

LOCAL

# *Lifestyle*

DECEMBER 2025

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## *in this issue...*

- 4** Dear Neighbor
- 6** Cutest Pet Contest
- 8** Drink Recipes
- 10** Holiday Beef Tenderloin
- 12** No Bake Holiday Wreath Treats
- 14** Transform Your Home
- 16** Alamo Market Report
- 18** Smart Sellers
- 20** Winter Home Improvement Projects
- 22** December is the Perfect Time for Home Buyers
- 24** 2026 Housing Market Outlook
- 26** Property Preparation Matters
- 28** Testimonials
- 30** About the Agency
- 31** Stay Connected



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## *Dear Friends and Neighbors,*

December arrives wrapped in light—twinkling from rooftops, reflected in windows, and shining from the small, quiet moments we gather with the people we love. It's a month of celebration and reflection, of endings and beginnings, of cozy nights and hopeful hearts.

As the year winds down, we often find ourselves pausing to look both backward and forward. We remember the laughter shared around dinner tables, the goals reached (or revised), and the moments—both big and small—that defined our year. And at the same time, there's a gentle anticipation for what's ahead: a new year, a fresh start, and the possibility of something wonderful just around the corner.

Whether you're planning to stay rooted in place or thinking about planting new roots in the coming year, I'm here to help guide that journey with clarity, care, and local insight.

Wishing you peace, joy, and meaningful moments this December—and a New Year full of promise.

Warmly,

*Andrea Scott*



# Cutest Pet Contest

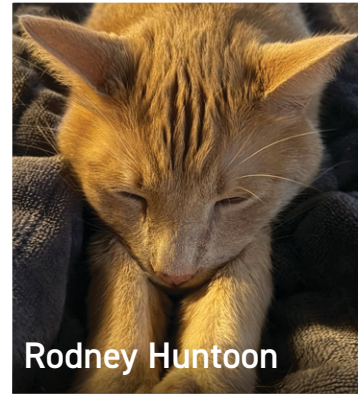


*Scout Bowie*



Please send a photo of your pet with **"Pet Contest"** in the subject line to: [Andrea@Alamo.RealEstate](mailto:Andrea@Alamo.RealEstate) to have them featured in the next magazine.

If you sent a photo and it hasn't been featured, please send again with "Pet Contest" in the subject line.



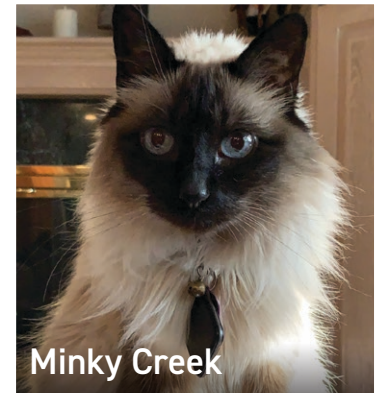
Rodney Huntoon



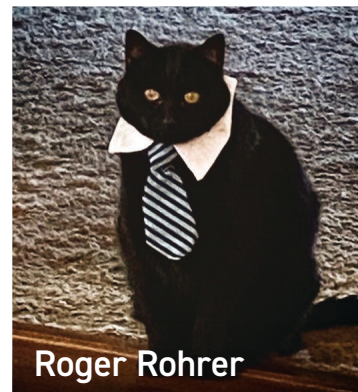
Wesley Passalacqua



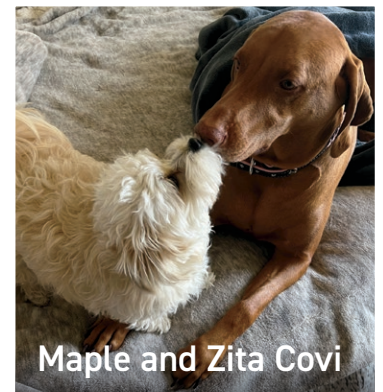
Davy Dwight



Minky Creek



Roger Rohrer



Maple and Zita Covi



## Super Simple Mulled Apple Cider

### 4 INGREDIENTS

- Apple cider (fresh, unfiltered is best)
- 1 orange (sliced)
- 2-3 cinnamon sticks
- Whole cloves (about 1 tablespoon)

### INSTRUCTIONS

Press the cloves into orange slices, add everything to a pot with the cider, bring to a boil, then simmer on low for 30-60 minutes. Remove the spices when it tastes perfect to you, and serve hot!

Optional add: A little brown sugar or maple syrup if you want it sweeter.

Optional "spiked" instructions: After simmering for 30-60 minutes, add in your choice of rum, brandy, or bourbon, and let it simmer for another 10 minutes.



## From-Scratch Spiced Tea

### 4 INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups water
- Fresh orange juice (1-2 oranges)
- Black tea bags (or loose black tea)
- Fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- Whole cloves and 1 cinnamon stick

### INSTRUCTIONS

Steep the tea in boiling water, then in a separate pan boil water with sugar and spices for one minute, remove the spices, add the citrus juices, and combine with the tea. Serve warm!



# HOLIDAY HERB-CRUSTED BEEF TENDERLOIN

Celebrate the holidays with a show-stopping Herb-Crusted Beef Tenderloin that's juicy, flavorful, and sure to wow your guests. This elegant yet simple recipe delivers a fragrant herb crust and a rich red wine sauce, perfect for Christmas, New Year's, or any festive gathering.

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 lb beef tenderloin, trimmed and tied
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Prep the Tenderloin:** Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). Pat tenderloin dry with paper towels. Rub with 1 tablespoon olive oil, then season with salt and pepper.
2. **Make the Herb Crust:** Mix garlic, rosemary, thyme, and Dijon mustard into a paste. Rub evenly over the tenderloin.
3. **Sear for Flavor:** Heat remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Sear tenderloin 2-3 minutes per side until golden-brown.

4. **Roast to Perfection:** Transfer skillet to oven. Roast 25-30 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 135°F (57°C) for medium-rare, using a meat thermometer.

5. **Rest and Deglaze:** Remove tenderloin, tent with foil, and rest 10 minutes. In the skillet, add red wine over medium heat, scrape up browned bits, and reduce by half. Stir in butter for a glossy sauce.

6. **Serve:** Slice tenderloin into ½-inch pieces, drizzle with sauce, and garnish with herbs. Pair with roasted vegetables or mashed potatoes.

**Why It's Perfect for the Holidays:** This tenderloin balances rich flavors with easy prep, freeing you to enjoy the festivities. The herb crust adds aromatic flair, and the red wine sauce brings restaurant-quality elegance. It pairs beautifully with bold holiday wines, making it a crowd-pleaser.

## TIPS

- Prepare the herb rub a day ahead and refrigerate.
- Let tenderloin sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before cooking for even roasting.
- If the tenderloin has a significantly thinner portion, remove it and reserve for other recipes (like stir-fry or skewers) to avoid uneven cooking.



# NO BAKE

## Holiday Wreath

### Treats

#### INGREDIENTS

- Marshmallows
- Butter
- Cornflakes
- Green food coloring
- Red mini M&M's

#### INSTRUCTIONS

##### Step 1:

##### **Make the marshmallow sauce**

Pour the marshmallows and butter into a large, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave them uncovered for about 45 seconds or until the butter is melted and the marshmallows are puffed. Tint the mixture with green food coloring. Start slow and make as green as you desire.

##### Step 2:

##### **Add the cereal**

Pour the cornflakes into the bowl and stir them into the marshmallow mixture. The cereal should be completely coated. Spray the waxed paper with nonstick spray so the wreaths don't stick to the paper.



##### Step 3:

##### **Shape the cookies**

Butter your hands and divide the cereal mixture into eight portions. Work quickly to firmly press each portion into a 3-inch wreath. Place the wreaths on the lined baking sheet.

##### Step 4:

##### **Add the candies**

While the wreaths are still wet, add three red mini M&M's in a cluster on each one to look like a small bunch of holly berries. Let the wreaths rest until they're set and easy to move. Then they're ready to eat!

##### **How to Store Christmas Wreath Cookies**

These marshmallow treat wreaths quickly become dry and hard if they're left out. To protect them, place the wreaths in a tightly sealed storage container at room temperature as soon as they're cool. They'll last for about three days.





# ransform your home this holiday season

Elevate your holiday décor beyond the traditional tree with these creative approaches that bring festive charm to every corner of your home.

## Dress Every Space

Don't limit decorations to just the living room. Extend the holiday spirit to entryways, bedrooms, and even bathrooms for a cohesive, welcoming atmosphere throughout your home.



## Invest in Quality Wreaths

A high-quality wreath serves as your home's first impression. Choose fresh eucalyptus or evergreen varieties that can be enhanced with ornaments and ribbons, creating a showpiece that lasts beyond a single season.

## Create Dynamic Tablescapes

Break away from matching sets by mixing vintage pieces with modern elements. Layer different textures and patterns in your table settings to create visual interest that feels collected rather than coordinated.

## Adorn Lighting Fixtures


Wrap pendant lights with fresh greenery or delicate garlands to draw the eye upward and utilize often-forgotten decorating real estate.

## Embrace Dramatic Candlesticks

Tall, statement candlesticks instantly add elegance to mantels and dining tables. Group them in varying heights for maximum impact.

## Strategic Faux Florals

Use artificial greenery where practicality matters—high shelves, outdoor displays, or hard-to-reach areas—while reserving fresh



materials for centerpieces and prominent displays.

## Try Neutral Palettes

Step away from traditional red and green with sophisticated whites, creams, and natural wood tones that feel fresh and modern while maintaining holiday warmth.

## Add Kitchen Touches

Since kitchens become gathering hubs during holidays, small accents like festive dish towels, seasonal fruit displays, or decorated open shelving make the space feel special.

## Explore Moody Blues

Deep navy, sapphire, and midnight blue offer elegant alternatives to traditional colors, creating a sophisticated winter atmosphere.

## Layer Seasonal Scents

Use cinnamon sticks, fresh pine, and dried oranges thoughtfully to create ambiance without overwhelming spaces. Position scented elements near entryways for maximum first impression.

## Amplify Twinkle Lights

String lights aren't just for trees. Wrap them around stair railings, inside hurricanes, or along bookshelves for magical everyday glow.

## Style Decorative Gifts

Wrap empty boxes in coordinating fabrics and ribbons to create stunning mantel and hearth displays that add visual interest without actual presents.



## ALAMO MARKET REPORT

### LAST MONTH V THIS MONTH

SEPTEMBER 2025	OCTOBER 2025
HOMES SOLD <b>15</b>	HOMES SOLD <b>19</b> ↑
DAYS ON MARKET <b>24</b>	DAYS ON MARKET <b>42</b> ↑
AVERAGE LIST PRICE <b>\$2,724,400</b>	AVERAGE LIST PRICE <b>\$2,461,830</b> ↓
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE <b>\$2,823,533</b>	AVERAGE SOLD PRICE <b>\$2,507,573</b> ↓
LIST: SOLD RATIO <b>104%</b>	LIST: SOLD RATIO <b>102%</b> ↓
\$/SF <b>\$874</b>	\$/SF <b>\$816</b> ↓

Buyer activity stayed strong, with sales rising from 15 to 19 homes—proof that serious buyers are still in the market. While prices adjusted slightly, values remain impressively high as compared with last year. Winter an ideal time to stand out before the annual influx of homes in Spring. (Last year, inventory rose 58% in a 2 week period in April)



## ALAMO MARKET REPORT

### LAST YEAR V THIS YEAR

OCTOBER 2024	OCTOBER 2025
HOMES SOLD <b>19</b>	HOMES SOLD <b>19</b> =
DAYS ON MARKET <b>25</b>	DAYS ON MARKET <b>42</b> ↑
AVERAGE LIST PRICE <b>\$1,595,000</b>	AVERAGE LIST PRICE <b>\$2,461,830</b> ↑
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE <b>\$1,635,000</b>	AVERAGE SOLD PRICE <b>\$2,507,573</b> ↑
LIST: SOLD RATIO <b>102%</b>	LIST: SOLD RATIO <b>102%</b> =
\$/SF <b>\$828</b>	\$/SF <b>\$816</b> ↓

Compared to last year, average sold prices jumped from \$1.6M to over \$2.5M, showing major appreciation in the luxury segment. Despite slightly longer market times, sales held steady—a sign of ongoing buyer confidence. With tight inventory and strong values, sellers who list now can capture peak prices before spring competition arrives.

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# Why Smart Sellers Start Their Homework in December

Smart sellers know that good timing matters, but smart preparation matters even more. While most homeowners wait until spring fever hits to prepare their property to list, savvy sellers are already planning their Spring launch in just a few months.

## The December Advantage

The real secret? December preparation. Use these quieter weeks to tackle projects that would stress you out during the busy selling season. Fresh paint, minor repairs, and decluttering take time—time you'll have in December but not in the spring rush.

Professional photography also benefits from December scheduling. Photographers have more availability, and you can capture your home's cozy winter charm with holiday decorations that showcase warmth and livability.

## Your December Action Plan

Call your Neighborhood Expert Real Estate Agent who will start with a pre-listing conversation to identify any issues. Schedule contractors now for January completion—they'll appreciate the work during their slower season, and you'll likely get better pricing.

## The Bottom Line

December preparation makes the difference between a good listing and a great one. Start planning now, and you'll hit the market ready to win!

*Photographers have more availability, and you can capture your home's cozy winter charm*

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# WINTER HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TO REFRESH YOUR SPACE

Winter is the perfect time to tackle indoor home improvement projects that enhance comfort, efficiency, and style. Here are six projects most homeowners will care about, each manageable during the colder months and impactful for your home's value and appeal.



## 1. Refresh Entrances with New Doors and Trim

Upgrade interior doors and their hardware for a modern look. Swap outdated doors for sleek designs and add stylish hinges or knobs in finishes like brushed nickel. This simple change transforms closets, bathrooms, and bedrooms, boosting aesthetic appeal without a full remodel.



## 2. Add a Kitchen Backsplash for Flair

A tile backsplash can revitalize your kitchen without breaking the bank. Choose bold patterns or simple single-color tiles to complement countertops and appliances. Pair it with a fresh coat of paint on cabinets for a budget-friendly update that adds texture and personality.

## 3. Give Floors a Facelift

Winter's dry air speeds up adhesive drying, making it ideal for flooring projects. Replace old carpet with cozy new carpeting or install wood or laminate for a fresh look. For smaller spaces, a well-chosen rug can add warmth and comfort underfoot.

## 4. Paint Indoors for a Mood Boost

A fresh coat of eco-friendly, water-based paint can transform any room. Paint one wall or room at a time to keep the project manageable. Winter's low humidity helps paint dry faster, turning a drab space into a vibrant one, perfect for beating the seasonal blues.

## 5. Insulate Your Attic for Efficiency

Insulating your attic reduces heating costs by trapping warmth. While up there, declutter stored items to streamline the space. Seal leaks around windows and doors with caulk to maximize energy savings, keeping your home cozy and your bills lower.

## 6. Update Light Fixtures for Ambiance

Swap outdated light fixtures for modern, energy-efficient ones with dimmer options. This quick update enhances mood lighting, crucial during darker winter months. LED fixtures save energy and add a warm glow, making rooms feel inviting and stylish.



These projects are practical, budget-friendly, and perfect for winter, requiring minimal outdoor work. They not only improve your home's look and feel but also increase its efficiency and value. Start small, pace yourself, and enjoy a refreshed home by spring.

With thoughtful planning and creative touches, your patio can become the summer destination that keeps you outdoors and entertaining with ease!



WHY DECEMBER IS

# The Perfect Time for

HOME BUYERS

Most people take their homes off the market during the holidays. The ones who don't? They need to sell.

December sellers are motivated. Maybe they've already bought another home. Maybe they're relocating for a job that starts in January. Maybe they've been trying to sell for months and can't wait any longer. Whatever the reason, a home still listed in December signals urgency.

This motivation translates to negotiating power for you. Sellers listing during the slowest month of the year are often more willing to accept lower offers, cover closing costs, or make other concessions they'd refuse in spring's competitive market.

While everyone else is waiting for January to start their home search, December buyers face less competition and encounter sellers who are ready to make a deal. Sometimes the best opportunities come when others aren't looking.

**Whether you're planning to buy or sell this holiday season, contact me to discuss how we can make your real estate goals a reality.**





# 2026

## HOUSING MARKET OUTLOOK

After a few slow years in the housing market, 2026 could be when things start picking up. Experts predict more people will be ready to move, creating opportunities for you to make your move, too.

### **MORE HOMES WILL HIT THE MARKET**

In recent years, high costs kept many buyers and sellers on the sidelines. But life doesn't stop—people still need to relocate for jobs, families, or new chapters. Experts believe 2026 will see more of them taking action. Why? Lower mortgage rates and steadier home prices are making it easier to jump in.

### **MORTGAGE RATES ARE EASING**

Buyers have been waiting for mortgage rates to drop, and there's good news: after hitting close to 7% earlier this year, rates are starting to come down. Forecasts suggest this trend will continue into 2026, though it won't be a smooth ride. Rates tend to drop slowly, with some ups and downs along the way. Experts think we might see rates in the low 6s or even high 5s by next year. Even a small dip in rates can make a big difference. Compared to earlier this year, today's rates could save you hundreds on monthly payments. That's a real boost for affordability, helping

more buyers get into the market.

### **HOME PRICES WILL GROW, BUT SLOWLY**

Nationally, home prices are expected to keep rising, but at a gentler pace. With lower rates bringing more buyers back, demand will push prices up slightly. However, a major crash isn't likely. Prices have climbed so much over the past five years that even areas seeing slight dips now are still ahead of where they were a few years ago. Price trends will vary by location, depending on local inventory and demand. Nationally, though, the slower price growth means a more predictable market. This makes it easier to plan your budget without worrying about prices shooting up overnight.

### **WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU**

2026 is shaping up to be a promising year for the housing market. With more homes being bought and sold, mortgage rates trending lower, and price increases slowing, the market is looking healthier and more active. If you've been waiting for the right time to buy or sell, next year could offer the chance you've been looking for. Contact your local neighborhood expert today to start planning your 2026 real estate moves.

# Think Your Home Isn't Photo Ready?

Let Me Get It Into Shape  
With No Upfront Cost!

## Services Include:

Fresh paint, new or refinished flooring, new light fixtures, staging, landscaping, decluttering, deep cleaning and so much more!

BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER





## Client Testimonials



Andrea Scott did a phenomenal job selling our home, she made the selling process as smooth as can be, her communication was on point throughout, and she explained step by step the entire process. She was extremely responsive with any questions we had, and trust me we had a lot of questions. I highly recommend working with Andrea Scott in Alamo. She was fantastic.

*-Andrea E, Alamo*



Andrea Scott was the right choice for us when it came time to sell our unique home here in Alamo California. Andrea and her team were very professional in walking us through the sale, giving us all our options along the way and with their unique marketing process, we received multiple over asking price offers. The entire transaction was smooth and closed on time. Without a doubt, we will utilize her services and expertise again. Thanks for everything Andrea.

*-Michael G, Alamo*



When my colleague had great things to say about his experience with Andrea Scott, I knew that I had to meet her. Andrea is everything my colleague said and more. Not only is she an excellent realtor but she is an excellent support system to her clients. Andrea helped me to buy an amazing house in the East Bay at the top of the market. The property had multiple offers, but Andrea is a great negotiator, she worked extremely well with the other realtors, and her great reputation all went to work and got me my dream home! On top of that, she has the best contacts for inspectors, contractors and service providers, taking the hassle out of getting bids for work. I would highly recommend Andrea and her team to anyone looking to buy or sell a home, you won't regret it!

*-Sam R, Pleasanton*



Andrea did a top notch job of selling our house. Her knowledge of Alamo and her experience with selling houses in the area made her the only choice for me. With Andrea's help the house sold in six days. And her follow up and communication throughout the listing and selling was excellent. I highly recommend her.

*- Edward Willy, Alamo*

# About The Agency

The Agency is a full-service, luxury real estate brokerage and lifestyle company representing clients worldwide in a broad spectrum of classes, including residential, new development, resort real estate, residential leasing and luxury vacation rentals.

Since its inception in 2011, The Agency has redefined the business of real estate, modernizing and advancing the industry by fostering a culture of partnership in which all clients and listings are represented in a collaborative environment by all of its agents. Shunning the traditional model of how real estate is practiced, our agents share their knowledge, spheres of influence, contacts and expertise, ensuring our clients better representation and a true competitive edge.

This approach has proven highly successful. Four years after its inception, The Agency was L.A.'s most outstanding real estate brokerage, with 13 of our agents ranked among the top 250 realtors in the United States, as measured by total sales volume by the Wall Street Journal and REAL Trends, Inc. To date, The Agency has closed more than \$9 billion worth of real estate transactions and established itself as a preeminent player in the luxury real estate market, representing many of the country's most visible and high-end properties.

## Stay Connected

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CONNECTION MAGAZINE

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# HAVE WE MET?



Buying and Selling a Home is one of the most important decisions you make. Let me guide you through the process. Call us to set up an appointment to meet in person or via Zoom.

- 5 Star Award Winner
- Forbes Magazine Real Estate Market Leader
- RealTrends America's Best Real Estate Agents
- Top 1% of Realtors in the US
- Rancho Romero Sponsor, \$60,000 and counting
- #1 Individual Agent, Westside Alamo 2013 to Present

Cumulative, per MLS



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