



THE REDMAN REAL ESTATE REVIEW

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Because our house sat vacant for almost a year before we bought it, the yard was in pretty bad shape. The grass was about 2 feet high and dead (except for the dandelions), a bunch of trees were dead and the shrubs were about 3 years overgrown. For the past two seasons, we've been pulling out overgrown shrubs and replacing thirsty plants with not so 'thirsty' options. We've almost tamed the jungle now but we've given up way too many weekends doing it (in my opinion). You know me, I'm not a fan of yard work. I'd much rather

be camping, on my bike, at the lake, golfing or doing anything else. Every spring, we layer OgoGrow and Nature's Gold on the lawn and flower beds to clean them up and feed them but I just can't overlook the irony of donating all my yard waste to the City all season and then buying it all back again in the spring as OgoGrow (and creating a whole bunch more work for myself). And then, just when I think I'm finished, the 'honey do' list grows again. I've decided that the worst part of yard work is irrigation systems. In fact, I've renamed

them 'irritation' systems because that's what they are. Just when you've got it so everything's getting watered, the plants grow too high & wide and block plants behind and you're back to pruning plants or tweaking the system. Does that mean I'm ready for condo life (my wife definitely isn't). Maybe I should just replace all the grass and flowers with rock and artificial turf and get back to enjoying my weekends; only then I'd have to give up more weekends to dig up all the grass and flowers!!!

MARKET WATCH



Vancouver, BC – May 14, 2009. The British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA) reports that April was the third consecutive month of increasing home sales in the province, on a seasonally adjusted basis. Consumer demand was bolstered by lower home prices and record low mortgage interest rates. Housing affordability hit a three-year high at the beginning of the month.

"Downward pressure on home prices has eased considerably," said Cameron Muir, BCREA Chief Economist. "An increase in consumer demand combined with fewer homes for sale has trended the market near balanced conditions." The number of homes for sale through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS®) fell to a twelve-month low in April, on a seasonally adjusted basis.

MLS® residential sales dollar volume in BC declined 25 per cent to \$3.1 billion in April, compared to the same month last year. Residential unit sales declined 20 per cent to 6,918 units during the same period. The average MLS® residential price in the province was \$449,372 in April, down 6 per cent from April 2008. Year-to-date,

A total of 18,089 units were sold in the first four months, down 35 per cent from 2008, while the average MLS® price declined 9 per cent to \$433,246.

Source: BC Real Estate Association

This trend is reflected in Okanagan activities with a total of 157 residential units sold this month compared to 130 last month. Sales for the same month in 2008 were 240. The value of those sales was \$70,824,224 in April compared to \$57,052,652 for the previous month and \$132,606,240 for the same month in the previous year. The average price of a residential home in April was \$451,109 compared to \$552,526 for the same month last year. The number of days on the market for a residential home in April was 99 compared to 57 for the same month in the previous year.



MLS® residential sales dollar volume was down 41 per cent to \$7.8 billion over the same period last

HOUSING MARKET BALANCING OUT

CORNMEAL CAKE WITH RHUBARB COMPOTE & BUTTERMILK ICE CREAM

This is not a recipe I would ever have picked but my wife made it and I couldn't believe how good it was.

The combination of flavours and the crunch of cornmeal in the cake is excellent.

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If I can assist you or anyone you know with real estate in Kelowna or at Big White, please let me know.

FAVOURITE FAMILY RECIPES

Cornmeal Cake

1 cup flour
½ cup yellow cornmeal
1½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
½ cup unsalted butter
1 Tbs grated orange peel
1 cup sugar
2 large eggs, room temp
½ cup sour cream
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 Tbs course sugar
Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter 9" cake pan with 2" sides. Dust pan with cornmeal. Sift flour, ½ cup cornmeal, baking powder and salt into medium bowl. Beat butter with mixer until smooth. Beat in orange peel. Gradually add 1 cup sugar and beat until light & fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Beat in sour cream and va-

nilla. Fold in dry ingredients in 3 additions. Transfer to pan and sprinkle with sugar. Bake 25 to 30 minutes. Let stand at room temperature.

Buttermilk Ice Cream

2 cups whipping cream
8 large egg yolks
1 cup sugar
2 cups buttermilk
1 cup crème fraiche (sour cream)
2 TB fresh lemon juice
¼ tsp salt
Bring cream to simmer in saucepan. Whisk egg yolks and sugar in bowl. Gradually whisk hot cream into yolk mixture. Return to pan & stir constantly over low heat until custard is thick enough to coat back of spoon (3 minutes). Do not boil. Cool to room temp. Whisk in buttermilk,

crème fraiche, lemon juice & salt. Chill and then freeze. Can be made 3 days ahead.

Rhubarb Compote

2 cups Pinot Noir or Cab Sauv.
1 cup + 2 TBS sugar
3—2 "long strips orange peel
2—2" strips lemon peel
6 cups ½" pieces fresh rhubarb
⅛ tsp salt
Combine wine, sugar, and peel in saucepan. Boil until sugar dissolves. Add rhubarb and salt and simmer until rhubarb is tender (9 minutes). Transfer rhubarb to shallow dish. Boil wine syrup until slightly thickened and reduced to 1¼ cups, adding juices accumulated from rhubarb, about 5 minutes. Pour syrup over rhubarb and chill. Serve with cornmeal cake and buttermilk ice cream.

MAKE YOUR RENO ECO FRIENDLY

Here are 10 tips to make your next reno environmentally friendly.

1. Redoing your kitchen? **Stay away from cupboards made of pressed woods** which are often bound with carcinogenic formaldehyde (headache-inducing stuff that could release fumes into your home for years). Same goes for any wood furnishings in your house. Look for products certified sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council.
2. **Choose eco-friendly floors made with bamboo, cork or wood certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.** If you're hooked on carpeting, look into lines with high recycled content by Milliken, Interface or Beaulieu, but note that pollutants have been found to lodge themselves into carpet fibres with time. Be sure to vacuum often.
3. Draft proof your home properly to lower your power bills by at least 20 per cent. **Caulk, weather strip and seal up doors, windows, electrical sockets and baseboards.** Boost the insulation in your attic, crawlspaces, basement and walls. Look into getting an energy audit from a pro to help identify leaks.
4. Furnace more than 20 years old? **You'll save yourself some cash in**

the long run if you buy a new Energy Star model, since they're 20 to 30 per cent more efficient than your old one since about 60 per cent of your hydro bills go to running these things. And don't forget to clean or change your furnace filter monthly in colder months.

5. **Ditch couches, mattresses and pillows filled with dangerous fire retardants** in favour of PBDE-free stuff.

6. **Trade in your old appliances for new Energy Star models.** A certified fridge, for instance, uses 40 per cent less energy than regular ones sold in 2001 -- a good thing considering 20 per cent of your energy bills go to keeping your milk cold.

7. Windows can leak about 25 per cent of your home's heat in winter and let in about 40 per cent of summer's heat. **Keep your house comfy with a set of new low-E Energy Star windows and skylights.** And get some good cellular blinds for extra window insulation.

8. A fresh coat of paint fills your home with polluting volatile organic compounds. **Make sure to use low-VOC paints,** available at paint retailers.

9. Keeping your showers steamy and your dishes clean swallows up a lot of

hot water. In fact, a quarter of your power bill goes to heating all that H2O. **Tap into the sun's rays and get a solar hot water heater.** For a few thousand dollars you can get a good vacuum-tube model that's really efficient at harnessing solar rays, even in the depths of Canadian winters. If your budget's tight, tankless hot-water heaters are a super-efficient option and will cost about \$1000.

10. **To save money, shop at your local used building supply shop at one of 50 Habitat for Humanity Re-Stores across the country.** They're full of second hand, donated or discontinued lumber, sinks, doors, windows, chandeliers, tiles, mantles, even nails, hooks and knobs for about half the retail price. You'll save money and help keep bulky building supplies out of the landfill at the same time. Plus, all the money you spend goes to building homes for the less fortunate. Happy renovating!

Source: By Adria Vasil, Canadian living.com