Anita Dream Home

"Love the House, Live in the House, Grow into a Home"

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Sales Representative

Positive, Passionate, Professional and Knowledgeable

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Greetings! You're receiving this newsletter with hopes that you find it informative and entertaining.

If you're thinking of making a move, or are just curious as to real estate trends in your area, please feel free to call at any time. It's always good to hear from you!

All the best,

Anita Pimentel

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

While we've always been told not to judge a book by its cover, there is certainly something to be said for first impressions when it comes to showing your home. That's why, especially in this busy open house real estate season, it pays to call in your real estate sales representative to give you a fresh perspective on how your home presents.

REALTORS® understand the power of first impression appeal and have the benefit of experience when it comes to sharing with you what works when it comes to preparing your home for sale. For example, your kitchen and bathroom can be deal makers – or breakers. When deciding if it's worth renovating before you sell, consider the Appraisal Institute of Canada's findings that, depending on the extent of the renovations, homeowners can often recoup 75 to 100 percent of bathroom and kitchen renovation costs when it comes time to sell their home.

Be aware that the desirability and resale value of a particular remodeling project can vary by region. Before undertaking a remodeling project, please call to discuss your plans, and ask what projects might provide the most return upon resale.

Remember, we REALTORS® have a unique understanding of local markets, home features and buyer preferences, and can give you good insight into all factors that affect a home's value. These factors can include not only the physical features of your house, but also its location, condition of surrounding properties and regional economic climate.

Please call today for the latest real estate tips and updates!

CNSF

LASTING BEAUTY

Hardwood floors are a perennially popular upgrade with homeowners and homebuyers alike, adding value to any home in which they're installed. With proper maintenance and a little preventative care, your hardwood flooring can retain its beauty and functionality indefinitely.

- Dirt and grit, however fine, are abrasive, scratching and dulling your hardwood floors like sandpaper. Placing mats inside and outside of entry doors is highly effective in reducing the amount of dirt that gets tracked into your home and across your hardwood. Just be careful which kind of mat you use – those with solid rubber or vinyl backing aren't breathable and thus trap moisture; look for mats designated for safe use on hardwood floors.

- Wood being porous, liquids are a threat to your floors; allowed to stand, they seep into the wood, causing warping and finish damage. Place hardwood-safe mats where spills frequently occur (e.g. the kitchen sink). Immediately wipe up spills with a dry cloth. Never pour water or cleaning solutions directly onto hardwood or use a soaking wet mop; rather, clean with a slightly damp mop, followed, if necessary, by a dry mop or cloth to absorb any excess liquid.

- Use the right products for the job. Cleaners meant for other purposes (e.g. furniture polish) or flooring types (e.g. vinyl) will dull hardwood or make it dangerously slippery – use only products specifically designed for the kind of hardwood you have. To remove dirt, sweep daily with a soft-bristled broom or, better yet, vacuum. Vacuuming is preferable because it sucks dirt up from between boards; just be sure to use a bare-floor or brush attachment, never a beater bar.

- Just as sunlight fades and discolors fabric over time, exposure to UV rays accelerates the oxidation of hardwood, causing permanent changes in the appearance of your flooring. Protect your floors from discoloration by closing your window treatments during those times of day when they would be exposed to direct sunlight, and changing up the placement of your furniture and rugs every so often so as to allow your hardwood to age more evenly.

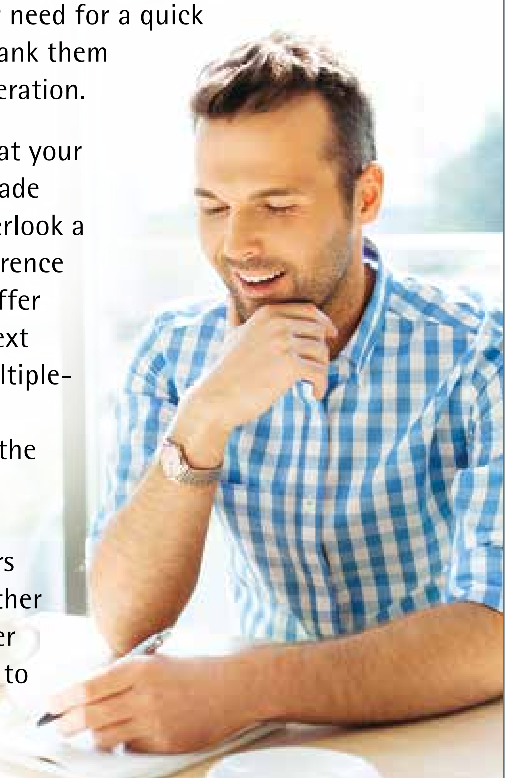
- Prevent your furniture and accessories from damaging your flooring: reduce friction by applying felt contacts to the feet of tables, chairs, couches, dressers, etc., and check under those feet for dirt that may have collected there; place (non-slip) underpads beneath area rugs that don't have soft backings; and, when you need to move furniture, don't drag it across the floor – lift and carry it.

- Avoid scratches and scuffs by leaving shoes, especially high-heeled shoes, at your front door – on your hardwood-safe mat – instead of wearing them around your home; keep a pair of slippers by your door if it will help you kick the habit (so to speak). In addition, keep pets' nails trimmed.

DEAR SELLER

Including a personal letter to the seller with your offer can be a great way to distinguish yourself from the competition when bidding on a home. But before you start writing, read the following dos and don'ts.

- Don't bypass your real estate representative by submitting a letter directly to the seller. When buyers and sellers communicate directly, the odds of something going wrong with the transaction increase. Your real estate rep is there, in part, to act as intermediary – let them do their job!
- Do enlist your real estate rep for help crafting your letter. They can guide you as to what to say in order to make your letter more effective in appealing to that particular seller and any particular circumstances.
- Don't overshare, divulging too many personal details about your life; overdo it on the compliments, lest the seller think they underpriced their property; or, under any circumstance, say anything critical about the home (especially as justification for why you lowered your offer price).
- Do keep it short, sweet, and sincere. Get to the point: tell the seller what, specifically, you love about the home (and community) and why you want to live there; reiterate why you're the right buyer (e.g. you can satisfy their need for a quick closing); and thank them for their consideration.
- Don't expect that your letter will persuade the seller to overlook a significant difference between your offer price and the next buyer's. In a multiple-bid situation, a letter could tip the scales in your favor provided competing offers are similar. In other words, your offer price still needs to be attractive.



PICTURE PERFECT

Whether it will be you or your real estate sales representative behind the camera, follow these tips for preparing your home to be photographed and your listing photos will be more effective in enticing buyers.

- Clear out the clutter. It's distracting to those viewing your photos and makes your space look smaller. Remove excess furniture, clear off the counters, organize shelves, hide cords, take drawings and magnets down from the fridge, and so on. If you tend to be blind to your own clutter, enlist a friend or even a professional organizer to help.
- Get the light right. Using flash can result in unflattering shadows and glare; as such, you'll want your home's interior to be good and bright for photographing so flash isn't necessary. Natural light is the best light, so open up all those blinds, curtains, and doors so as to let as much light into and through your home as possible.
- Don't date the photos. You don't want anything appearing in your pictures that will tie them to a specific time, lest your listing photos look stale and give away the amount of time your property has been on the market. So if you're selling this spring, but still have the holiday lights up from December, it's time to take them down!
- Do some staging. Create little tableaus that will suggest to buyers the kind of lifestyle they could enjoy in your home: a short stack of books and a wine glass on a chair-side table, or a board game set up in your child's room, for example. Add splashes of color via fresh flowers on the table or throw pillows on furniture.

Orange Chicken

Sauce:

- 1 c. water
- ½ c. orange juice
- ¼ c. lemon juice
- ⅓ c. rice vinegar
- 2 ½ Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. grated orange zest
- 1 c. packed brown sugar
- ½ tsp. minced fresh ginger
- ½ tsp. minced garlic
- 2 Tbsp. chopped green onion
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 Tbsp. water

Chicken:

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into ½" pieces
- 1 c. all-purpose flour
- ¼ tsp. each salt and ground pepper
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil

Directions:

1. Pour water, orange juice, lemon juice, rice vinegar, and soy sauce into a saucepan and set over medium-high heat. Stir in the orange zest, brown sugar, ginger, garlic, chopped onion and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil and remove from heat.
2. When contents of saucepan have cooled, pour 1 cup of sauce into a resealable plastic bag and add chicken. Seal the bag, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Reserve remaining sauce.
3. In another resealable plastic bag, mix the flour, salt, and pepper. Add the marinated chicken pieces, seal the bag, and shake to coat.
4. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Place chicken onto the skillet, and brown on both sides. Remove from skillet and keep warm on a baking sheet in the oven.
5. Wipe out the skillet and add the remaining sauce. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Mix together the cornstarch and water; whisk into the sauce to thicken.
6. Transfer chicken to serving platter and mix sauce into chicken before serving.

Terminology Tip

COLLATERAL — A security or guarantee pledged as security for the repayment of a loan if the borrower does not have enough funds to make payments on their loan. In respect to mortgage loans, the collateral is the property being mortgaged, and the lender's claim to that property is called a lien. If the borrower cannot make their mortgage payments, the lender can foreclose on the home and take possession of it to sell and recoup the principal it lent the borrower

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