

We love that the house is south facing and bathed in sunlight whenever there are sunny days, and there are many here. The deck on the front of the house is big enough to have a party, and during the summer months, we fill it with blooming plants that we can see from the living room and kitchen. The walnut tree on the west side of the deck gives us shade in the yard, while providing a lush green wall of leaves when sitting on the deck. In the fall, the blue jays often come to eat the walnuts.

We have poked away at the garden over the years and it now yields a crop of potatoes, chard, tomatoes, kiwis, (yes, kiwis) plums, apples and more. We built a 2x4 constructed chicken house complete with a cedar shake roof and fenced it and it comfortably houses ten chickens which produce plenty of eggs and besides that; we love the ambiance of having the flock. When the weather cools down we enjoy time by the fire and the dry wood storage is immediately at the entrance of the foyer, which is handy. What is also handy is to pull the car right up to the house for carrying heavier things in, the covered and tiled entrance provides a nice transition out of the rain. Many of our students preferred just waiting outside in that covered area so we put out chairs and used it as a secondary waiting area.

Over the years we have taught thousands of music lessons here and the current configuration of having the two studio spaces and a waiting room/foyer has been perfect. We can close the door to the other side of the house while taking students and it remains undisturbed with its own bathroom.

The upstairs has a cozy country type kitchen with lots of natural light and access directly to the deck and the bbq and deck seating. Since putting in the skylight the kitchen cooking area now also has warm natural light. The 2 bedrooms on this floor share 2 full bathrooms. The living room is cozy and roomy and full of light and is a great place to hang out.

When the kids were growing, we would go to St. Mary's lake which is only about a 5-minute drive away and there is a cute little sandy beach there where they would swim. If saltwater is your preference, Vesuvius beach is a brisk walk or a very short drive away, it is a lovely spot to swim or simply watch the sunset and meet neighbours who are doing the same. The Crofton ferry makes its trip from this same bay to mid-Vancouver Island and is only 3 minutes from our door. We use it frequently to visit family or shop in Duncan, Nanaimo and Parksville. We also visit our local Seaside kitchen, beside the Crofton Ferry dock, where they have the best fish and chips and ocean-side deck on the island.

Walking the dogs is a regular part of our life and there are several enchanting locations nearby. Just down the hill there is Duck Creek park where we can let the dogs run in the expansive clearing and hike the trail through the forest beside the stream which in the winter rushes past the fallen logs and rocks. Only two minutes above us there are the Channel Ridge trails that go for miles and overlook the lake and the ocean through a canopy of fir and cedar, arbutus and hemlock.

We find the neighbourhood to be a nurturing environment, our local neighbours are quiet and kind and respectful. The micro-demographic includes a mix of retirees and a family with children and youngish working professionals. Because the lots in this subdivision are between 1 and 4 acres we never feel crowded, the natural surroundings always remain the paramount feature, there is life everywhere. The bird feeders are always full of our local wrens and nut-hatches, woodpeckers, finches and hummingbirds.

We often take a drive to visit the Dailey's North End farm to pick up fresh produce at the stand, which has everything from turnips to fresh-baked buns and sausage and fresh eggs, it's fun to stop at Fernwood coffee shop on the way back and sit by the dock. The village is about a 6-minute drive from the house, so picking up needed items is not a time-consuming problem. Not to mention that during health emergencies the hospital is the same distance and has always been a godsend. Just minutes away and on the way to the village there is the golf course and Portlock Park and tennis courts. Driving into the village never gets old as the harbour comes into view and the core of little shops and restaurants await. If you care to venture farther the natural wonders of lakes and mountains and bays and wildlife are splendorous at all times of the year. It's only a 15-minute drive to the natural beauty of the new provincial 520 hectare Burgoyne Bay park where hiking to the point of Sansum Narrows or down to the Bay is truly awe-inspiring, and that is only the beginning.