

B&Bs:

A business, a lifestyle

By Karen Aude

The long winding dirt road leads to the edge of nowhere. Or so it seems. "Nowhere," however, turns out to be the cliffside residence of Denise and Jack Kedian. Overlooking Cape Cod Bay, the circa 1960s house with its contemporary facelift, is convincing proof of the value of real estate's mantra "location, location, location."



SPECTACULAR VIEWS of Cape Cod Bay can be seen from the deck at The Beach House



INNKEEPER
Denise Kedian uses flowers and sea shells to add accents of color through-out the dining and living areas on the ground level.

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DENISE KEDIAN enjoys sharing her home with visitors but does advise those seeking to buy or convert a property to a B&B to have some private space.

The Kedians raised their two daughters here. Over the years, they made improvements to the property—four sets of sliders off the living/dining area opening on to a wide deck overlooking Cape Cod Bay; a huge Palladian window above the large picture window in the master suite on the top floor; a spacious screened-in porch off the living room. The open floor plan on the main level takes full advantage of the bay views which can be enjoyed today from virtually every living space from the kitchen and dining areas to the living room. They also replaced linoleum floors with wide pine boards.

interior might be filled with antiques or Victorian charm." The key to success is, she says, "You've got to take your area of interest and make a sanctuary, your special place, and then be willing to invite others to share it with you."

"For example, we wouldn't be comfortable in a town environment or with Victorian furnishings" she says. "My husband and I like the beach, so we choose to share that kind of casual life-style with our guests. If you do that, if you share your own interests, you create a more genuine, warmer experience for your guests." The interior of The Beach House is casually elegant. It's the kind of interior you wouldn't be surprised to see featured in, if not *Architectural Digest*, then certainly *Better Homes and Gardens*.

It was only when her two daughters moved on with their own lives that Denise seriously contemplated opening her home to others. "The layout is a natural for a Bed & Breakfast," says Denise of the three-story house. "Each level has its own entrance and each room its own bath, so everyone can have privacy."



WITH HER SIGNATURE WHITE palette as backdrop, innkeeper Denise Kedian furnished her guest living area with comfortable sectional sofas and designer touches. Mirrors reflect the ocean and sky.

Gathering and arranging these items is a complex and often whimsical process. "I think of myself as a random abstract," says Denise. "I'll see something and I have to have it, even if I'm not quite sure what I'm going to do with it. I'm attracted to shapes and textures, disparate items that I weave together to try to create an ambiance in which my guests will feel comfortably at home."

Innkeeper is Denise Kedian's fourth career, following—in this order—teaching, then journalist, and finally publications/public relations professional. Though she clearly enjoyed the others, innkeeping is a natural fit for her. And "fit" is what she seeks in her guests.

Privacy, in fact, is right up there on the list of "must haves" that Denise suggests to anyone contemplating buying a B & B. "You've got to have a private space, an owner's suite even," says this consummate hostess who clearly enjoys cooking and sharing her home with guests from as far afield as New Zealand, Zimbabwe, England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany other European countries. "It's so much fun sitting on the deck, sharing a drink and chatting with guests, even having dinner with them or golfing, but," she says, "innkeepers need downtime; they need family time."



DINING ELEGANCE is enjoyed by guests on the sun deck or the shady wicker-filled screened porch oceanfront at The Beach House in Plymouth.

According to Denise, a private bedroom and bath isn't enough. "You need somewhere to relax unobserved, perhaps a private deck or porch, a private living room, somewhere you can be alone with your own family and friends when they come to visit. Lack of privacy is one of the biggest reasons for innkeeper burnout."

And her decorating secret? A discerning eye and frequent trips to yard sales, secondhand shops, mill stores, some antique stores, and even, she says, the Christmas Tree Shops. In the living area a beautiful pickled armoire is one of the focal points. She picked this up for a song at a mill store and rubbed a white glaze into the unfinished wood grain to create a designer piece. The glass top coffee table was scooped up at a local second hand store, as was the mirror hanging over the fireplace. "Every home has a palette," says Denise. "Mine is white." And it works. There's a serenity to the soft white walls and furniture. Rooms are accessorized with arrangements of flowers, a bowl of shells here, family photographs there, Mary Cassatt and Jessie Wilcox Smith prints of mothers and children.

"There's more than enough business to go around. If someone calls and it's clear they're looking for an in-town experience, I'll refer them. It just doesn't work when people don't get what they want. Innkeepers understand this and make referrals all the time. Maybe it's not a fit, maybe we're full, but we'll help people find what fits for them."

But as important as privacy is to her, this isn't her first piece of advice to the would-be innkeeper. "When you're looking for property," she advises, "remember that this will be your home. Make sure the house is where you want to live."

Denise sees the job of hostess as one of making guests feel at home. And a large part of that, she says, is creating an environment that's conducive to relaxation. Denise, as it turns out, has a knack for that and is quick to tell you that it takes more imagination than money.



CASUALLY ELEGANT bedrooms are consistent with the romantic ambiance and white palette throughout The Beach House Bed & Breakfast.

Bottom line for Denise is innkeeping is as easy as one, two, three: find a home you love; create a personal environment guests will like; and welcome them into your space.

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"I really believe anyone can create a unique space. We happen to be right on the water. Someone else might be adjacent to a bike path or a golf course, or maybe they have river access; maybe they're in town, or the