

A SHORE THING

FAMILY TIES TO THE OCEAN GIVE THIS COSY COTTAGE ITS NAME AND ITS CHARMING DECOR.

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Pepper Hutchinson referenced husband Marko's boat-building heritage when decorating their holiday home, The Shipwright's Mistress, in Augusta, WA. A vintage ship's barometer and nautical artworks from Vintage Art Emporium adorn the walls of the lounge room. **FACING PAGE** Bedlinen from In The Sac and Kip&Co cushions ensure a restful night's sleep. A wicker Indigo Love 'Mallorca' lightshade from Lightingales adds a layer of texture.

It was a cold and rainy holiday in the small town of Augusta, 50 kilometres south of Western Australia's famed Margaret River region, that made Pepper Hutchinson and her family fall in love with the area. "We stoked the fire, rugged up and explored, going night fishing from the town jetty and climbing the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse," Pepper recalls of the 2015 trip she shared with her husband Marko and three sons Gus, Leo and Max. "From then on, we dreamed of having a holiday home there and started keeping an eye on the local real estate."

After a few false starts, they found the one: a charming two-bedroom cottage built in the 1960s, sitting in a peaceful spot on the Blackwood River. "The house is elevated and back from the water, and the view from the front deck, through the swaying Peppermint Gums, is mesmerising," says Pepper. While the house "had good bones", she admits it needed an update and refresh. The couple spent over a year doing it up so they could also let it out to guests, replacing the asbestos-filled roof with Colorbond, removing two internal walls to improve flow and rebuilding the kitchen, bathroom and laundry/mudroom. They also added a covered outdoor area to the side of the house, which is protected from the elements to serve as a second dining space.

The interiors were selected with comfort and quality in mind. Moody sea-green walls, nautical-themed artworks and timeworn wall hooks and surfaces provide constant reminders of the home's location and history, while plush velvet cushions, thick woollen rugs and a Lopi wood fire ensure a cosy stay. "Marko is a fourth-generation boat builder [shipwright], so we had a vast collection of boating memorabilia that we loved using here," Pepper shares. "It also inspired the house name, The Shipwright's Mistress, a fun reference to the family's heritage."

The kitchen is a welcoming hub, with reclaimed Oregon benchtops, a Smeg oven and fridge and a collection of old crockery and servingware. "We love cooking, so the kitchen was always a priority," says Pepper. It's much appreciated by their guests, who are met with a gin and tonic or glass of pinot noir on arrival and enjoy a steady supply of tea, coffee and hot chocolate during their stay.

While it's a very easy cottage to spend time in, Pepper encourages her guests to partake of Augusta's small-town charms, which her family fell in love with all those years ago. She recommends local restaurant Glenarty Road and cafe and bar The Colourpatch, a swim at Flinders Bay or Granny's Pool and a spot of dolphin, pelican or whale-watching. And then by all means retire to the cottage for a glass of red by the crackling fire. "It's a deeply relaxing house," says Pepper. "Fire-watching is a favourite pastime." *Ch*
To book a stay, visit theshipwrightsmistress.com.au

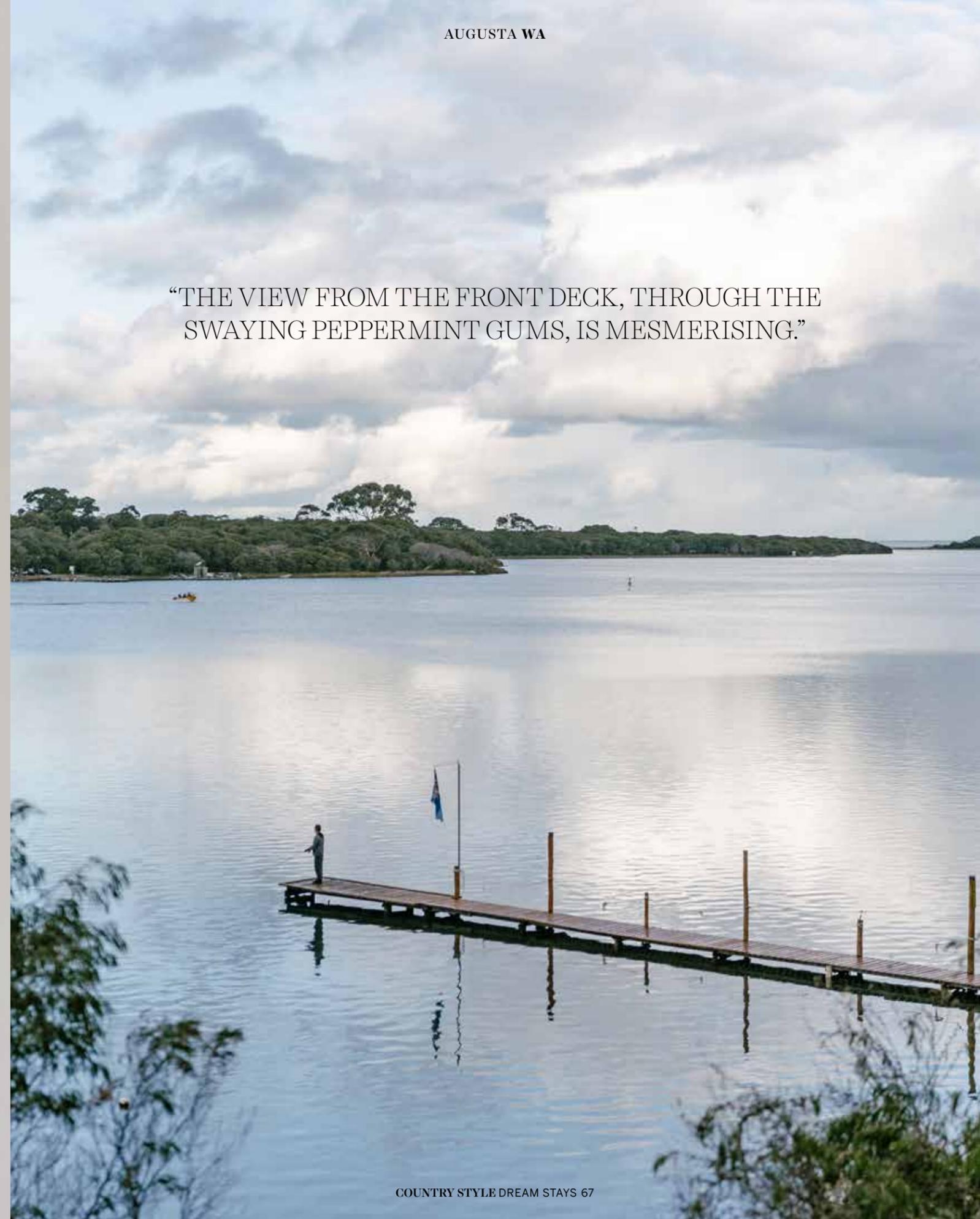


CLOCKWISE FROM THIS IMAGE Two cane armchairs with velvet cushions provide a cosy spot to sit; the hallway is painted Dulux Little Mermaid, with a vintage painting from Merchants of the Sea; a selection of books, games and puzzles keep guests entertained; a Smeg fridge and reclaimed Oregon benchtops in the kitchen; the Lopi fire gets a workout in winter; the cottage overlooks the river and trees.





A *Young Woman Daydreaming* artwork purchased from On the Mantle hangs on the wall of the kitchen, with a House of Orange fabric lightshade suspended nearby. **FACING PAGE** Morning views of the Blackwood River.



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