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**Celia Manley Properties**

buy. sell. live.



“***Approach the new year with resolve to find the opportunities hidden in each new day.***

**~Michael Josephson**

## What to Expect In 2026



As the new year begins, it's a good time to think about what the housing market could mean for you, whether you are buying, selling, or keeping an eye on your home's value. National forecasts point to a stronger market ahead, and it is worth considering how that might shape your plans.

For buyers, experts expect a modest rebound in nationwide home sales next year, along with mortgage rates stabilizing around 6 percent. While every local market is different, this could create opportunities for those who have been waiting to make a move. Planning and reviewing your finances can help you act when the right home comes along.

For sellers, the forecast suggests steady demand and gradual price growth. Homes that are prepared and priced thoughtfully are likely to attract interest even as more listings come onto the market. Understanding these trends can help you determine the best time to list in the coming months.

For homeowners who are not moving, the outlook is a reminder that homeownership continues to be a long-term investment. A healthier national market supports ongoing value growth and gives confidence that your home remains a strong asset.

National trends provide a useful perspective, but local conditions can vary. If you want to know how these predictions might apply to your neighborhood or your plans for 2026, I can review the numbers and help you explore your options. Starting the year with information and a plan is the best way to approach your real estate goals.

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## Ingredients

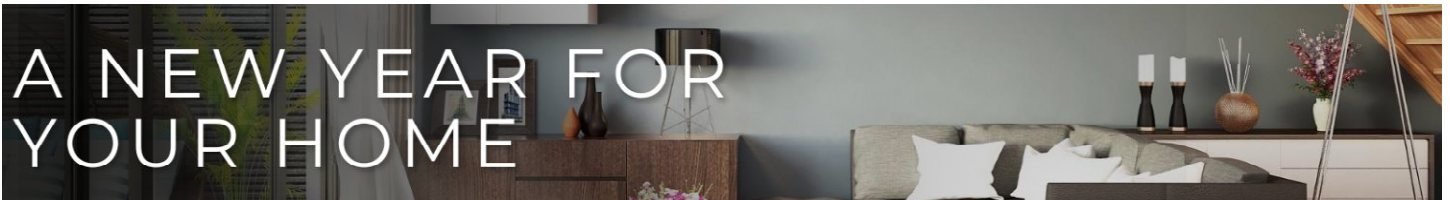
1 lb beef, cut into servable pieces  
1/4 cup soy sauce  
1/4 cup white vinegar  
3 cloves garlic, smashed  
2 bay leaves  
1/2 teaspoon whole peppercorns

1/4 cup brown sugar  
Salt to taste  
1/4 cup cooking oil  
3 tablespoons banana ketchup (optional)  
1 tablespoon cornstarch diluted in 1/4 cup water (optional)

## Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine the beef, soy sauce, vinegar, garlic, bay leaves, peppercorns, and sugar. Marinate for at least 30 minutes.
2. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat.
3. Add the marinated beef and cook until lightly browned.
4. Add the marinade and enough water to cover the beef. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat, cover, and simmer for 1 to 1.5 hours, or until the beef is tender.
5. Add more water, if needed, to prevent the sauce from drying out.
6. Once the beef is cooked, add the banana ketchup and stir in the diluted cornstarch to thicken the sauce.
7. Season with salt, to taste. Simmer for a few minutes more.
8. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley and serve hot with steamed rice.

Whats cookin, Chicago?



The start of a new year is a great time for homeowners to reset and take care of a few practical tasks that keep a property running well. I often tell clients that consistent maintenance doesn't have to be overwhelming. A few small checks in January can prevent bigger issues later and help protect long-term value.

Begin with safety. Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and replace the batteries. It's quick, and it reassures you that everything is working the way it should.

After the holidays, most homes need a little organizing. Sort through decorations, clear out storage areas, and donate what you no longer need. A bit of decluttering can make your home feel lighter and more manageable.

Next, look for drafts around windows and doors. Weather stripping wears down, and even small gaps can raise your energy costs. A simple fix can make your home more comfortable through the colder months.

Give attention to indoor upkeep as well. Carpets and rugs collect dust over the holidays, so a deep clean helps improve air quality. Take a few minutes to go through your pantry, toss expired items, and wipe down shelves.

Check under sinks and around faucets for leaks. Catching small drips early prevents expensive repairs. If you have a traditional water heater, draining a little water from the tank can help reduce sediment and keep it running efficiently.

Finally, take a quick look at your roof and gutters from the ground. Missing shingles or clogged gutters can lead to water damage if left unchecked.

These simple January tasks help you start the year with a home that's safer, cleaner, and better prepared for the months ahead, and they go a long way in protecting your investment.

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If your property is currently listed with a real estate broker, please disregard. It is not our intention to solicit the offerings of other real estate brokers. We are happy to work with them and cooperate fully.

