



The Real Estate Informer

Real Estate News of the San Ramon Valley and Lamorinda
from Bernard Gibbons of Alain Pinel Realtors

August 1st, 2006

www.BernardGibbons.com



PLANNING SOME REPAIRS OR REMODELING?

This is just a reminder that, as a service to readers of The Real Estate Informer, I maintain a database of contractors with expertise in a wide variety of trades.

These are all people who are either known to me personally or who have been recommended by my clients or fellow agents and who have shown themselves to be reliable, capable and trustworthy. They are not necessarily the cheapest you will find but they do give good value and they do a professional job.

They include painters, electricians, tree specialists, pool specialists, landscapers, window suppliers, roofers, handymen, general contractors and more.

You don't have to be preparing your home for sale (although I do always appreciate some advance notice). If you need a contractor for any work you are planning and you don't already have somebody in mind, just send an email to Bernard@BernardGibbons.com and I will do my best to help.

THINKING ABOUT SELLING YOUR HOME?

If you are planning to sell in the next few months, please call me now! If I have some advance notice, I can often suggest low-cost improvements that can get you a higher price and/or get a sale agreed faster. Time, rather than money, is what is often needed, so advance notice really helps everyone concerned.

When I contract with you to list your home for sale, I also work to a carefully orchestrated marketing program that is designed to gain maximum exposure for your home in the initial listing period.

Publications like Homes and Land require that advertising space is booked well ahead of publication date so advance notice is often essential in order to maximize the advertising impact.

If you want to physically move in October or November, you should ideally be contacting me now to discuss the pricing and marketing. Your home can then be listed and marketed in September, traditionally a very good time of the year to sell a home. Call me now on (925) 997-1585 and we can arrange to get things started.

Bernard Gibbons

Restaurant Review

Campo di Bocce, 175 E Vineyard Ave., Livermore

Much more than just a restaurant, Campo di Bocce is a purpose built Bocce club with 8 world class, state-of-the-art Bocce courts (4 inside and 4 outside), complemented by an Italian restaurant set in a purpose built contemporary interpretation of an old world Italian Villa.

Bocce is a game that anybody can play (although not necessarily well) and although Campo di Bocce had been open only a couple of weeks on our visit, it is already very popular. We were fortunate in that just one court was immediately available for us and after an enjoyable hour spent playing Bocce (a first for all of us), while also enjoying cocktails, our party of four was ready for dinner.

On this pleasant summer evening, we opted to dine on the terrace, an attractive setting divided into multiple areas, with two outdoor fireplaces and an outside bar. The menu is very traditional with starters including bruschetta, frito misto and antipasti, while main courses range from a wide choice of pizzas and pastas to chicken parmigiana and filet mignon. There is also an extensive wine list.

Sylvia and I shared a portion of fried calamari to start and then Sylvia had lasagna while I chose lamb sirloin which was accompanied by risotto. Portion sizes are large. I thought the calamari were only average. Sylvia's entree was enormous and well flavored although somewhat dry, while my lamb was very tasty. One member of our party had the chicken parmigiana which was quite delicious.

Campo di Bocce is about much more than food though. This is really a full evening's entertainment and should be viewed as such. If you don't mind a drive out into Livermore wine country, give it a try. I will certainly go back again. Find out more and see the full menus and wine list at www.campodibocci.com.

Reviews such as the one above are included as a service to introduce people to interesting restaurants in the San Ramon Valley. They should not be taken as any form of recommendation. We have no connection with any restaurateurs in the area and all opinions expressed are strictly those of the writer.

Quality Service Counts in Real Estate

For Larry Romito quality is a passion. The president and CEO of Quality Service Certification is successfully convincing real estate professionals that certified service is the key to their success.

QSC delivers and manages the Quality Service Certification® program throughout the United States and Canada for real estate agents and brokers. It was created to offer greater value for the home seller or buyer by providing consistent, reliable, accountable and responsive service for every real estate transaction. Even though real estate professionals are independent contractors, they can still be held to and benefit from accountability.

That's where QSC enters the picture. It offers home sellers and buyers a unique option for selecting the service professional with whom they will do business. By checking the Customer Satisfaction Rating (CSR) of an agent, the home seller or buyer is able to view the agent's independently validated record of past customer satisfaction.

QSC gives brokers and agents a way to measure results. Real estate professionals put in writing what the customer should expect. Then customers get to assess the professionals on service delivery and service satisfaction.

Editor's Note: Bernard Gibbons earned the QSC designation in July 2006 and looks forward to continuing to provide the highest level of customer service to home buyers and sellers throughout the San Ramon Valley and Lamorinda.

This newsletter is for information purposes only and nothing herein is offered as advice. It is not Intended To solicit any properties currently listed for sale with a broker. All content is believed to be accurate but is not verified or guaranteed. E&OE

Market Review – August 2006

How is the market doing? Is it a good time to buy? Is it a good time to sell? I can't tell you how often I have been asked these questions in recent weeks. I know that many of you want to move but you are understandably cautious given the shift in the market from this time last year, so let's try to answer some of these questions.

Is It A Good Time To Buy?

There are more homes for sale here than usual. So if you are in a position to buy, there should be lots of choice. This large inventory also means that sellers are often prepared to accept an offer below list price. This is particularly true for older homes that are in need of updating.

Prices are presently very stable. Certainly they have fallen from a year ago but they now appear to have leveled out. The Bay Area economy is one of the strongest in California. Employment is high and more jobs are being created every month. The housing market is strong.

Based on the above, I think this is a great time to buy. Everybody wants to sell at the top of the market and buy at the bottom. For buyers, this is probably as good as it will get.

Is It A Good Time To Sell?

There is a misconception that all homes are taking a long time to sell. The fact is that desirable homes, accurately priced, are selling within a few weeks. This is what happens in a normal market. I have also seen numerous cases recently where homes have sold above list price. So if you have a nicely upgraded or remodeled home in a good area, list it for sale with confidence. Provided that you don't have unreasonable expectations, it will sell. But what if you don't have such a nice home? Well this is when you really need to be realistic if you want to achieve a sale in a reasonable time frame. First of all you need to make it as appealing as possible to a potential buyer. If you are working with me, I will tell you exactly what you need to do but getting rid of all the clutter and making sure that the paintwork and carpeting is up to scratch is a good start. Then you must price it aggressively. A year ago, it seems that people would pay whatever you wanted regardless of condition. Those days are gone for a long time. Every home will sell reasonably quickly at the right price.

The potential sellers with the bigger problem are those who live in an area where there are lots of homes already for sale. San Ramon's Windemere immediately comes to mind. There are homes in Windemere that have been on the market for months. Yet similar homes come on to the market and sell quickly. You can sell your home quickly in this situation but you have to be realistic. You need to listen to your agent regarding pricing. Over-pricing is the kiss of death. You absolutely must price it below similar homes to have a chance of selling quickly. Upgrades will speed the sale rather than add value in such cases.

So How Is The Real Estate Market Doing?

Overall, things are a little slow at present but there are good opportunities for buyers, desirable homes are still selling quickly and interest rates are still low. All these are good signs. Look for a strong recovery in the next few months.

San Ramon Valley Market Update

The 40 most recently Closed Sales in Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville, San Ramon,
Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda
(Last Calendar Month - Sorted By City and Sold Price)

Address	City	Beds	Baths	Part Baths	SqFt	Lot SqFt	List Price	Sold Price
340 Lakeview Place	Alamo	5	4	1	4750	34400	\$2,425,000	\$2,230,000
16 E Ridge	Blackhawk	5	5	1	7172	26870	\$3,498,000	\$3,498,000
304 Borel Lane	Danville	3	2	0	1145	0	\$499,900	\$486,000
405 Garden Creek Pl	Danville	2	1	1	1090	1127	\$493,000	\$492,000
81 Fawn Pl	Danville	3	2	1	1590	3008	\$699,000	\$715,000
226 Abigail Cir	Danville	4	2	1	2396	4000	\$799,950	\$799,950
44 Summer Hill Ct	Danville	3	2	1	1862	2880	\$849,990	\$842,500
123 Blackstone Dr	Danville	5	3	0	2595	4775	\$998,500	\$990,500
370 Adagio Dr	Danville	5	3	1	2737	10800	\$999,999	\$999,999
504 Honey Lake Ct	Danville	4	3	0	3281	7440	\$1,109,000	\$1,067,500
162 Merano St	Danville	4	3	0	2933	8320	\$1,200,000	\$1,185,000
1031 Westridge Ave	Danville	5	2	1	2312	14848	\$1,225,000	\$1,200,000
112 Shadewell Dr	Danville	4	3	1	2923	11150	\$1,450,000	\$1,410,000
104 Edinburgh Circle	Danville	5	4	1	3895	18224	\$1,604,500	\$1,604,500
142 Sunhaven Rd	Danville	5	3	1	3416	18905	\$1,679,000	\$1,679,000
3648 Bickerstaff	Lafayette	2	1	0	1082	6500	\$739,000	\$735,000
3411 Moraga Blvd	Lafayette	3	1	0	1400	7070	\$839,000	\$830,000
22 Camino Ct	Lafayette	5	4	0	3000	20860	\$1,295,000	\$1,295,000
221 Sandringham N	Moraga	4	2	1	2633	12000	\$1,195,000	\$1,250,000
3848 Campolindo Dr	Moraga	5	3	0	2653	14000	\$1,325,000	\$1,299,500
14 Las Cascadas	Orinda	4	2	0	2136	12750	\$1,128,888	\$1,190,000
387 Eastridge Drive	San Ramon	2	2	0	1050	0	\$469,900	\$469,900
610 Canyon Woods Ct	San Ramon	2	2	0	1042	0	\$519,500	\$490,000
913 Joree Ln	San Ramon	3	2	1	1605	0	\$629,950	\$615,000
2113 Joree Lane	San Ramon	3	3	0	1892	0	\$699,000	\$683,000
25 Brian Court	San Ramon	4	2	0	1427	7125	\$695,000	\$695,000
207 Forest Creek Ln	San Ramon	4	2	1	1912	2830	\$715,000	\$715,000
45 Canyon Green Ct.	San Ramon	3	2	1	2354	2912	\$749,900	\$730,000
503 Deer Terrace Ct	San Ramon	4	2	1	2148	4000	\$848,800	\$848,800
9485 Thunderbird Pl	San Ramon	4	3	0	3094	13600	\$899,900	\$885,000
2100 Goldenrod Lane	San Ramon	5	3	0	3471	8345	\$999,950	\$960,000
9469 Thunderbird Pl	San Ramon	4	3	0	3094	8925	\$989,000	\$975,000
3115 Sorrelwood Drive	San Ramon	4	2	1	2727	15681	\$1,399,000	\$1,390,000
1616 Countrywood Ct	Walnut Creek	2	2	0	1036	2340	\$509,000	\$501,000
500 Churchill Downs Ct	Walnut Creek	3	2	1	1380	0	\$549,900	\$549,900
1940 San Luis Rd	Walnut Creek	3	2	0	1664	14810	\$799,000	\$761,450
1939 Everidge Ct	Walnut Creek	3	2	1	2091	1500	\$834,900	\$816,000
2813 Moselle Ct	Walnut Creek	4	3	0	2485	12000	\$1,070,000	\$1,050,000
18 Tice Valley Ln	Walnut Creek	5	5	0	4200	22651	\$1,150,000	\$1,150,000
4124 Walnut Blvd	Walnut Creek	4	2	1	2376	22216	\$1,199,000	\$1,275,000

All data supplied by the Contra Costa / Alameda Multiple Listing Service

Wondering what the home down the street sold for?

For more detailed information on home sales anywhere in Contra Costa or Alameda County, call Bernard Gibbons on (925) 997-1585 or send an email to bernard@bernardgibbons.com.