

# A Writer's Retreat



**A4 ARCHITECTS: A4ARCHITECTS.COM,  
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Location: Seal Cove, Maine  
Architect: A4 Architects (Kay Stevens Rosa,  
AIA & Augusto Rosa, IAB)  
Builder: TBD  
Construction dates: 2012

**H**ow does a couple who splits their time among three continents unwind and shake off the jet lag? Five years ago, a writer from Maine and her Australian husband hired A4 Architects to design a primary home base for them on a waterfront lot on Seal Cove. There was a kitchen-less one-room cabin already on site. Since the home was several years off, A4 was asked to add a bedroom suite to the drab little cabin so the owners could begin to enjoy the property.

After three summers in the little cottage, the owners found that they really enjoyed the charm and intimacy of the 500-square-foot abode. However, without space for guests and no kitchen, they yearned to be able to share this special place more easily with close friends and family. Again they called on Kay Stevens Rosa and Augusto Rosa of A4 Architects, this time to expand the cottage just enough to be a livable home without sacrificing its allure. Their expanded needs included a small kitchen, a proper dining area, comfortable living space, a place to write, a guest bedroom, a bunkroom, and inconspicuous vehicle/boat storage.

The writer's retreat is meant to be an intimate enough place to allow a busy couple a quiet reprieve from their hectic life of work and travel; just large enough to be livable for more than a few days at a time and for more than a couple, without compromising charm and intimacy. Important concepts included the ability to host a family group separately from the owner's suite (these are located upstairs above the kitchen/dining area), a living area that feels indoor/outdoor and spacious, a proper entry, a tranquil and inspiring writing space, a tub with a view, a garage for boat storage (underneath), and a screened space for summer night parties and days when the wind or fog make waterside porch sitting uncomfortable. Deep, protective roof overhangs, eyebrow windows, and a variety of outdoor spaces were "must haves." Visually, the structure needed to be alluring but unassuming—like the Maine they love. **MH+D**