

Nest Building

BRING THE VACATION HOME

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October 28, 2009

Autumn is the time of year we feel obliged to put summer away. We shut down the cottage, empty out the camper and everyone returns to school and regular work schedules. While you are dragging the canoes up the beach and scrubbing down the hibachi, you are also be stowing away all that came with them—family time, simple meals, permission to read a novel or play cards and time to think.

That little place ‘up the lake’ is restorative not because of the rustic plumbing, but because it represents a break in routine and an escape from the hyper-productive lives we subscribe to in between. Up the lake, sandy feet are propped up on furniture, cellular phones are useless and dinner is not a ‘phone call away.

Up the lake, we are more present in our environment and with family members. We focus on, and enjoy, the simplest of tasks instead of racing to the next.

Many aspects of summer living are portable and don’t belong exclusively at the end of a long gravel road. If you were able to make time for these things in the summer, why can’t you make time for them throughout the year? Would the walls of your life come tumbling down if you traded a couple of hours at the office for a couple of hours at home, or played Frisbee with your kids in the backyard instead of driving them to every sports practice and scheduled activity?

Family vacations are often more about what you are not doing than what you are doing and there is no reason not to incorporate some *not-doing* into your regular home life.

Bring a piece of the lake home—not the mosquitoes perhaps, but some unstructured time, a bag of marshmallows and the occasional romance novel.