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BUY | SELL | RENT

Compliments of Les Twarog

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Hello again valued clients!

**My Top 8 Tips
for Real Estate Investment**

1. Use a Mortgage Broker to advise you.
2. Buy properties that generate positive cash flow.
3. Work with an experienced Realtor.
4. Use a Professional Home Inspector.
5. Consult with your Accountant/Lawyer before buying.
6. Keep proper income and expense records for investment property.
7. Hire an Experienced Property Manager to assist you.
8. For tax reasons, avoid buying and selling properties quickly.

In gratitude,

Les Twarog

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DEMAND FOR HOUSING SOARS

The Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV) reported a significant jump in buyer demand this spring, resulting in 3,286 residential properties sold on the Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) during the month of May. This represents a 14 percent increase compared to the 2,882 sales recorded in May 2013, and a 7.7 percent increase compared to April 2014 sales.

REBGV President Ray Harris noted, "Our MLS® statistics tell us that there's more home buyer demand today than at any point over the last three years." Specifically, "With sales surpassing the 3,000 mark in May and our sales-to-active-listing ratio exceeding 20 percent, this is the most active marketplace we've seen since the spring of 2011."

As far as the cost of homes, Harris points out, "Home prices have experienced consistent yet modest increases in our region since the beginning of 2013." The benchmark price for detached properties in May 2014 was \$966,500 – a 5.4

percent increase from May 2013, while the benchmark price of an apartment property increased 3.2 percent during the same period to \$377,500. The benchmark price of an attached unit increased 3.1 percent to \$469,100.

As the market continues to heat up, more people are putting their homes up for sale in hopes of taking advantage of the rising prices. Are you wondering how much your current property may sell for in today's active real estate environment? Please call today for the latest local market update!





FINISHING TOUCHES

Furniture is a practical necessity, but it's through our accessories that we really express our style and personality, make our living spaces utterly unique and “complete” our environments. Below are five home décor accessories that are essential for turning any house – or condo – into a home.

- **Art.** But not just any old art: pieces you truly connect with, that you love to look at each and every day, be they fabric wall-hangings, travel photography from your globe-trekking adventures, or Dadaist prints. Just avoid the all-too-common décor faux pas of hanging your art too high. And consider highlighting (some of) your art with accent lighting (such as picture lights, which attach to picture frames; recessed lighting; or ceiling-mounted spotlights) to really make an impactful statement of your art.
- **Plants.** Make your home come alive (literally!) with a living accessory. In addition to looking (and often smelling) good, plants are functional too. They can help camouflage flaws (block an unsightly view with a strategically placed plant); be used to create a focal point (a big Thatch palm or Dracaena tree makes a bold statement); and improve your indoor air quality (English ivy, Boston ferns, and rubber, spider, and snake plants are excellent choices for this purpose). Just do your homework before bringing any plant into your home – some species can be toxic to pets or people.
- **Rugs.** It's been said that a rug can really tie a room together. Available in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, they're a great way to add color, pattern, and texture to a room, and warmth and softness to cold, hardwood or stone floors. Rugs can serve to provide a room's focal point (think bold colors and geometric patterns), or to define certain areas, or zones, in an open-concept floorplan – make sure the rug is big enough to go under the furniture pieces that define the zone.
- **Lamps.** The overhead fixtures that come with most rooms may provide adequate general (or ambient) lighting, but left at that, a room looks rather stark. No décor is truly complete until it has the three light layers (ambient, task, and accent) needed to establish mood and provide functional lighting for the room's uses. Floor and table lamps are key to providing ambient and task lighting, but they needn't look utilitarian – with so many choices available, you can express your style through lamps just as easily as you can through artwork or rugs.
- **A collection.** As so many of us have something we collect, and those collections reveal much about our personality and passions to anyone visiting our home, why not make them part of the décor? Whatever the nature of your collection – books, records, tea pots, or vintage cameras – you'd be surprised at the number of creative ways it can be incorporated into your décor. Displays of collections can be so ingeniously creative, in fact, as to qualify as that first thing on this list: art.

BEST IGNORED

No property is perfect – each one you come across will have its flaws, but while some are justifiable grounds for crossing a home off your list, others aren't. Below are four things that *shouldn't* be dealbreakers.

- **Unappealing décor.** Outdated or ultra-modern: whatever the reason you're turned off by a potential property's décor, keep in mind that this is a cosmetic flaw – in other words, it's a problem that's easily solved. If you can't look past the gaudy wallpaper, stained carpeting, and/or shabby cabinetry, you might just miss out on a property perfectly suited to your needs.
- **Minor repairs.** A home in need of significant (read: costly) work is one you'd be justified in walking away from. But problems of a "leaks and squeaks" nature – faucets, cupboards, and drawers needing a little attention, for example – are minor, and relatively easy and inexpensive to repair; as such, they shouldn't put you off an otherwise sound property.
- **Odors.** Certain odors – the smell of mold for instance – are always cause for concern, and you wouldn't want to live near a factory that produces a foul smell, of course. But odors from cooking, smoking, or pets, while unpleasant, can be dealt with; walls can be washed and repainted with odor-eliminating paint, and carpets can be steam cleaned, for example.
- **The listing.** Sometimes, buyers write off a property before they even see it due to the listing itself – perhaps the photos are unflattering, the price seems too high or low, or it's been on the market for a long time. Consider that if your real estate representative shows you such a listing, there must be a reason – give it a chance.



STAY FOR A WHILE!

The less time buyers spend in your home, the less likely they'll be to purchase it. Create a welcoming atmosphere – one that encourages buyers to linger long enough for a good look around your home – with these tips.

- Make sure the temperature inside your home is comfortable – not too hot, not too cold. This is especially important at this time of year, when the mercury is spiking and air conditioners are put to the test.
- Lighten and brighten your home's interior. A dark home doesn't exactly exclaim to buyers, "Welcome! Stay for a while!" Not to mention a home is more difficult to navigate in the dark, potentially causing accidents. So replace those burnt bulbs, turn up those dimmers, flick those switches, and open those window treatments.
- Have some low-key music at the ready – soft jazz, classical, or ambient, for example – so you or your real estate representative can just press play (volume set to low, of course) before potential buyers arrive for showings.
- Leave out some refreshments. Freshly baked goods have the added benefit of making your home smell, well, homey – exactly the goal. And some chilled water bottles or pitcher of iced tea will be particularly appreciated this time of year and help you stand out in buyers' memories.
- Lastly, don't be home. Few things make buyers more uncomfortable than the homeowner's presence during showings; feeling they're intruding, buyers are more likely to rush through the showing so they can leave. Have an exit strategy planned for last-minute showings, be it going for coffee or taking Fido for a walk.

1. Get a Realtor to negotiate for you.

It's free. The Buyers Agent works for you, protecting your interest in the transaction and gets paid by the Seller.

2. Don't buy on Emotion.

Falling "in love" with the home in front of the Selling Agent or Seller can cost you more. If you really want the property, be poker faced – don't show your feelings.

3. Get qualified before you shop.

Make sure you get qualified with a Mortgage Broker so when you find a place you love, you know you can afford it.

Vancouver West Side

3.5 Floors of Elegant Luxury
South Granville
 5,385 sq ft
 Excellent School Catchment
 5 Bed & 6 Bath



North Vancouver

Amazing City & Harbour Views
Lower Lonsdale Penthouse
 2 Bed & Den / 2 Bath
 300 s/f of balconies + a roof deck
 Victoria Park across the street



Richmond Farm

Great Investment Opportunity
9.28 Acre Blueberry Farm
 3,600+ sq ft home
 Close to Golf, Rec Centre
 and Theatres



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