



de Harmonious Home Adventures

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It's kind of amazing that the end of 2017 is almost here. The New Year means different things to different people but, for all of us, it's a time to take stock of where we've been, where we are, and where we're going.

For some of us, it's time to think about moving on - *really* moving, that is.

This month's newsletter is the first of a two-part series about things that you need to think about and change when you're planning to put your current home on the market: the beginnings of staging.

And it illustrates one of the reasons that it helps to have a realtor who is skilled in staging, styling, and redesign. By the way, *I offer complimentary staging evaluation services to each of my listing clients.*

Whatever your real estate plans, I hope the New Year brings you peace, joy, and prosperity!

xxxooo

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Things to Consider and Change When You Sell – Part 1

Changing Expectations

Once upon a time, standard rule for selling a house might have been: “Vacuum the carpet, get the dirty dishes out of the sink, and stick a sign in the front yard.”

The advent of HGTV and similar opportunities for broad swaths of the public to see into the world of real estate transactions has changed that. Once, people thought that a home offered for sale should be reasonably clean. Now everyone expects a house on the market to look as if a designer just prepped it for a “reveal.”

And, guess what? Modern experience dictates how quickly - and for what price - a home sells is directly correlated to how well it meets those expectations.

Translation: If you want your house to sell, make it look like the “after” shots on HGTV.

Expanding on the Old Rules

The premise of the old rule was spot on: in order to sell, your home must be clean. That hasn't changed. Now, however, you need to add that it must be UNCLUTTERED. By “uncluttered,” we don't just mean tidy. We mean almost Spartan.

Phases of Uncluttered

You might think of “uncluttered” as comprising two categories:

- • Permanent – applies the whole time your house is on the market; and
- • Temporary or For Showings – things to take care of immediately before showings (or when you leave the house each morning).

Permanent

Making your home look and feel uncluttered means getting rid of anything that unnecessarily takes up space - physical or visual. The biggest offenders are furniture and tchotchkes (knick knacks).



Furniture – Room to Maneuver – Typically, buyers come in twos and they have a realtor who will tour the home with them. So, ideally, three adults should be able to walk abreast throughout as much of your home as possible. If you can't make enough room for three, then at least shoot for two.

Point - A room that's so crowded with furniture that you can't easily navigate through it

will make the whole house feel cramped and claustrophobic.

Consider renting a storage unit for the extra furniture that you have to remove to make your home maneuverable. Seriously. Making the house feel bright, airy, and spacious will help maximize its selling price. That will more than offset the storage expense.

Knick Knacks – Poison Pills – You’ve probably heard that the aim of staging a house for sale is to make buyers imagine themselves living there. If your buyers walk into a room and see a display of your Aunt Mable’s collection of six thousand Hummel figurines, their imagination shuts down.

A good rule of thumb: if the reason it's on display is its sentimental value, it should go.

If the real reason you have a piece displayed starts with “it was given to me by” or “it reminds me of,” then chances are you should remove it. Your buyers won’t feel the same way that you do.

You want your buyers to see themselves in the space. Things that trigger *your* emotions - that make living there special to *you* - won’t help your buyers do that. Buyers usually can’t see past your things.

You want buyers to visualize *their* tribal mask collection on the wall or *their* Lladro porcelains in *their* display cabinet in the corner. *Depersonalize* the space so that your buyers are able to personalize it for themselves.

Depersonalizing is Good for Sellers, Too

Listen to your realtor or stager's advice about what can stay and what needs to go. That advice is not a criticism of your taste – again, it’s a method to *depersonalize*. And it’s important for you, too, as a seller.

Chances are that you're pretty attached to your home, even if you've decided to sell. In order to get through this process with as little emotional trauma as possible, and to be able to treat it as a business proposition, you need to dial back that attachment. Changing things up so that the space no longer looks and feels as it did all the time you lived there helps you detach and think clearly about the transaction.



Next month, we’ll talk about the temporary or “for showings” steps that you need to take so that your home has the look and feel modern buyers expect – plus a couple of *No Matter What* things that you need to remember at all costs.

Until then,

Be Safe & Happy New Year!



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ABOUT DEBRA

Debra's experience in home renovation, staging, styling, and redesign sets her apart from the crowd in the Fort Worth area real estate market.

- Creativity to re-imagine existing spaces for broader appeal.
- Vision to see opportunities where others see problems.
- Insight to know what buyers are looking for.

Debra doesn't just listen - she empathizes.
She matches buyers to spaces.

Debra doesn't just sell property - she maximizes potential.
She helps her clients find *harmony* in their lives.



Visit Debra on Social Media



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