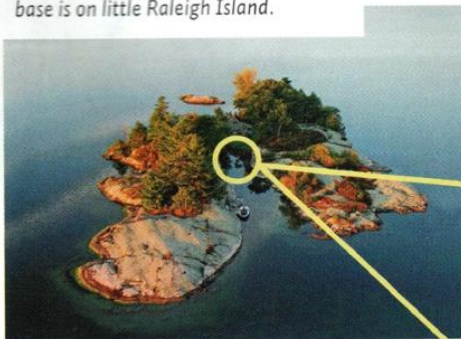


Cottage Life

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Waterfront

Photographer Ian Coristine's cottage base is on little Raleigh Island.



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Treasured islands

Photographer Ian Coristine has a plaque at his Thousand Islands cottage that says, “The river chooses some.” It certainly chose him. He fell in love with the region on a flyover in 1992, and then came across Raleigh Island, with its rundown 1917 cottage, three years later. “It’s the only island around with a natural harbour that could accommodate my plane,” he says, “and it hadn’t been on the market in years.”

That’s the kind of amazing luck Coristine says he’s had over the last couple of decades, as he set about flying among the islands every day, sometimes steering with his feet and knees, so he could snap hundreds of shots. The photos, celebrated for their beauty, are a love letter to the region, and over the years, he has published five books of them, selling about 100,000 copies to date. But luck isn’t the end of the story: Coristine, a former formula race-car driver and aviation entrepreneur, is wily enough to make connections, and to orchestrate fruitful collaborations. He heard the music of the band Great Lake Swimmers and thought it would go well with his photos in some format. Soon, he was inviting them to come to the Thousand Islands—which they did, a year later, to record parts of an album.

Then, last December, Coristine met Doug McLellan, who also owns a cottage island in the St. Lawrence, and realized that his digital production company, McLellan Group, was uniquely positioned to help him create the e-book that would be the culmination of his career. “Most e-books are static

documents, and I wanted mine to have photos, video, maps, and music,” says Coristine. “The technology wasn’t there to bring it all together, but Doug’s people created the software to make it work.”

One in a Thousand, available now in the Apple App Store, is a memoir of Coristine’s life and work, co-written with novelist Donna Walsh Inglehart (another Thousand Islander), with music by Great Lake Swimmers. “I’m all in,” says Coristine. “Everything I’ve done is in that book.” He’s now sold his plane, but still plans to spend half of every year—“ice out to ice in”—on tiny Raleigh, perhaps with visitors who find the region through his books and photos. As luck would have it.—Blair Eveleigh

➤ For a gallery of Coristine’s photos and a video about the e-book, go to cottagelife.com/coristine