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❖ What this Workbook is about

The Cottage Design Workbook is a guide through the design process. It is modeled after a typical client-architect relationship where the architect interviews the client at great depth, then asks a whole lot more questions. The idea is to encourage the client, often without his/her realization, to take the architect on a guided tour of what the architect is to make "real". In exploring the client's "magical forest" of needs and design ideals, the architect just paves the path. Where the final step of your cottage project involves the construction, the first step is about the vision and that is what this book is about.

❖ Who it was written for

This workbook was written for anyone who is contemplating buying, building, or renovating a cottage, resort property, or country retreat. If you're in the market for a new home, you may discover some rather enlightening things when you re-ask these same questions with regards to your principal residence.

❖ Who it was written by

This book was conceived and written by the firm *The Ideal Environment-Brian Lee Architects*, a Toronto-based design firm, who realized, after 30 years of designing cottages, country retreats, and urban palaces, that the most successful projects stem from a client's willingness to be deeply involved in the design process and commitment to their ideals.

❖ About the format

The Cottage Design Workbook is largely blank space. This is because you are doing all the work hence "workbook". It's part questionnaire, survey, and scrapbook. There are blank pages to sketch your ideas, describe possibilities, and paste pictures of images you may have collected. You are encouraged, to add pages to "build" on your ideas.

❖ What you'll need

Dig out your Pinterest boards, design magazines, clippings, all your sketches, a site survey of your property if you have one, and a list of people who may be involved in the design and construction of your cottage. Of course, you'll need pencils, scissors and glue, and most importantly, the input of family members or friends.

❖ What you'll have in the end

After having carefully considered each aspect covered in the Workbook, you will have a fairly comprehensive design brief or check-list. This will be of great value as your reference when you are:

- a) deciding which existing cottage to buy,
- b) choosing the plan that best suits your needs from a prefab or mail-order company,
- c) contemplating the best way to renovate or add on to your existing cottage
- d) communicating with your architect

Enjoy the book - neatness doesn't count. Above all, enjoy the process.



