

DECORATING

STAGING YOUR WAY TO HAPPIER HOLIDAYS

by Susan Crema-Martin

This is the time of year that the real estate market usually slows down but this year I am still receiving calls from realtors to assist homeowners to prepare their properties for sale. Staging your way to 'Happier Holidays' is possible even during this holiday season. Many homes get that holiday polish for family and friends visiting so your property is guaranteed to "show" better. Preparing a consultation report and offering staging services really helps clients with the process of putting a property on the market and giving it a "wow" factor. Some of the furniture rental companies even give discounts over the holidays.

Contrary to popular belief, the holiday season is an excellent time to sell your home. There aren't as many homes on the market so that means less competition. Most sellers don't like to move during the holidays, so the buyers who are out viewing homes are serious. Many buyers set deadlines for their move.

Keeping that in mind, you have to be prepared to take advantage of every buyer's visit. Staging, simply put is putting the finishing touches on your home, to highlight and enhance its positive features.

Here are 5 simple tips to keep in mind when staging for the holidays:

- Outside decorations – potential buyers should notice your house, but should not be distracted by your decorations (i.e. Chevy Chase's *Christmas Vacation*). A few strands of single-coloured lights framing the entrance, or urns adorned with fresh greenery, twigs and berries or a wreath on the front door will suffice.
- Clutter—follow the staging rule of "less is more" principle; simple décor on main items such as a mantle and the banister of your home; think "elegant" not "cutesy".
- "No religious items" applies to the holidays as well. Whatever symbolizes your particular holiday (The Nativity, menorahs, etc.) should be kept to a minimum.
- A small assortment of wrapped gifts under the tree is a lovely touch; large items make a room feel small; colourful plastic toys and empty boxes... not so much. Clean up after the celebration!
- If your MLS photos were taken while your decorations were on display, have them retaken as soon as the holidays are over.

We can easily guide you through the process while allowing you to enjoy the season. Wouldn't the best present be a nice offer? Wishing you a season filled with fun, family and friends – Merry Christmas to all.



Outdoors: urns with greenery



Indoors: less is more!



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