



Homeowner
Kirsten Torokvei

Kirsten Torokvei knew she had the perfect four-season property, a piece of vacant land with waterfront and a ski hill nearby. She was also certain she wanted timber frame.

“I love the wood and the big beams in a timber frame,” she says.

What Kirsten was unsure of was the size of the build. The property has been in her family for over 20 years, and her parents’ cottage still stood on the adjacent land. She has been visiting the property since her youth and it was her late father’s favourite place to be.

“We lost my dad 13 years

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FEARMAN

YEAR-ROUND FUN

Four season cottage a perfect fit

ago,” says Kirsten. “The cottage was his happy place, as well as ours.”

The new build had to be the right fit for everyone.

Initial ideas included tearing down her mom’s cottage on the adjacent property and erecting a large compound-style building, something that could fit Kirsten, her

two children, her mom and her brother’s family.

In the end, her mom’s cottage remained and Kirsten enlisted Normerica to build

a 4,600-square foot, four-bedroom, five-bathroom custom timber frame cottage of her own.

“My dad had always envisioned using that property and building a big place there,” recalls Kirsten. “So doing it was fulfilling doing something he wanted to do and never got a chance to. It’s kind of nice that we have a place that we can all go to be close and be together.”

Kirsten says from beginning to end, the Normerica team was a joy to work with. She hit it off with Normerica representatives right off the bat and the goodwill grew from there. Shortly after

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choosing to build her timber frame home with Normerica, Kirsten learned her uncle had used them 20 years before.

“He has a spectacular place,” says Kirsten. “I was asking him about his experience. He had nothing but good things to say. He said, ‘you can’t go wrong,’ so it reinforced my feelings that I had picked the right people to work with.”

Wish list items

Every custom build has a wish list, and Kirsten’s included a couple of musts. One was the screened-in Muskoka room and the other was a functioning mudroom and laundry room. She also made sure the kids had a large play area incorporated into the design.

“We’re right on the water and the sunsets and the view of Georgian Bay are spectacular,” says Kirsten. “Big windows on the lake side was a must. As well, I wanted my kids to be able to enjoy themselves without having to listen to the adults doing grown-up things in the kitchen or other rooms.”

The design includes future needs: a loft space is located above the garage so her two children, currently aged four and seven, can grow into the space as they become teenagers and young adults.

“Of the four bedrooms we have, the two kids’ rooms can sleep four kids in each, so they can have friends over,” says Kirsten. “I have a nice,

big master bedroom down the hall from the kids. I wanted my own cushy space to relax in. We also have a guest bedroom for family or friends to use.”

Although the entire cottage is stunning, Kirsten does have a favourite place to relax. She wholeheartedly loves the great room with its high ceilings and joinery at the peaks where the rafters meet.

“It’s a big open area where you can see all the wonderful woodwork,” she says. “We have a beautiful chandelier up there, so it’s my favourite place to sit. And when I look up, I think ‘this is amazing.’ The kids are in awe when they’re in there because the ceilings are so big and high.”

This was Kirsten’s first experience building a cottage or home from scratch. She says it was a little overwhelming at the beginning but her fears were quickly quelled.

“Once I met with the Normerica team, they made it feel less daunting,” recalls Kirsten. “They were a really great team and

understood what I wanted. They did a really great job of incorporating everything I wanted from the sketch to the build. They walked with me throughout the project and didn’t make me feel alone. They followed through on everything they promised.” **DS**

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