



Compliments of Les Twarog

RE/MAX Crest Realty (Westside)



**Les Twarog**

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Hello to all our valued Clients!

We have been very busy lately buying and selling properties for some of you. The market has picked up since the start of the year due to the pent up demand from people not buying for almost a year.

And did you know that we post most real estate related articles for the Vancouver area on a daily basis? Check them out at [www.BCCondos.net/news](http://www.BCCondos.net/news). Also review our new 7,000 Strata Building Websites at [www.BCCondos.net](http://www.BCCondos.net).

On another note, two of our team members, Wendy Mills and Jenny Hu, have left to create their own team and we wish them both the best.

In gratitude,

*Les Twarog*

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## Balanced Conditions Continue

The Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV) reports that the Greater Vancouver housing market continues to maintain a relative balance between the number of homes for sale and the number of people looking to purchase a home in the region today.

REBGV President Sandra Wyant commented on the balanced market by explaining, "As the term suggests, a balanced market means that many of the key housing market indicators, such as price, are stable and conditions therefore don't tilt in favour of buyers or sellers." Wyant adds, "If you plan to enter the market today, identify your needs, consult your REALTOR® and work to build a 'win-win' scenario with the people on the other side of the sale."

The total number of properties currently listed for sale on the MLS® in Greater Vancouver is 17,289, a six percent decrease compared to June 2012 and a 0.4 percent increase compared to May 2013.

The MLS® Home Price Index composite benchmark price for all residential properties in Greater Vancouver is currently \$601,900. This represents an overall decline of three percent compared to this time last year, but an increase of 2.3 percent compared to January 2013.

If you're in the market to buy or sell in the Greater Vancouver area, you'll

want to find out what the latest real estate conditions are in your area of interest. Please call today for the latest market updates and for a no-obligation review of how your housing wants and needs can be best accommodated in today's local market.



VREB

# MASTER OF DISGUISE

One would be hard pressed to find a homeowner who didn't wish there were some aspects of their home that were less noticeable, if not entirely hidden from sight. Below are some tips and tricks for disguising a few common décor eyesores.



## Unfit for Viewing

To hide unsightly exercise equipment like treadmills, ellipticals, and stationary bikes, create an exercise nook by hanging a curtain from tracking or hooks, or put up a room divider, available in many designs from picture-frame to Asian-style shoji screens. A higher-end solution is a "Murphy gym" that opens to reveal foldable treadmills or weight benches. Alternatively, if you're handy, you could gut or build an armoire yourself in which to hide exercise equipment.

## Goodbye Harvest Gold!

If you have an appliance that's in fine working order but that pains you to look at because it's outdated or worse for wear, consider ordering a front panel and trim kit from the manufacturer or a re-facing company. Other options include the application of a vinyl film or magnetic cover to your appliance. It's a great way to inject some personality into your kitchen, as they come in a variety of colors, themes, and materials (e.g. chalkboard, whiteboard, or stainless-steel panels). You may even consider appliance paint, available in brush-on and spray-on varieties and found at home improvement and paint stores.

## A Tangled Web

With ever more electronic devices in our homes, we have ever more wires to contend with. Thankfully, we also have ever more products intended to better blend cords into our décor, if not conceal them altogether: colored cords;

decorative clip-ons that dress cables up and keep them in place; cord covers, or "raceways", which come in hard or flexible varieties that can be painted and mounted to desks, shelves, or along trim; boxes that house power bars; and hollowed-out baseboards designed for containing cords, just to name a few.

## On the Wall

Security-alarm panels, buzzers/intercoms, unused phone jacks and vents, electrical panels – even if you don't consider these eyesores, they're often inconveniently located. Here's a clever trick to hide them: put hinges on picture frames deep enough to hang overtop them. Canvas art works well, as do framed mirrors; the latter option is particularly great for small areas like entryways and halls, which tend to have many such features. The great thing about this solution is you always have access to what the frame is concealing just by swinging it open.

## Hidden from View

When the eyesore isn't in your home, but visible from it, what can you do? Window coverings are the obvious answer, in particular cellular shades, which obstruct unsightly views but allow plenty of light, and top-down shades, which let you see the sky above while hiding the eyesore below. Other options that help hide the sight without blocking the light include stained glass windows or stained glass paint; glass block, ideal for ultra-modern décors; and decorative window film, which comes in a wide variety of colors and designs.



## FAMILY FRIENDLY

Whether you currently have children, plan on starting a family, or are just concerned about resale value, consider these signs of a family-friendly neighborhood when deciding where to move.

- Do amenities and events demonstrate that children are important to this neighborhood? Are there playgrounds and parks? A local pool? Sports fields? Community center? If so, are they in good condition? Parents should check the local paper to see the number and nature of family-friendly events listed, and visit local libraries and theaters to see what they offer children.
- Drive through or walk around the neighborhood. Do you see things like trikes and basketball hoops in driveways? Strollers on front porches? Swing sets in backyards? Do you see many children out playing after school and on weekends? These are signs of a community that's already been vetted by other parents, and signs your child(ren) will have plenty of local play dates.
- Is the community safe for kids? Are there sidewalks (and are they in good condition) or would children have to get around using the street? Are entrances to recreational areas clearly marked and visible? Is the neighborhood well lit after dark? How busy is the street you'd be living on? What's the speed limit there? Are local intersections and crosswalks clearly marked?
- Does the area boast good schools? Even buyers with no need for them should ask their real estate rep about local schools, an important feature when it comes time to sell. Parents will want to dig deeper, visiting schools, obtaining copies of student handbooks, and inquiring about extra-curricular activities, lunch programs, and support for students with special needs, for example.



## FIRST, BUT NOT LEAST

One of the more common reasons why homes linger on the market longer than they need to is because the seller didn't take the first offer seriously. Don't make the same mistake yourself!

Sellers often believe that the first offer they receive is just one of several to come. This is particularly true if the offer comes in quickly after listing; when this happens, sellers may feel they've priced their property too low and, as a result, dismiss the first offer out of hand, holding out hope that a higher offer will come along or that they'll have many from which to choose.

There are a couple of problems with not taking your first offer seriously, however. One, first offers generally tend to come from buyers who are motivated. By the time they've submitted their offer, they've likely researched the market, seen your competition, and weighed the pros and cons of your property, so they're probably serious about doing business. Two, it's when a listing is new that it generates the most – and highest – offers; the longer a property sits on the market, the less interest it attracts and the lower the price of any offers that do come in.

Your first offer isn't necessarily your best, only, or ideal offer, but it shouldn't be ignored simply because it's your first offer. Like all offers, it should be received in the spirit in which it was likely made: seriously. You needn't accept it as-is, but if you work with your real estate representative to draft a counter-offer and keep negotiations open, your first offer might just become your best offer!



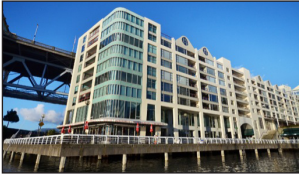
## Les' Lessons - Client Almost Lost \$104,000

Recently, I had a call from an offshore client for help. In 2010, he put a downpayment on a new condo in a desirable downtown Vancouver building. Due to changes in mortgage financing regulations in Canada over the past 3 years, he was no longer eligible for bank financing and was going to lose his \$104,000 deposit to the developer.

I called my Mortgage Broker associate, Dean Tylor. Dean was able to provide the client with a financing solution. The client wants to sell upon completion, so I have a new listing for \$550,000 – and a happy client. Realtors that have not worked with a resourceful mortgage broker are unaware of how many opportunities they miss out on. The same holds true for a buyer that misses out on purchasing that dream home, vacation property or great real estate investment.

**\$1,690,000**

#201 – 1010 Beach Ave



1000 Beach Complex, Spectacular  
1917 sf Waterfront Residence

**\$466,000 / \$466,000**

302/303 – 1205 Howe



Alto – 659 sf, 1 Bed + Den and  
200 sf balcony North Facing

**\$1,265,000**

3105 – 833 Homer



Atelier, 1350 sf, N/W Facing  
2 Bed + Den + Storage Sub P/H

**\$1,275,000**

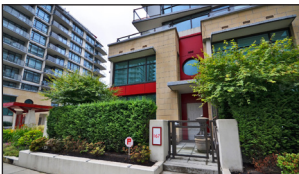
1561 Smith Rd – Gibsons



Executive Log Home, 4267 sf, 5 Bed,  
4 Bath West Coast Executive Log home

**\$599,000**

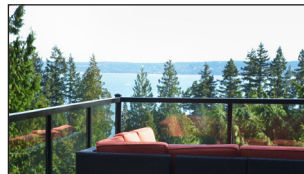
TH 167 Esplanade



Atrium at the Pier – 882 sf, 2 Level,  
1 Bed + 1.5 Bath - North Vancouver

**\$2,450,000**

4722 Meadfield Pl.



4000+ sf 4 Bed, 4 Bath West Coast style  
view home - West Vancouver

**\$648,800**

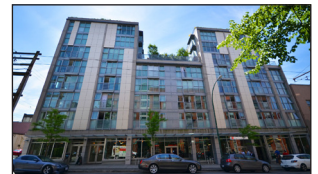
#205 – 1228 Homer



Stunning 935 sf 1 Bed + Den in Vancouver's  
most sought after location, Yaletown

**\$699,000**

806 – 168 Powell



Smart 2 Level Penthouse Suite, 1035 sf  
2 Bed + Office + 282 sf private roof deck

**\$559,000**

1001 – 2668 Ash



Cambridge Gardens, Remodeled 1200 sf,  
2 Bed + Den, 2 Bath Suite With View

**\$788,000**

#1801 – 550 Pacific



1,055 sf, South Facing 2 Bed, 2 Bath + Den  
Suite at "Aqua at the Park"

**\$539,900**

2207 – 688 Abbott



Firenze II, Fabulous 2 Bed, 2 Bath N/W  
Corner w/ Sweeping Mountain and Water Views

**\$699,999**

3203 – 1200 W Georgia



Residences on Georgia, 1002 sf, 2 Bed, 2 Bath  
+ Den w/ Balcony Spectacular N/W views of  
Ocean and North Shore Mountain.

View all our listings at [www.6717000.com/res](http://www.6717000.com/res)

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The Mortgage Bros

Dominion Lending Centres Casa Mortgage Inc.



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- ✓ Over the past year mortgage regulations have made it harder for people who are Self Employed to get financing.
  - ✓ We can get it done for you.
- ✓ It's not all about the rates - it's about proper mortgage structure and meeting your needs.

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