

LATEST HOME SALES INFORMATION INSIDE



The Real Estate Informer

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

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www.BernardGibbons.com



COMING SOON

2517 Aranda Drive, San Ramon

Rarely does a home such as this come on the market for less than \$1 million. Completed updated and tastefully remodeled over the past few years, this is undoubtedly one of the nicest homes in Twin Creeks in one of the neighborhood's most desirable locations. Every room has been updated and every piece of interior trim has been replaced together with all of the doors, windows, electrical fixtures, floor coverings and much more.

Offered for Sale at \$969,950

Call Bernard Gibbons at (925) 997-1585 for more details or visit www.2517ArandaDrive.com

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 really should be contacting me now to discuss the pricing and marketing. Call me on (925) 997-1585 and we can arrange to get things started.

Bernard Gibbons

Restaurant Review

Vino Restaurant, 3351 Plaza Way, Lafayette

Imagine yourself on vacation in a small village in Italy or Spain. For dinner, you decide to go where the locals go. A tiny restaurant down a back street that you could walk by without even noticing it, a simple bistro with only a handful of crowded together tables, most of them occupied, obviously by regular customers, even on a Tuesday evening, and an eclectic selection of artwork on the walls with additional decoration provided by wine bottles and an old grand piano in the corner. This is Vino!

Owner Castro Ascarrunz, originally from the Basque Country, runs Vino almost single-handed and he is deservedly well supported. Castro is a very genuine and amiable host and he even finds time to play the piano. And he plays well.

"So much for the ambience, what about the food?" I hear you say. I am happy to report, that on our recent visit, Sylvia and I had some of the best restaurant food we have ever tasted in the East Bay. To start, we shared a portion of melon with prosciutto. The melon was deliciously sweet and juicy and the prosciutto was the real thing. So different from most store bought prosciutto.

For an entrée, I had pan-roasted scallops on a bed of wilted spinach. Sylvia chose one of that day's specials, roast halibut, also served with spinach. Both dishes were accompanied with potatoes, mine with mashed, Sylvia's with steamed. Everything was cooked to perfection. My scallops were heavy on the garlic, which I thought was terrific although admittedly, everybody may not share my enthusiasm for garlic. We also enjoyed an excellent bottle of Rabbit Ridge Reserve chardonnay which complemented our dishes perfectly.

For dessert, we shared a generous slice of ricotta cheesecake. Regular readers will know that we rarely eat dessert but knowing that everything in Vino's is home-made, we decided to make an exception. What a good decision. Again, this was absolutely delicious, melt-in-the-mouth cheesecake. So different from bought-in desserts found in many restaurants.

With a restaurant of such a small size, prices are generally quite high by necessity. Vino is an amazing exception. The total cost of the meal was only \$90 including tip. This was our first visit and we will be back. Give it a try, you will not be disappointed.

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

Making Your Home Stand Out From The Crowd

With so many homes for sale this year, making a good first impression is more important than ever. Here are some tips to make your home look its best for potential buyers.

Kitchens and bathrooms sell houses -- so be sure to make them sparkle. Countertops should be clear and sinks and washbasins must shine. If you have older cabinets that you don't plan to change, think about having them professionally painted or at least clean them thoroughly with a product made for the task and consider new hardware.

Take a look at all of your rooms and remember, not everyone has the same decorating taste. A fresh coat of neutral paint can help to improve the look of any room. Don't use white paint though because it gives a stark effect and shows up every blemish.

Clear Away Clutter -- Less is more. The less "stuff" you have in each room, the larger the room appears.

Well-lit rooms appear much larger than dimly lit ones. Increase the wattage in your light bulbs and brighten your living space.

How is your sense of smell? Although you may not mind the smell of cigarettes or Fido's wet coat, these smells will turn-off potential buyers. Freshen the air as much as possible. A large vase of flowers can be very effective and creates a great impression. Fresh designer soaps left out in bathrooms, lighted candles (not too strong though) and plug-in air fresheners are additional possibilities.

These simple, inexpensive improvements that demonstrate that you've carefully maintained your house really can help to sell your home quickly and get you the price you want.

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

How To Minimize The Tax Implications When You Sell Your Home In California

Are you one of the many people I talk to who would really like to sell their home but feel that they can't afford to do so for tax reasons? If so, read on. This article may give you some food for thought.

There are two main areas of taxation to consider here, Capital Gains Tax and Property Taxes. The Capital Gains Tax issue is fairly well defined now as follows:

If you sell your home having occupied it for at least 2 years, the first \$250,000 of any increase in value (after deducting any expenditure on improvements) is exempt from Capital Gains Tax. If you and your spouse occupied the home for 2+ years, the exemption is doubled to \$500,000.

If you have lived there for less than 2 years you may be able to take a pro-rated deduction depending on the reasons for making a move. As far as property taxes are concerned, many people just assume that wherever and whenever they move, they will be paying annual property taxes approximately equivalent to 1.25% of the purchase price of the new home. **This may not need to be the case.**

If either spouse is over age 55 (when the old home is sold), Proposition 60 allows transfer of the assessed valuation from the old home to the new property when you replace your primary residence with a new home of **equal or lesser value, within the same county** Note that **this is allowed only once in your lifetime**, and a spouse who has done it before 'taints' both spouses.

Additionally, Proposition 90 allows counties to elect to accept transfers of property tax values for moves from other counties when a primary residence is replaced with a less expensive home. If you are over 55 and move into a county which accepts Proposition 90, you may take your old, lower property taxes with you, regardless of from which county you move.

There are seven counties that currently accept incoming transfers of such property taxes: Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Ventura.

So provided you meet the age requirements and you have not previously taken advantage of Proposition 60, **you can sell your home in Contra Costa or Alameda County and buy a lower priced home in the same county or any of the seven counties above and continue paying the same amount of property taxes you were paying before.** This may not be such a big deal if you have only lived in your home for a few years but if, like many people in our area, you have lived there for 20 years or so, and the home you purchased for \$80,000 sells for \$800,000, you can save thousands of dollars per year.

If you feel you meet the qualifications for this exclusion, you must provide evidence and/or declare under penalty of perjury that you are at least 55 years old, and complete the claim form. The claim for relief must be filed within three years of the date a replacement dwelling is purchased or new construction of the replacement dwelling is completed.

This discussion just provides the basic information and if you believe you qualify, you should consult your tax advisor for more details.

San Ramon Valley Market Update

The 40 most recently Closed Sales in Alamo, Blackhawk, Danville, San Ramon,
Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda

(Sorted By City and Sold Price)

Address	City	Beds	Baths	Part Baths	SqFt	Lot SqFt	List Price	Sold Price
153 Smith Rd.	Alamo	5	6	1	7746	38280	\$2,998,000	\$2,998,000
73 Blackhawk Club Ct	Blackhawk	6	5	1	5584	62290	\$2,989,000	\$2,700,000
592 Mission Pl	Danville	4	2	1	1608	6318	\$549,000	\$565,000
54 Danville Oak Pl	Danville	2	2	0	1002	0	\$580,000	\$585,000
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
443 Silver Chief Pl	Danville	4	2	1	2168	7904	\$948,000	\$925,000
365 Borica Dr	Danville	4	2	1	1984	15150	\$969,000	\$955,000
334 Squirrel Ridge Way	Danville	5	3	0	2438	5600	\$999,000	\$999,000
317 Mountain Ridge Dr	Danville	4	3	0	2255	7000	\$999,000	\$1,009,000
217 Heather Pl	Danville	4	2	1	2590	12980	\$1,049,000	\$1,025,000
252 Remington Loop	Danville	3	2	0	1909	15000	\$1,049,000	\$1,035,000
5910 Old School Road	Danville	3	2		2462	747925	\$1,875,000	\$1,775,000
25 Brightwood W Lane	Danville	5	6	1	4777	22000	\$2,399,000	\$2,375,000
2 Chapel Dr	Lafayette	3	2	0	2073	22540	\$1,299,000	\$1,285,000
1104 Hillcrest Dr	Lafayette	4	3	0	2891	27750	\$1,325,000	\$1,299,000
25 Samantha Drive	Lafayette	5	4	1	4427	23507	\$2,625,000	\$2,625,000
1259 Redwood Ln	Lafayette	5	3	1	5190	55103	\$4,595,000	\$4,325,000
117b Ascot Ct	Moraga	2	2	1	1191	600	\$379,000	\$381,000
497 Chalda Way	Moraga	2	1	1	1114	820	\$475,000	\$455,000
1047 Alta Mesa	Moraga	2	2	1	1890	2580	\$675,000	\$655,000
8 Canning Ct	Moraga	3	2	0	1547	8800	\$849,950	\$841,500
56 Corliss Dr	Moraga	3	2	0	1630	18180	\$898,950	\$870,000
410 Sutter Creek Ln	San Ramon	2	1	0	879	0	\$445,000	\$430,000
2812 Bollinger Canyon Rd	San Ramon	3	2	0	1158	1440	\$499,999	\$475,000
3053 Lakemont Dr	San Ramon	2	2	0	1474	0	\$624,000	\$629,000
1014 Nancy Ln	San Ramon	3	3	0	1892	0	\$649,950	\$640,000
2524 Rockhampton Rd	San Ramon	4	3		2369	0	\$719,950	\$700,000
2962 Millbridge Drive	San Ramon	3	2	0	1530	0	\$715,000	\$705,000
9509 Sandpoint Drive	San Ramon	4	2		1874	10450	\$765,000	\$740,000
49 Terraced Hills Cir	San Ramon	4	3	1	1995	0	\$759,000	\$750,000
7401 Sedgefield Ave	San Ramon	5	3	0	2497	10000	\$899,000	\$878,000
22 Playa Ct	San Ramon	5	3	0	2368	9000	\$889,000	\$889,000
782 Pradera Way	San Ramon	3	2	1	2337	5189	\$899,950	\$899,000
4629 Sweetgale Dr	San Ramon	3	2	1	1971	0	\$959,000	\$959,000
132 Black Calla Ct	San Ramon	3	2	1	1971	6098	\$969,900	\$960,000
1483 Asterbell Drive	San Ramon	5	3	1	3015	6900	\$1,189,000	\$1,140,000
3095 Hastings Way	San Ramon	5	4	1	3479	7100	\$1,200,900	\$1,200,900
5038 Westside Dr	San Ramon	5	4	1	3908	12272	\$1,599,000	\$1,550,000
1632 S Villa S Way	Walnut Creek	1	1	0	670	9999	\$334,950	\$334,000
1715 Villa S Way	Walnut Creek	2	2	0	895	0	\$429,500	\$424,000
2723 Oak Rd	Walnut Creek	2	2		1216	0	\$459,500	\$455,000
1630 Terrace Way	Walnut Creek	2	2	0	1430	2210	\$675,000	\$675,000
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1584 Gilboa Dr	Walnut Creek	2	2	0	1527	2482	\$699,950	\$680,000
1966 Stratton Circle	Walnut Creek	3	3	0	1853	0	\$779,000	\$755,000
1757 Camino Verde	Walnut Creek	5	3	1	2071	10400	\$824,500	\$850,000

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.