toward the homes built by Kevin Lord of Thomas and Lord in Kennebunkport, so they tracked him down. "It wasn't long before he called to tell us he had the perfect spot," recalls Robin. "We'd be able to walk to Dock Square and the beach, still have a nice-sized yard, be close to family on Goose Rocks, and have a custom home." Intrigued, the two were introduced by Lord to Tim Harrington, the developer behind the Cottages at Morning Walk, which Lord was building in collaboration with designer Erik Peterson, of Peterson Design Group, and landscape designer Ted Carter of Ted Carter Inspired Landscapes.

When they first saw the property, it was pouring rain. Huddled underneath a golf umbrella, Kelly and Robin were a little skeptical at first. "You promise me this is the sunniest lot?" Kelly asked. Harrington said, "Trust me." So they did. With everything.

"It seemed like a perfect fit," says Robin. The Kavanaghs loved Tim's vision of a small grouping of cottage-style homes with sea-shelled paths into town, coupled with having Lord, Carter, and Peterson to work with as their team. "We felt comfortable that we were in good

The paint color throughout the first floor is Benjamin Moore's Revere Pewter (opening spread). The Kavanaghs first saw the color inside the Inn at English Meadows just up the street and loved it for its calming effect. Boston-based interior designer Daniel Reynolds designed the fireplace with a mantle made of Angola gold granite in a flamed finish by Morningstar Stone and Tile.

Kelly and Robin Kavanagh (above) had originally planned for an all-white kitchen, but then decided to have builder Kevin Lord do something bold with the island. Instead of marble, they chose a single piece of black Marinace granite in a brushed finish from Morningstar Stone and Tile. "People can't walk by it without touching it," says Robin. The countertops are Angola silver/black granite in a brushed finish. In lieu of upper cabinets, windows bring the outside in.

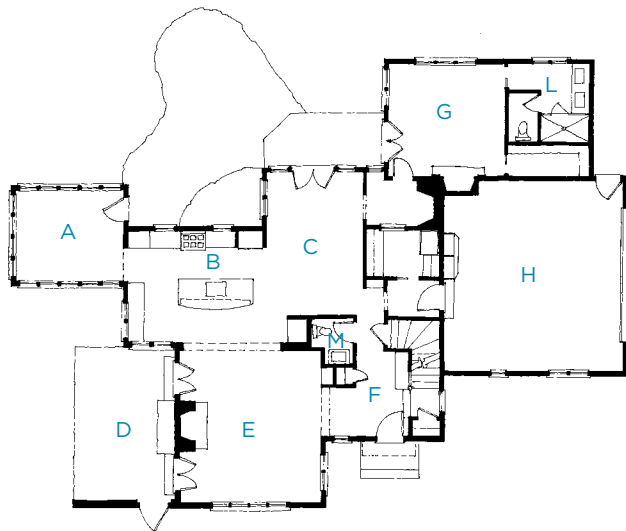
Most of the furnishings throughout the house are Grange pieces that have been accumulated over the last 20 years and reupholstered to fit with Reynolds's color scheme. This includes the dining set (opposite), which was originally upholstered in bright yellow Scalamandre fabric. "We reused as much of our furniture as we could," says Kelly.





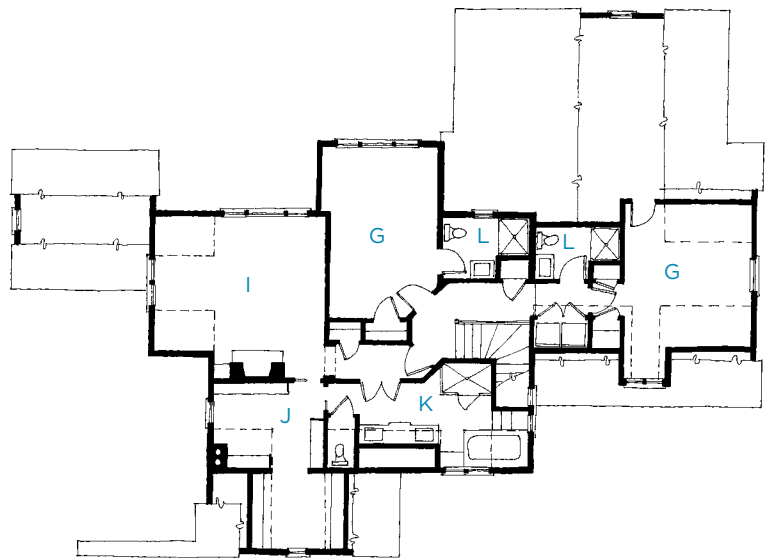


**FIRST LEVEL**



- A Sunroom
- B Kitchen
- C Dining Room
- D Patio
- E Living Room
- F Entry
- G Guest Bedrooms
- H Garage
- I Master Bedroom
- J Master Closet
- K Master Bath
- L Guest Baths
- M Powder Room

**SECOND LEVEL**





Builder Kevin Lord and architectural designer Erik Peterson created a charming, humble, friendly scale house (opposite) with a clear single point of front entry and garage doors out of sight on the side. “We fell in love with the roof swoop,” says Kelly.

The first-floor bedroom suite has walls painted in Benjamin Moore’s Smoke. The pillows on the bed are from the Jane Churchill Collection at Cowtan and Tout.

hands based on the experience, quality, and workmanship they brought to the table, along with their willingness to work with us as very hands-on clients.” The couple also loved Harrington’s plan for the Galleries at Morning Walk—a community of eight individual cottage-style gallery spaces for artists and artisans. “The minute we saw that was part of this plan for the neighborhood, we were on board,” says Kelly. “We have so much art near our home in Boston. And we’ve loved getting to meet some of the artists here. It’s so exciting having them just down the road.”

After selecting their lot—the one that promised maximum solar exposure—the Kavanaghs chose a floor plan that was originally intended for another lot. The features that sold them on the design? The swoop of the front roofline and the many (seven) gables. Although the Kavanaghs had renovated several homes before, this was their first time building new. The ability to put their own personal mark on the house as it was being built was important, as was having the ability to consult with their Boston-based interior designer, Daniel Reynolds of Daniel H. Reynolds Design Collaborative, a trusted friend with whom they had worked on previous projects. Luckily for the Kavanaghs, Lord and Peterson were open to the collaboration, and working together they made some modifications

to the original plan that included adding a second master suite on the first floor (for Kelly’s parents). “From the front, the house looks very much like it did in our original design,” says Peterson. “The idea was to create an English cottage-style house that presents smaller than it really is.” Reynolds also helped make some additional adjustments to the interior design by opening up cathedral ceilings in some of the bedrooms. He also suggested Anderson A-series windows in black to give, as he says, “a little modern twist to the traditional cottage feel.”

With the goal of living full-time in the house after retirement, the Kavanaghs’ list of must-haves included an open-concept approach to the kitchen, living room, dining room, and sunroom; enough bedrooms and attached baths to accommodate guests; and a seamless indoor-to-outdoor flow. As a result, virtually every room provides access to the outside, and all of the exterior doors lead to a common backyard. “We love being able to open the doors—day or evening—and have it all illuminated. We wanted a home where our outside spaces would be extensions of our living space,” says Kelly.

Although the Kavanaghs love their contemporary loft in Boston, they wanted a space and aesthetics that were slightly less modern for their Maine home. “The goal was to make it contemporary, but not *too* contemporary,” says Reynolds. The resulting style lies some-









The house has an intentional tie between its indoor and outdoor living areas; most rooms on the first floor have doors that lead outside (above). Ted Carter designed the landscape with patios that act as outside rooms in the summer (complete with interior and exterior sound systems by Smart Home Solutions). All outside stone material for the patio came from Sanford-based Genest, and Ray Dussault Stonework did the stone wall, bluestone patios, and the stonework on the foundation and chimney.

This first-floor bathroom (opposite) features tile from the Tile Showcase at the Boston Design Center.

The doorknobs (left) were specially ordered from Needham Lock and Decorative Hardware in Massachusetts.

where in between: an open layout outfitted with furniture that the couple has collected over the past 20 years—masterfully reupholstered to suit the space. Working with Reynolds, the Kavanaghs made careful color selections that, to this day, are still ongoing—a collaborative evolution. “Educated clients realize the value of good design,” says Reynolds. “Kelly and Robin are visual. They like collaborating and bringing things together.”

Until the Kavanaghs reach retirement age, their time in Kennebunk will always end with a trip back to Boston, back to work, back to everyday life. But someday, this house they so carefully built and designed will be their permanent home. With all the charms of Kennebunk right outside their door. **MH+D**