



Inside This Issue:

- 1 Renovating Before Selling – Is it Worth It?
- 2 Newcomer's Guide to Canadian Housing
- 3 Gift Giving Made Easy
- 3 Eggnog Recipe

Renovating Before Selling – Is it Worth it?

Does your home and current market conditions warrant a home renovation before you sell? Here are some things to consider before you start that large reno job.

Every day a homeowner asks the question, "should we renovate and sell or sell this home as it is?" And every day a homeowner gets the renovation bug and spends thousands of dollars on their aging home only to find that they really made no profit on the work after selling.

Do-it-yourself and home renovation is an extremely enormous market. And with all the inspiring shows we see on television each day, it is hard not to get the bug! Absolutely everything we need is available at the local hardware outlet - some of them even offer free reno classes.

All that is missing is experience. The experience required to select professional materials and not just buying what is presented in the sale catalogue; the experience to handle the difficulties of the job, to prepare the many different types of surfaces that people are confronted with, and the experience to know what can and cannot be achieved without specialized tools or without time to cure products or allow them to settle so that inherent problems do not affect how the finish performs over time.

So what do you do if selling the home is intentional and a profit essential? You need to do a serious market survey and compare your home with what is in your street and area and what they had that you don't. If you are the best home in your street, then you have already hit the top of your market and it will be hard to predict what you will get. In this situation you need to find a buyer who is simply as passionate about your home as you are, and hope that an emotional bid may allow your home to hold the new highest street price as a future comparative yard stick for others.

At the same time, a professional finish can be achieved with a very minor budget. It would be very worth bringing in a professional painter and painting the home in soft colours that provide a warm or cool contrast but do not dominate the colours within your rooms. Another low budget recommendation is to invest your budget in hiring new, fresh furniture for the auction or sale period, so that the furnishings are not tired and worn and can actually modernize the feel of the home.

In closing, your best bet is to have a serious chat with agents or the right people for advice on what is an acceptable limit for your renovation work given the area you live in. Remember, everyone out there wants to purchase a bargain. Why not give your next buyer a home worth renovating! It might be just the thing that attracts them to it.

(Source: hgtv.ca)



Susan & Alicia Zanders
VERICO ZANDERS & Associates
Mortgage Brokers Inc.

☎ 604 461-8063

Toll Free ☎ 1 877 638-3688

Fax: 604 461-8062

Toll Free Fax: 1 866 961-8062

susan.zanders@verico.ca

alicia.zanders@verico.ca

www.vericozanders.com

Newcomer's Guide to Canadian Housing

Roughly two-thirds of Canada's annual population growth now comes from net international migration. For many of these new arrivals, finding a safe, affordable place to live can be an immediate challenge, especially since housing in Canada varies greatly between provinces, territories, cities and communities. To help Canada's newcomers make the best housing decisions, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) offers the following tips on what to look for when buying or renting a new home:

- Decide how much you can afford, how many rooms you will need, where you'd like to live and what type of housing you prefer.
- If you are renting, find out what the rent includes. Remember that while the rent may be higher in central areas, these neighbourhoods also often offer greater access to work, shopping, recreation and public transportation.
- Use several different search methods to find your new home. Ask relatives or friends. Search the classified ads of ethnic, community or daily newspapers. Check bulletin boards in grocery stores, laundromats, libraries, thrift stores, health clinics, etc.
- Many non-governmental agencies can help you find a community where you'll feel comfortable. Make a list of neighbourhoods where you might like to live. Take into account the character of the community and the proximity to medical care, schools, shopping, places of worship and possibilities for work.
- If you're buying a home, make sure you have the right team of professionals. A realtor, which we can recommend to you, an appraiser and a home inspector will give you a better idea of the condition of a home and its worth. A lawyer (or notary in Quebec) will help protect your interests. If you need to arrange for a mortgage, you will need to give us a call so we can help you get a mortgage for your home.
- Before you search for a home, learn more about the housing market and the latest price trends in the city or neighbourhood that interests you. Keep interest rates in mind. Figure out how much you can realistically afford and ask a lender or mortgage broker how large a mortgage loan you qualify for.
- Always check out a house or apartment as thoroughly as possible before committing. Make sure all plumbing, electrical and other systems are in good working order. Ask about utility, repair and other costs that you may have to pay in addition to the rent or mortgage.
- Know your rights and responsibilities as a tenant or home owner. Most cities and towns in Canada have bylaws that protect your rights and responsibilities.
- Try to remain positive and avoid being too choosy. If you're having difficulty finding a permanent place, consider a room that rents by the week or month while you keep looking. Don't feel rushed into renting an apartment or buying a home immediately.

(Source: cmhc.ca)

Roughly two-thirds of Canada's annual population growth comes from net international migration. For many new arrivals, finding a safe, affordable place to live can be an immediate challenge.



Always check out a house or apartment as thoroughly as possible before committing. Make sure all plumbing, electrical and other systems are in good working order. Ask about utility, repair and other costs that you may have to pay in addition to the rent or mortgage.

Gift Giving Made Easy

The perfect gift isn't some sort of urban holiday myth. Finding that right item requires a little thought, some imagination and knowing where to find something that suits the occasion and the receiver.

Dollar Store Bonanza

With dollar stores popping up everywhere, it's easy to find wrapping paper, bows and tape — and at prices that you just can't beat. Look here for baskets, decorative boxes and small ornaments to dress up your presents.

Taste-bud Faves

Rather than the usual bottle of wine, wouldn't it be nice to give a few exotic spices, flavoured oils or vinegars, or a collection of finely crafted condiments? Even smaller grocery stores will carry a few gourmet items. These can be put into a basket, gift box or gift bag or come wrapped.

Magazine magic.

Scan your local newsstand for great gift ideas. Good bets are home and décor, photography, travel, and general lifestyle magazines. Buy a copy of the latest edition and wrap it up with a one-year subscription certificate.

Movie Madness

Even for those who don't get out much to see the latest flick will appreciate movie passes. For friends that have kids, make the gift even more special by offering to baby sit for a few hours while they enjoy the big screen.

Book Basics

Books are a great gift item because they can be very specific (assuming you know someone's tastes quite well) or very general (assuming you don't). Try to make your book selection as personal as possible. Coffee table books are always a hit because they're beautiful to look at and show off. Make sure you write an inscription on the inside to really make it special.



Gift-giving. While there are lots of choices out there, be sure to combine items into a themed present. For example, combining an item (such as one or two rare spices) with a book or magazine on the subject (like recipes or a book on the spice trade) will make a good gift a great one.

The word Christmas originated as a compound meaning "Christ's Mass". It is derived from the Middle English Christemasse and Old English Cristes maesse.

(Source: hgtv.ca)

Eggnog Recipe

Ingredients

- o 4 egg yolks
- o 1/3 cup sugar, plus 1 tablespoon
- o 1 pint whole milk
- o 1 cup heavy cream
- o 3 ounces bourbon
- o 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- o 4 egg whites

Directions

In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat the egg yolks until they lighten in color. Gradually add the 1/3 cup sugar and continue to beat until it is completely dissolved. Add the milk, cream, bourbon and nutmeg and stir to combine.

Place the egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer and beat to soft peaks. With the mixer still running gradually, add the 1 tablespoon of sugar and beat until stiff peaks form.

Whisk the egg whites into the mixture. Chill and serve.

(Source: FoodNetwork.com)