

## Ripple Effect

A stunning new West Coast villa is the jewel in the crown of a Northern B.C. coastal retreat.

By Charlene Rooke | Photographs by Darren Bernaerdt



One moment you're walking on water, over iridescent pools of glass tile that ripple into a dark slate floor. The next, you're in the treetops, walking into a window-walled great room nestled in high, rocky forest. This grand room and entryway overlook actual pebble-rimmed tidal pools outside, a sunning and feeding ground for which this secluded pocket of Sonora Island is named: Sea Lion Pointe.

The 10,000-square-foot, four-bedroom Sea Lion Pointe villa is the newest addition to the Relais & Chateaux Sonora Resort, located in the Discovery Islands, above the Desolation Sound area of Northern B.C. Resort guests can take one suite, or call the entire villa home—and with it enjoy not only resort activities like fishing, wildlife experiences and a West Coast spa but luxe amenities like a personal chef cooking in the Viking-equipped indoor and outdoor kitchens, a nanny suite and a Subaru Outback to drive around the property.

Interior designer Céline Petrie of Céline Interiors in Vancouver (designers Diane Riffell and Sharon Lum and architect Tony Kloefer of Scientific Architecture also worked on the project) credits the resort's president with wanting to “make people feel like they were in the forest. The concept was developed to bring the outdoors in and vice versa.” In fact, building materials were craned in to the site in complex sequence, back to front, so the heavily treed landscape could be preserved.

After taking in the view beyond the Rookery great room your eye is drawn up, up, to the 35-foot Douglas fir-beamed ceiling, where a giant five-metre-wide mobile of seaweed-like acrylic strands gently floats in the rafters, keeping time with the evergreen boughs dancing in the breeze outside. Like virtually all the art in Sea Lion Pointe, the mobile was commissioned for the space and made by a B.C. artist (Markian Olynyk).

Echoing a trend often seen in high-end homes, the villa is structured as two zones, private bedroom suites and a public entertaining area. The latter includes not only the eat-in kitchen but a dining room seating 12 at a long Claro walnut-slab table topped by Tidal Pools, an inspired aquatic-life-themed centrepiece installation by young artist Benjamin Kikkert. Above the dining room is the Big Bear Den games room, complete with a 60-inch plasma screen, Parasound Halo sound system and professional pool table and dart board. Inspired interior and exterior lighting design by Margo Richards emphasizes the distinction between the two zones: the lighting and iPod-controlled sound in individual rooms, or the entire villa, can be lit from a simple master panel using mood settings like “play,” “rest” or “spa.”

Variations on colour, theme and artwork tie the spaces together. Petrie explains that Donghia's Seedpod fabric became an inspiration, four of its colourways corresponding to themes for the bedroom suites. The suites are oriented to cardinal points, offering unique light and views during the day. Dancing Urchin is a summer-inspired suite in straw and cream shades, its deep egg-shaped Waterworks tub and his-and-hers glass rainshower, as in the other suites, tucked into a sunny windowed corner yet providing complete privacy. Raven Sun offers a spring palate of mossy greens and sienna tones; Abalone Tide is a warm winter palette of teal, chocolate, pewter and opalescence. The master Copper Moon suite is loft style, with its second-floor tub under a skylight and a cascade of bubble-like suspended glass lamps, as well as a private third-floor outdoor hot tub.

An inspired touch connecting the dots between inside and out are wooden “story poles.” Three define each space. In the Rookery, an indoor, fully-carved pole features playful sea lion paws grasping fluid strands of seaweed; just outside the window, a partially carved pole features five sea lions' snouts; completing the triad is a third pole, strikingly peeled but uncarved. “I knew of many traditional native carvers but no local carvers that did contemporary work,” says designer Petrie, who eventually found Phil Grey through Art Works gallery. His modern take on totems is remarkable in its restraint: a broad-lipped smiling face of the moon tops one; playful intertwining fiddleheads decorate another.

This summer the villa's crowning touch is complete: a glass-railed stairway that descends right down to the emerald waters of the tidal pools, its deck marking the perfect spot for a glass of wine or a late-day slice of sun—making the journey into the outdoors complete. w/

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