



ah Harmonious Home Adventures

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Hello!

April is a rock-and-roll kind of month - both in the weather and in the real estate market. The weather changes so fast that your morning wardrobe is completely inappropriate for the afternoon. And properties for sale appear and disappear like shooting stars.

Last month (if you missed it, you can find it [here](#)) we started talking about buyers' needs when searching for the home that will enable them to love where they live, like everyone should!

This month - inspectors. Why buyers need to hire one whenever they're considering purchasing a property.

You *deserve* to have harmony in your life, and I can help. Let's do it together!



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Some Things You Can See ...

Buying a home is an enormous investment - the biggest that most of us will ever make. So, sure, you're going to be careful when you look things over.

But let's face it - not everything that's wrong with a house is going to be readily apparent. Not everything is going to be in places that you normally look.

Not only that, but when you're looking, are you sure that you even know what you're looking at?

And Some Things You Can't

A lot of things that need to be checked when you're plunking down the kind of money it takes to purchase a home are things that escape the notice of even the most conscientious layperson buyer.

That's why an entire industry has arisen over the last few decades of professionals whose education, training, and experience qualifies them to search the places you might not search, perform tests that you might not know how to perform (or interpret), and uncover things that ordinarily would evade detection.



Choosing An Inspector

The way it typically works in Texas is that any offer you make on a home will include an unconditional right to terminate the contract for a given period of time (generally seven to ten days). This is called the "option period."

The primary purpose of the option period is to allow you to get whatever inspections done

that will give you the confidence to move forward with the purchase.

You certainly ask your Realtor for recommendations - but expect to get a list in response. Most agents want to avoid any appearance of collusion in this process.

Do your own research. In today's Internet age, you can find out a lot of information about just anyone offering a professional service. Probably the two most important things to look for are:

- Is the inspector licensed (in Texas, licensing is by the Texas Real Estate Commission); and
- Is the inspector insured?

Their website should provide this information. When in doubt, ask. If the prospective inspector is hesitant, at all, about providing answers, just move on. Quickly. There are lots of other choices.

Once You Have an Inspector, Then What?

The inspector will schedule an appointment for the inspection with the seller's agent. Your agent will let you know when it will take place.

The inspection will take about three hours, give or take. If possible, meet the inspector at the property - at least for the last part of the inspection. While you'll receive a written report, being able to walk through the home with the inspector and have him point things out to you is invaluable.

A professional inspector knows where to look. He'll get on the roof; he'll go under the house into the crawlspace (if your house is pier-and-beam construction, of course.) He'll go into the attic. And he's trained to detect signs of problems, both existing and potential.

The inspection report will detail all of the systems of your home - plumbing, electrical, foundation, roof, structure, HVAC, kitchen appliances, and more. Most will have photographs and test results.

So, What Good is a Report?

Like the old saying goes: knowledge is power. It's also peace of mind.

At the extremes, a glowing inspection report can completely set your mind at ease about the purchase and a horrible one can allow you to avoid getting trapped in a money pit. The truth is that most reports - even on newly constructed properties (more on that subject in a minute) fall somewhere in between.

No matter what, knowing what the problems are puts you in the position to make choices.

Can the situation be repaired? If so, how much will it cost?

Is the seller willing to reduce the price of the house to offset the cost of repair? Or, perhaps, make the repair before closing?

Your realtor likely has had clients in the same or similar situations many times and can help guide you through this process. (*Another reason buyers need an agent!*)

A Word About Older Homes

It's a fact: older homes will have more problems than new construction. If you're considering an older home, you should expect this.

The charm and character that a home develops over the years comes at a

price in condition - even in the most immaculately maintained property. But you can't get that charm and character any other way.



Many people (me, for example) love older homes and would rather live in one than new construction under pretty much any reasonably acceptable circumstances. They understand that an older home may not be up to current code or that the electrical may be out of date or that ordinary living produces wear and tear.

But sometimes it makes choosing an inspector a little trickier.

Inspectors are people and, like anyone, they're going to have their preferences. Some will go to considerable lengths to steer buyers away from older homes. It's worth it to have a conversation with a prospective inspector to find out their attitude about older homes.

A Word About New Construction

If you're buying a newly constructed home, you might think that you don't need to worry with an inspection. You would be wrong.

I once worked with a builder to construct a new home. Before closing, I decided to hire an inspector, just as I would have if the house had been previously-owned. The inspection report showed some cracked rafters, revealed by the inspector's examination of the attic space.

The builder repaired them without any problem but I never would have discovered the condition without a professional inspection.

And Another Tip About New Homes

This one doesn't involve a buy/sell transaction but it involves the role of inspectors.

If you buy a new house, it will come with a builder's warranty, typically for a period of a year. Have a professional inspection of your home 60-90 days before the end of the warranty period. It will help you identify the things that you need to request your builder to repair before your warranty expires.

You Deserve to Love Where You Live

The cost of having a professional inspection done is a pittance compared to the peace of mind that it can help you have. Peace of mind is an important component of having harmony in your life and loving where you live.



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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.

You can - and should - love where you live!



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