

The Virginia Rich Kid Who
Became a Con Man

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(Before He Writes About You)

How to Find the Perfect
Weekend House

WASHINGTONIAN

100 VERY BEST RESTAURANTS

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Ten Young
Chefs Shaping
Washington's
Dining Future



Virtuoso DC pastry chef
Paola Velez. Look inside to
find out where she cooks—
and how the place is ranked.

HOMIE



SECOND PLACE
Turn the page
for more of this
charming weekend
house, plus ideas if
you're considering
buying another home.

TREASURE TROVE:
Designer Kelley Proxmire outfitted much of this Rappahannock space with decor she found at estate sales.



MINI GUIDE:

THE WEEKEND HOME, NOW

Things to know if you're considering a second place—or just dreaming of one



BRIGHT IDEAS

Bold colors, strategic splurges, and vintage finds make for a seriously fun—and chic—getaway

By Michelle Brunner

BILL AND SARAH WALTON HAVE HAD THEIR VACATION HOUSE IN WASHINGTON, VIRGINIA, SINCE 2010—but the property wasn't complete. The home's guesthouse had been sold off years earlier, along with 30 acres of land. "There's a saying in Rappahannock: 'I don't need any more land, except for the property next to mine,'" says Bill, laughing. In 2017, when their neighbors moved to New York, the Waltons were finally able to buy it all back, restoring the property's original boundaries.

Initially, they'd hoped to turn the former guesthouse—which features some of the best views in Rappahannock County—into a vacation rental. But after designer Kelley Proxmire renovated it, they realized it was the perfect spot to put up their own friends and family. Here's how they brought it back to life, with Proxmire's guidance.

THEY LOOKED PAST THE CLUTTER

First, they had to clean it up. The most recent tenants had been city slickers turned doomsday preppers who'd used the sleeping loft and porch for storing junk. They'd put a propane tank in front of the



house and installed a chicken coop that attracted coyotes. But “the funniest thing they left behind was a big freezer for deer meat that was standing right in the entry hall,” says Sarah. “We took that out and put in a powder room.”

THEY MADE IT FUN

Next, the couple brought in Proxmire, who had also worked on their primary residence in Chevy Chase. The Waltons love bold colors, so the designer incorporated lush greens, bright yellows, and electric blues throughout the house. “A weekend place shouldn’t be too serious or precious—it should be comfortable and have its own personality,” says Proxmire. That playful spirit continues in the gaming area downstairs, where Proxmire painted a shuffleboard court onto the floor of the screened porch.

THEY FOUND CLEVER WAYS TO SAVE

One of Proxmire’s tricks: Splurge strategically. For instance, she put a pricey Scalandre fabric on just the back—i.e., the most visible side—of a sofa that floats in the room. She furnished the rest of the space with vintage items from local estate sales. For the wet bar, she retrofitted an inexpensive secondhand armoire with shelves and a vessel sink, creating a swanky—but budget-friendly—spot to mix cocktails.

OPEN BAR: An armoire became a cocktail station, right. The bold color scheme carries into the bedrooms, above.

