

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER



"There is always some madness in love. But there is also always some reason in madness."
– Friedrich Nietzsche

HOW TO INCITE A BIDDING WAR ON YOUR HOME

As the economy remains strong in most places, experts are predicting that the housing market in 2019 will continue to be categorized as a seller's market, meaning that there is a relatively low inventory of homes for sale compared to the number of buyers. Therefore, if you are planning to sell your home this year and are hoping to get top dollar, there is plenty of reason to be optimistic. In fact, bidding wars are not uncommon in seller's markets, which may yield a selling price that far exceeds a home's asking price.

While it is always important to consult your realtor--as the success of certain home-selling techniques depends on the housing market in your area and your particular property--the following strategies may be used to help spark a bidding war on your home:

Set the initial listing price slightly below market value. While it may seem counterintuitive (and even risky) to set a low initial price for your home when you are hoping to ultimately receive a sales price above market value, a lower price could be the key to generating the intense buyer interest needed to trigger a bidding war. In a seller's market, a listing price that is approximately 5 percent below market value could lead to multiple showings in the home's first couple days on the market. Once buyers fall in love with your home, they may increase their offers in order to win out over other interested buyers.

Create a buzz before listing your home. Work with your realtor to

begin advertising your home before it hits the market. This may include adding it to the MLS but noting that showings may not be scheduled yet, creating a separate website for your home and/or advertising it via social media, and hosting an open house for realtors. These proactive steps will ensure that as soon as your home is listed, several potential buyers and agents will be pining to see it.

Ensure that your home is in prime condition before it is viewed by any potential buyers or their agents. If a bidding war is going to erupt, it will almost certainly happen within the first several days that the home is on the market. Therefore, to maximize buyer interest, it's essential that your home is in stellar condition as soon as it is listed. Make sure that it is thoroughly cleaned and decluttered and all necessary repairs have been made. Consider working with your agent to stage the home, even if it requires hiring a professional stager. Taking all possible steps to help buyers envision themselves living in your home will ensure that the property is as competitive as possible.

If you succeed in generating a great deal of initial buyer interest, set a deadline for offers. It may be best to only do this once you have received more than one offer, or at least have gotten strong indications from buyers' agents that offers are forthcoming. In this enviable situation, notifying all potential buyers that the property has received a significant amount of interest and that they must submit their offers by a set deadline may encourage them to raise their offer prices.

Source: mashvisor.com



CHOCOLATE LAVA CAKES WITH STRAWBERRIES

Ingredients:

2 sticks (1/2 pound) unsalted butter, plus more for coating
3/4 cup sugar, plus more for coating
3/4 pound semisweet chocolate, chopped
6 large eggs
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
Strawberry ice cream and sliced strawberries, for serving

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425°. Butter ten 8-ounce ramekins and lightly coat them with sugar. Set the ramekins on a large rimmed baking sheet.
2. In a large bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water, melt the 2 sticks of butter and semisweet chocolate until smooth, stirring a few times. Set the melted chocolate aside and keep warm; keep the saucepan of water simmering.
3. In another large bowl, whisk the eggs with the 3/4 cup of

sugar. Set the bowl over the simmering water and stir the eggs until warm. Remove the bowl from the heat. Using an electric mixer, beat the eggs at high speed until doubled in volume, about 5 minutes. Sift the flour over the chocolate mixture and gently fold in with a rubber spatula. Working in 2 batches, fold in the warm egg mixture.

4. Spoon the batter into the ramekins and bake for about 15 minutes, or until the cakes are set around the edges and wobbly in the center. Remove the ramekins from the oven and let the chocolate cakes stand for 3 minutes.
5. Carefully invert the ramekins onto plates to unmold the chocolate cakes. Top each cake with a scoop of strawberry ice cream, spoon the sliced strawberries alongside and serve right away.

Source: foodandwine.com



THE SURPRISING HISTORY OF VALENTINE'S DAY

Today, Valentine's Day is often considered one of the most overhyped and commercialized holidays of the year—a day on which couples exchange chocolates, flowers, and sentimental declarations of their affection for one another. But did you know that the origins of Valentine's Day are surprisingly sordid?

Our modern conception of Valentine's Day has both Christian and pagan roots. For example, the Catholic Church recognizes three different St. Valentines, who were all martyred. The most famous of these saints was reportedly a priest in Rome during the third century. The emperor at the time banned young men from getting married after declaring that single men made better soldiers. Believing that this decree was unjust, Valentine secretly performed weddings for young couples—and ultimately paid for his defiance with his life when the emperor learned of his actions and ordered his execution.

Another possible origin for Valentine's Day was Lupercalia, a pagan fertility festival celebrated by the ancient Romans on February 15. During the festival, an order of Roman priests called the Luperci would wander the city, gently swatting young women with a goat's hide. Surprisingly, the women welcomed this contact as it was believed that the goat hides would make them

more fertile in the coming year! Later in the day, the women would place their names in a large urn, and the bachelors of the city would each draw a name and be romantically paired with that woman for the remainder of the year.

In the fifth century A.D., Pope Gelasius outlawed Lupercalia, deeming it antithetical to Christianity, and officially declared February 14 as St. Valentine's Day. Later, during the Middle Ages, it was widely believed that birds' mating season began on February 14, which further linked the concept of romance to Valentine's Day. In the centuries that followed, the popularity of Valentine's Day quickly grew, and it is now widely celebrated as a secular romantic holiday throughout the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Mexico, Australia, and France.

Source: History.com



If you are currently working with another Broker please do not consider this a solicitation.

