



## Facts You May Not Know About Cottage Rentals

### Renting Helps to Maintain Property Values

A great many people rent out in order to fund their cottage purchases. We speak with people all the time who are considering a cottage purchase but will only be able to afford it if they rent several weeks of the year. Without the ability to rent, these buyers will leave the market, with the accompanying downward pressure on cottage price/value. Additionally, many cottage owners are second or third generation owners who have been ambushed by rapidly rising tax rates. These owners often resort to renting a few weeks a year in order to afford the taxes. Without this ability, they may be forced to sell, or worse, neglect necessary repairs to vital functions such as septic systems. Either way, the end result is also downward pressure on values.

### Rentals Support the Local Economy

Visitors who are in the area for only one or two weeks of the summer will inject more money into the local economy. They are more likely to take in the museums and attractions that owners will have already experienced long ago. They will rent boats, use the marinas, buy souvenirs and take tours. Savvy owners, free from the burden of having to pack their clothing supplies each week, will often bring groceries from the city where they can be purchased more cheaply. Renters require a more densely packed car and thus are required to stock up locally. Owners typically spend less than 30% of high season at their cottage. If the cottage sits vacant during the other 70%, no money is flowing onto local businesses at that time. With rental activity, businesses are supported throughout the tourist season. If the local businesses cannot be supported, you may find that once-convenient services begin to disappear. Without these, you could find yourself with a double whammy of decreasing property values and increasing tax rates as municipalities scramble to make up the shortfall left by business closings.

## **Rental Properties are Maintained and Cleaned Regularly**

As an agency, we are meticulous with our owner community that property standards be met and maintained - it is only fair to guests who are paying substantial amounts of money to stay there. Cottages must be kept clean, facilities must be kept in working order and generally the cottage must have an aesthetic appeal. In addition, rental income is often used to improve the property so that future rental activity is assured. Those nagging required fixes that may linger for years in unrented cottages cannot be left in that state in today's rental market. It simply is not acceptable.

## **Private Cottage Rentals do not take Business away from Resorts**

Many resort operators are concerned that their market is being unfairly usurped by private cottage rentals. We have not found this to be the case. We find that our clientele, typically a family of 4-8 people, are looking for the personal, private cottage experience. They ask specifically about privacy and quiet, often shunning the more social aspect of resorts. There is a market for both types of vacations, but in our experience they do not cross over.

## **Responsible Renting**

Agencies and owners who rent responsibly will ensure that cottages are occupied with guests that have been educated in subtleties of life at the cottage. They will know not to make noise at night, have proper respect for the environment and waterfront and generally be friendly temporary neighbours. In fact, you might find that rental guests may occasionally encourage permanent owners to respect the sanctity of the lake :)

## **Renting is a Deterrent to Theft**

Theft is an all-too-common occurrence in the isolated environment of cottage country. Sadly, thieves understand that sparsely populated areas make for easy targets. An occupied property means that potential thieves are likely to pass not only that cottage, but any cottages nearby as well....Criminals tend to be very risk-averse, and the rental group next door may be the perfect watchdogs for your cottage and not even be aware of it.

## **Build Awareness of Cottage Country**

This sounds like it might be a "soft" point, but in reality it could be one of the most important. In Ontario and Quebec, we have something that is truly, truly unique in the world. If you peruse the world using Google Earth or similar tool, you will find no other place on the planet that offers the abundance of lakes, rivers and wilderness that we are fortunate enough to enjoy. Cottage rentals let families experience this environment first hand, building impressions that will last a life time. We cannot overstate the importance of ensuring that as many people as possible have a stake in protecting this amazing gift we have been given!