



Staging Your House to Sell

As we all know, the real estate market has changed drastically in the past few years. Last time we I were looking for a new home, our dream home was snapped up by someone who paid the asking price in cash, as well as bought the car in the garage! Homes were moving quickly then, and for awhile, real estate prices escalated.

Now, however, there is a larger inventory of homes for sale and the market activity has slowed considerably. This is probably why in the past six months, home staging services have become the mainstay of my interior redesign business.

Real estate staging has come to the foothills because the market is asking for it. Many of our buyers are arriving from the Bay Area, where staging is a more established practice, and sellers realize that, in order to receive top dollar in this competitive market, their home must be presented in its best possible light. Home staging gives the impression of good living, a comfortable environment, and minimal improvements needed.

Staging a home to sell means preparing the property so that it will appeal to the largest number of potential buyers, and thus sell in the shortest amount of time. The goal of home staging is to highlight the positives, distract from the negatives, and minimize any potential concerns. For example, if you have great views, arrange furniture to face the windows; a nondescript house can be spruced up with the addition or distribution of colorful, interesting art and accessories; updated lighting and appliances give a potential buyer the impression that the entire home has been well maintained.

Redesign staging is my favorite way to improve a home for sale. This type of staging means working with the sellers and using their own furnishings, art and accessories to show the house to its best advantage. This usually requires minimizing personal items, pre-packing unnecessary things and neutralizing the home so that nearly anyone can imagine themselves living there. (Think: model home). The challenge here involves living with less stuff while your home is on the market. After all the hard work, my clients admit they enjoyed living in the new streamlined, clutter-free environment that we created.

A good real estate stager will make a house as pristine, simply decorated and neutral in style as possible, so that when a house hunter recalls it later, he will easily remember its unique architecture, beautiful setting, immaculate condition or ample size, as opposed to its contents.

Please don't wait until it's time to move, however, to make the most of your living environment. If your home is not on the market, try to emphasize its assets and enjoy its unique beauty every day you live there.

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