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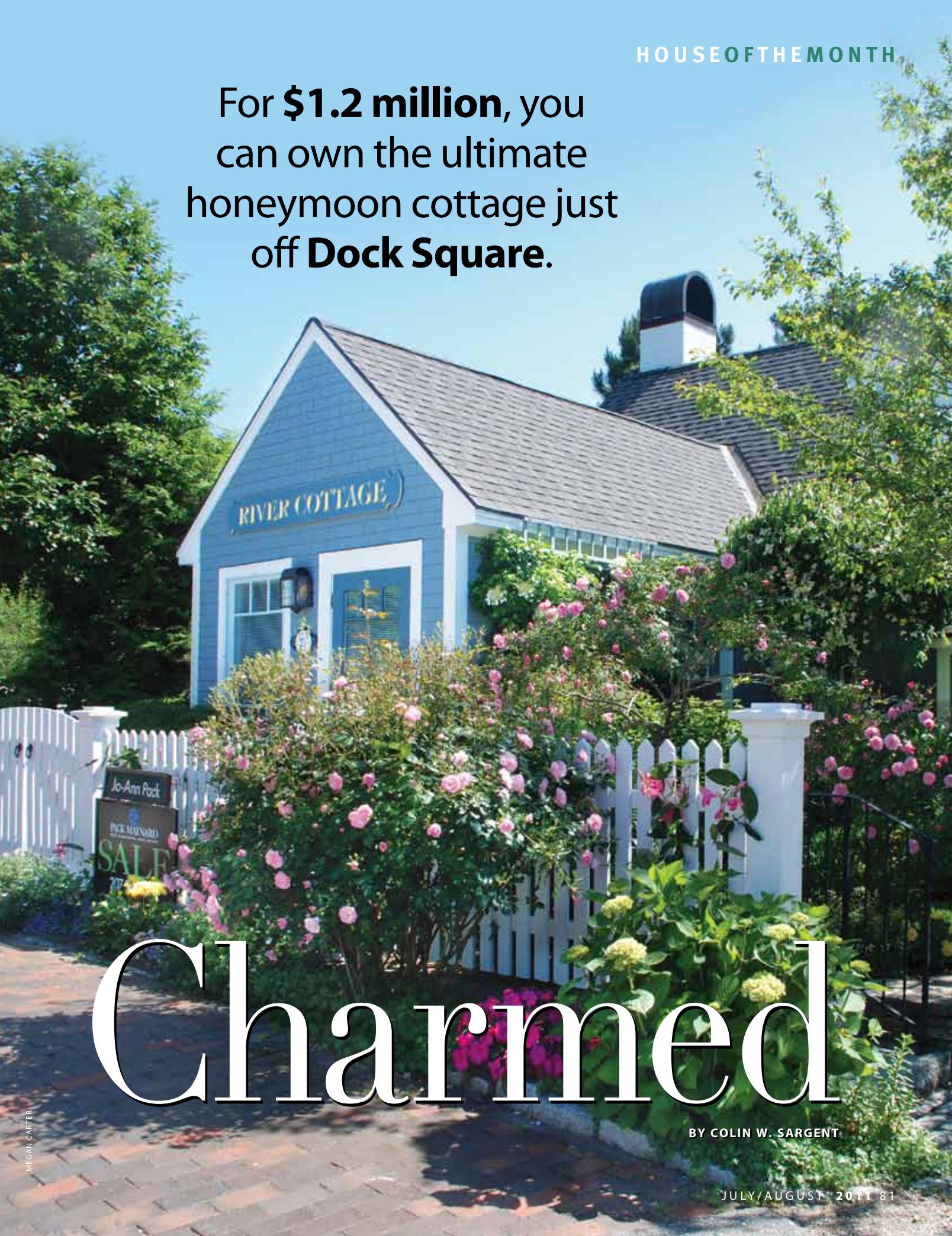
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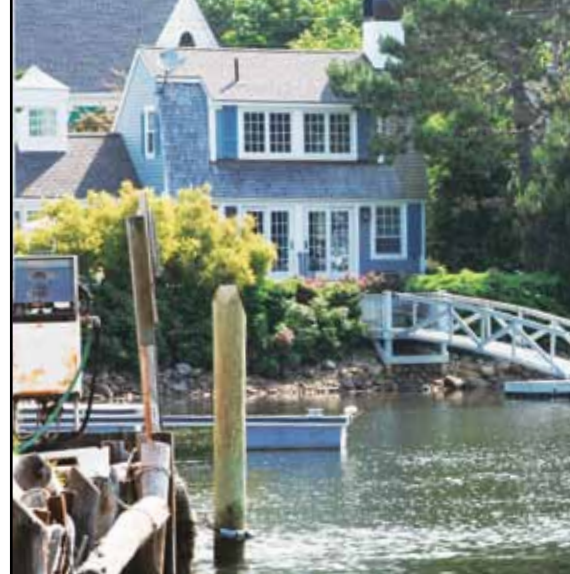
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What's the value of charm?

The acid test this summer may be the purchase price fetched by "River Cottage," the ultimate honeymoon cottage covered with roses just off Dock Square in Kennebunkport. Listed for \$1.2 million by Pack Maynard Real Estate, the tag's a big jump from its current assessment of \$707,100.

Outrageous? This house is 'off the charts' in terms of cuteness.

"In [1997], Andrea Irvine, the owner of Carrots & Co., came up from Manchester By The Sea and purchased this property," then a faded shack with million-dollar views of the Kennebunk River. "I helped oversee the improvements," says Frank Pack.

There's general agreement that the improvements to the original structure, which sold for \$225,000, were phenomenal.

"Ted Carter did the landscaping," an early effort for the landscape designer who is changing the face of the area today, with projects everywhere you turn.

"Then we put in this private dock," Pack says, with classic views of Shackford and Gooch, the bridge, the Lyric Theater building, Federal Jack's, and the former Windows on the Water.

Inside, everything was gallery white and minimalist, with blonde pine floors, a river-level master bedroom, an adorable galley kitchen, and a sweet guest suite upstairs.



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HOUSE OF THE MONTH



A year later, on 25 November 1998, “a lady from Pennsylvania purchased it” for a totally reasonable \$550,000. “She just passed away a few months ago,” Pack says. “When we sold it to her, it was listed for less than a week. The sellers are her two sons, both probably in their sixties. One son used to live here with his mother.”

Who knows if eyebrows were raised when the price tag on this slice of heaven soared to the listing price today, without any substantial improvements since the reveal, pre-9/11?

“Well,” says Park, “We redid the floors, repainted the interior, and hired Louise Herbert to stage this house.”

Whatever your perspective, River Cottage may be worth a figure way beyond its intrinsic value, and whatever created it should be bottled. Surrounded by views like these, you feel you’re in the center of the universe, extraordinarily close to everything but protected by the exclusive privacy of your gardens.

Your carriage awaits—literally. River Cottage is so precious, the horse and carriage that gives rides all through the town picks up customers just on the other side of your hedge. In a place like this, you could get carried away. ■

FROM TOP: MEGAN CARTER; PACK MAYNARD/BOB DENNIS (2)

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