

LOCAL

Lifestyle

JANUARY 2026



ANDREA SCOTT, REALTOR | 925.788.9374



in this issue...

- 4** Dear Neighbor
- 6** Cutest Pet Contest
- 8** Winter Berry Fizz
- 10** Slow Cooker Balsamic Chicken
- 12** Carrot-Orange Bundt Cake
- 14** Hot Chocolate Rice Krispie Treats
- 16** Alamo Market Report
- 18** Pantry Storage Hacks
- 20** Is Now a Good Time to Sell?
- 22** 2026 Design Trends
- 24** Essential Checks for Your Dream House
- 26** Property Preparation Matters
- 29** Testimonials
- 30** About The Agency
- 31** Stay Connected



ANDREA SCOTT 925.788.9374
ANDREA@ALAMO.REALESTATE

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

January feels like a blank page—crisp, open, and full of possibility. The decorations come down, the calendars reset, and there's a quiet energy in the air—one that invites reflection, intention, and forward motion.

It's a time when we set new goals, refresh routines, and think about the changes we want to create—whether in our homes, our habits, or our hearts. In many ways, it feels like a fresh start not just for the year, but for ourselves.

I find this season to be full of promise. It's when many people begin dreaming of new surroundings, new opportunities, or simply more space to grow. If a new chapter in a new home is part of your vision this year, I'd love to help you take that first step.

Here's to a peaceful, purposeful, and joy-filled January—and to all the exciting things the year ahead may bring.

Warmly,

Andrea Scott



Cutest Pet Contest



Rosie and Squeaky Ferraro



Please send a photo of your pet with **"Pet Contest"** in the subject line to: **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.



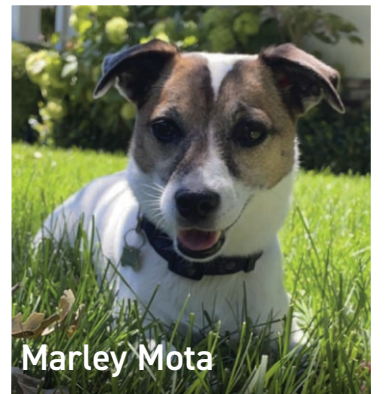
Mr. Beals
Corstorphine



Sandy Naughton



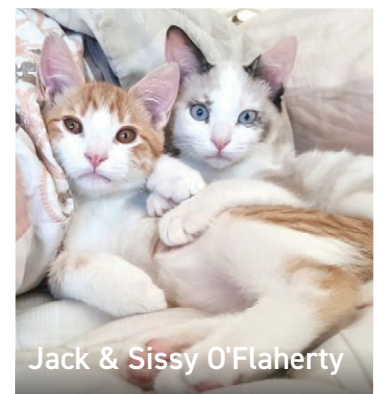
Lily Beyer



Marley Mota



Heidi Sinkowitsch



Jack & Sissy O'Flaherty

Sparkling winter berry Fizz

prep time: 5 min, total time: 5 min
servings: 2

This Winter, a bright, fizzy drink can lift the season. A refreshing mocktail, perfect for gatherings or quiet nights. Ready in minutes and low-calorie, it's antioxidant-rich and can be spiked with your favorite spirit if desired.

- **4 ounces** herbal-infused simple syrup
(see note below)
- **8 ounces** unsweetened cranberry juice
(or homemade by simmering fresh cranberries with water)
- Soda water or sparkling water, to top
- Ice cubes
- Fresh rosemary sprigs, for garnish

Note on syrup: For the herbal twist, simmer equal parts sugar and water with rosemary until dissolved, then strain and cool. It keeps for a month in the fridge.



instructions

- 1 Fill two serving glasses generously with ice to keep things chilled.
- 2 Pour in 2 ounces of the herbal simple syrup and 4 ounces of cranberry juice per glass. Stir gently to combine—the ruby hue is already mesmerizing.
- 3 each with a generous splash of soda water for that lively fizz.
- 4 Garnish with a rosemary sprig, giving it a quick swish to release the aroma. Serve immediately and savor the bubbly burst of tart-sweet flavor.

tips and twists

Keep it non-alcoholic or turn it into a cocktail with 1 ounce of your preferred spirit—the herbal notes pair well. Use any carbonated water: sparkling for light bubbles, club soda for minerals, or seltzer. Skip tonic, as its bitterness clashes with the fruit. Make it fresh so the fizz doesn't fade.

This simple drink quenches thirst while offering vitamin C and heart-healthy benefits from cranberries. It's a light, festive winter refresher. Cheers!



2 Tablespoons Olive Oil
4 Boneless, Skinless
Chicken Breasts
Salt And Black Pepper
(To Taste)
1 Onion (Sliced)
4 Cloves Garlic

1 Teaspoon Dried Oregano
1 Teaspoon Dried Basil
1 Teaspoon Dried Rosemary
½ Teaspoon Dried Thyme
½ Cup Balsamic Vinegar
2 Cans (14.5 Ounces Each)
Crushed Tomatoes

Slow Cooker Balsamic Chicken

1. Pour the olive oil into your slow cooker. Arrange the chicken breasts over the oil and sprinkle both sides with salt and pepper. Layer the onion slices and garlic over the chicken, then add the oregano, basil, rosemary,

and thyme. Pour the balsamic vinegar over everything, followed by the crushed tomatoes.

2. Set your slow cooker to *High* and cook for approximately 4 hours, until the chicken is fully cooked through with clear juices.



Zesty Glazed Carrot-Orange Bundt Cake



This vibrant cake blends the earthy sweetness of carrots with bright orange notes and warm spices, creating a moist, flavorful treat that's perfect for any gathering. Infused with cardamom and ginger, it's topped with a creamy glaze that adds just the right tang. It's a fresh take on classic carrot cake, easy to whip up for a crowd-pleasing dessert.

Active Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours

Makes: 1 (9-inch) cake
(about 12 servings)

Ingredients for the Cake

- Baking spray, for greasing
- 1 pound carrots, peeled and finely grated (about 4 cups)
- 3 ounces dried apricots, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
- 2 ounces candied orange peels, finely chopped (about 1/3 cup)
- 2 ounces raw pistachios, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 1/2 cups grapeseed oil or other neutral-tasting oil
- 2 cups packed dark brown sugar
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 tablespoons grated orange zest plus 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground green cardamom
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

Ingredients for the Glaze

- 1/4 cup cream cheese, at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar, divided
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/2 tablespoon grated orange zest plus 3 tablespoons fresh orange juice, plus more orange zest for garnish or thin orange slices

Make the Cake

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. Generously spray a 9-inch tube or Bundt pan with baking spray. In a large bowl, toss together the grated carrots, chopped dried apricots, candied orange peels, and pistachios.
2. In a blender or food processor, combine the oil, brown sugar, eggs, orange zest, and orange juice. Pulse on high until fully emulsified, about 10 quick bursts. Pour this mixture over the carrot blend and gently fold to combine.
3. In another large bowl, whisk the flour, baking powder, cardamom, ginger, baking soda, and salt. Create a well in the center and add the carrot mixture. Fold until no flour streaks remain, being careful not to overmix. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan, tapping gently to release air bubbles.
4. Bake for 55 minutes to 1 hour, rotating the pan halfway through. The cake is ready when a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean and the top feels firm and golden. Cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes, then invert onto the rack to cool completely.

Make the Glaze

1. In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment (or using a hand mixer), beat the cream cheese and butter on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 4 to 5 minutes.
2. Scrape down the sides, then add 3/4 cup powdered sugar and beat on low until smooth, about 1 minute. Mix in the sour cream, orange zest, and orange juice on low for 1 minute. Add the remaining 3/4 cup powdered sugar and beat on low until incorporated, about 45 seconds. Scrape the bowl again, then whip on medium-high until glossy and combined.
3. Drizzle the glaze over the cooled cake and sprinkle with extra orange zest or thin sliced oranges for a fresh pop of color.

This cake stays moist for days—store it covered at room temperature. For the best texture, grate carrots finely and don't skip the emulsifying step; it ensures even distribution of flavors.



Hot Chocolate Rice Krispie Treats

INGREDIENTS

- 8 tablespoons salted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup hot cocoa powder mix
- ¼ cup dehydrated marshmallows
- 10 cups mini marshmallows divided
- ¼ cup mini chocolate chips
- 9 cups Cocoa Krispies Cereal
- 1 tablespoon sprinkles optional



INSTRUCTIONS

Line a 9×13-inch baking dish with parchment paper and spray with cooking spray. Set aside.

Melt the butter, hot chocolate powder, and 8 cups of mini marshmallows in a large pot. Stir continuously with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula until the marshmallows have melted.

Add in the Cocoa Krispies, vanilla, and the remaining 2 cups of marshmallows and stir until cereal is evenly coated.

Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish, use another piece of parchment to put on top of the treats and gently press the mixture into the pan.

Sprinkle the dehydrated marshmallows, chocolate chips, and sprinkles on top of the treats and lightly press them in.

Allow the treats to cool for 20 minutes before removing from the pan and slicing into 24 pieces.



ALAMO MARKET REPORT

LAST MONTH V THIS MONTH

OCTOBER 2025	NOVEMBER 2025
HOMES SOLD 19	HOMES SOLD 15 ↓
DAYS ON MARKET 42	DAYS ON MARKET 24 ↓
AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,461,830	AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,724,400 ↑
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,507,573	AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,823,533 ↑
LIST: SOLD RATIO 102%	LIST: SOLD RATIO 103% ↑
\$/SF \$816	\$/SF \$874 ↑

Sales slowed slightly to 52 homes, yet price per square foot rose impressively from \$816 to \$874, showing buyers will still pay a premium for the right property. While days on market lengthened, that's typical heading into the holidays—and strategic sellers can stand out while inventory thins. Even with a temporary dip in list-to-sell ratio, motivated sellers who price smartly are capturing strong, selective buyer attention.



ALAMO MARKET REPORT

LAST YEAR V THIS YEAR

NOVEMBER 2024	NOVEMBER 2025
HOMES SOLD 12	HOMES SOLD 15 ↑
DAYS ON MARKET 42	DAYS ON MARKET 24 ↓
AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,462,583	AVERAGE LIST PRICE \$2,724,400 ↑
AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,390,416	AVERAGE SOLD PRICE \$2,823,533 ↑
LIST: SOLD RATIO 97%	LIST: SOLD RATIO 103% ↑
\$/SF \$770	\$/SF \$874 ↑

Sales volume increased and \$/sf climbed dramatically from \$770 to \$874, signaling that home values remain robust despite fewer transactions. Homes are taking a bit longer to sell, yet buyers are proving they'll pay more for exceptional properties. This is an ideal time to prepare your home for market and take advantage of early-season demand before spring competition builds.



PANTRY STORAGE HACKS

A little organization goes a long way—your January self will thank you!

HACK #1 **Clear Containers**

Transfer pasta, rice, flour, and cereals into clear, airtight containers. You'll see exactly what you have (no more buying duplicates!) and everything stays fresher longer.

HACK #2 **Use Lazy Susans**

For Deep Shelves Stop digging through layers of spices and oils. A lazy Susan brings everything to you with a simple spin—perfect for corner cabinets too.

HACK #3 **Create Zones**

Group like items together: baking supplies, snacks, breakfast items, canned goods. Add simple bin labels so everyone in the family knows where things belong.

HACK #4 **First In, First Out**

Store newer items behind older ones. This simple restaurant trick prevents food waste and keeps your pantry rotating smoothly.

HACK #5 **Door Real Estate**

Don't waste the back of your pantry door! Add an over-door organizer for snacks, spices, or kitchen wraps.

Is Now A Good Time To Sell?



3 Questions To Ask Yourself

The “right time” to sell your home isn’t really about timing the market—it’s about timing your life. Markets rise and fall, interest rates shift, and headlines change weekly. But the decision to move is ultimately rooted in how well your home supports the way you live right now and where you want to go next. If you’re wondering whether it might be time for a change, start by asking yourself these three questions:

1 Has your family outgrown (or undersized) your space? Homes evolve with us—until suddenly they don’t. Maybe the nursery became a toddler’s room, then a tween’s hangout, and now every corner feels full. Or perhaps the opposite has happened: the kids have moved out, and you’re finding yourself with more empty bedrooms than you know what to do with. When your space no longer matches your daily routines, your energy, or your future plans, it may be a sign that you’ve simply outgrown your home—or that it has outgrown you. A move could give you the breathing room, efficiency, or simplicity you need.

2 Is your commute or location holding you back? Remote work has transformed how—and where—we live. If you’re still driving

long hours to an office you visit only twice a week, or if you feel tied to a neighborhood that no longer suits your lifestyle, it’s worth considering whether your home is still working for you. Maybe you’re dreaming of a walkable community, easier access to friends and family, or a quieter environment with more outdoor space. Life is too short to feel stuck in the wrong location, especially when flexibility is now more possible than ever.

3 Are you ready for a fresh start? Sometimes nothing is “wrong” with your house at all. You’ve just changed. A new job, a new relationship, a new city—or simply a new chapter you feel ready to step into—can be reason enough. Our homes are deeply personal spaces, and when life calls you in a different direction, it’s natural to follow that pull. Moving can be a chance to reset, redefine your priorities, and design the lifestyle you want next.

If any of these questions resonate with you, it might be the right moment to explore your options.

Reach out to me today, and let’s talk about what your next chapter could look like.

HOME DESIGN TRENDS SHAPING 2026

As we look ahead to 2026, a fresh wave of design directions is emerging, blending timeless warmth, thoughtful functionality, and a deeper connection to nature. These trends focus on creating spaces that feel both refined and lived-in, turning houses into true sanctuaries.

TRADITIONAL DETAILS RETURN

Classic English country and modern Tudor influences are making a strong comeback. Think inset cabinetry, arched range hoods, rich wood tones, gentle curves, and paneled walls in soothing earth tones like olive green, taupe, and burgundy. Warm khakis and soft eucalyptus greens are becoming signature shades for understated elegance.

WALL-MOUNTED BATHROOM FAUCETS

Mounting faucets on the wall instead of the countertop is gaining momentum. This approach keeps surfaces clear for easy cleaning, works beautifully with vessel sinks or double vanities, and brings a



sleek, minimalist look to any bathroom.

CHECKERBOARD PATTERNS EVERYWHERE

The checkerboard motif is breaking out of kitchens and bathrooms and appearing on entry floors, patios, and mudrooms. Designers are moving beyond classic black-and-white into softer sage-and-cream combinations or bolder emerald-and-oxblood pairings, often in honed marble or terra cotta for lasting charm.

FLAT-PANEL CABINETRY

Smooth, slab-front doors with no visible framing are the new go-to for kitchens



and bathrooms. Finished in matte paints or warm woods and paired with discreet hardware, they offer a clean evolution of traditional styles while being remarkably easy to maintain.

ZONED BUILT-IN WALLS

Full-wall built-ins that combine media centers, fireplaces, storage, seating, and even bars are replacing bulky freestanding furniture. Mixing stone, wood, glass, and metal creates layered



texture and keeps rooms feeling open yet purposefully designed.

QUIETLY DRAMATIC NATURAL STONE

Slabs of quartzite and marble with subtle veining in greens, browns, and golds are taking center stage. Their gentle movement pairs perfectly with wood cabinetry and brass or chrome accents, delivering organic luxury without overpowering the space.

OUTDOOR GARDEN ROOMS

Backyards are being divided into distinct “rooms”—dining areas, fire-pit lounges, play zones, and quiet reading nooks—separated by hedges, large planters, and trellises. This layered approach makes even modest lots feel expansive and inviting year-round.

WARM YELLOW ACCENTS

Muted ocher, honey, and soft mustard tones are appearing in upholstery, textiles, and occasional walls. Layered with rust, terracotta, or chocolate brown, these sunny hues bring gentle optimism and cozy glow to any room.

ART DECO REVIVAL

Geometric chevrons, sunbursts, and stepped details are returning in marble inlays, lacquered furniture, and metallic finishes. Jewel tones—emerald, sapphire, and deep charcoal—combined with mirrored surfaces and polished brass create rooms that feel both glamorous and timeless.

Together, these directions point toward homes that prioritize comfort, craftsmanship, and a softer, more human pace—spaces designed not just to impress, but to nurture.



NAVIGATING THE HOME BUYING MAZE:

Essential Checks for Your Dream House



Buying a house is one of life's biggest investments—exciting, with a bit of anxiety mixed in. The right home is more than four walls; it supports your lifestyle, family, and future. Start with a realistic budget using the 28/36 rule: keep housing costs under 28% of gross income and total debt under 36%. This leaves room for surprises like closing fees or repairs. No house is perfect, especially in competitive markets, so focus on must-haves and schedule a professional inspection to catch hidden issues.

Scout the Neighborhood First

Location is king—you can't move a house. Visit at different times: mornings for traffic, evenings for noise, weekends for overall vibe. Check safety through local chats and crime stats. Proximity to work, schools (even without kids, for resale), groceries, gyms, and parks matters. Test commutes during rush hour and consider walkability or transit. Watch for airport noise or flood zones to avoid higher insurance costs. A local real estate agent can flag upcoming developments or street quirks.

Size Up the Home's Layout and Features

Think about your needs now and later. Detached homes offer privacy but more upkeep; condos trade space for amenities and HOA fees; townhouses sit in the middle. Count bedrooms and baths—enough, but not excessive. Open floor plans work for entertainers, while quiet nooks help with remote work. Look for flexible square footage, like a basement or ADU potential.

Outdoor perks like a flat yard add joy, though slopes require more work.

If parking is tight, ensure a garage or reliable street options. Storage—closets, pantries, attics—keeps clutter at bay. Older charm may beat modern efficiency, but stay open. If you plan to age in place, a first-floor bedroom can be a smart move.

Inspect Structure, Systems, and Surprises

Look beyond cosmetics to the home's bones. Foundation cracks or bowing walls signal issues. A roof over 20 years old may need replacing. Check plumbing, electrical, and HVAC ages to plan for upgrades. Test faucets, outlets, and vents.

Outside, healthy landscaping suggests good care, but beware of invasive roots. Inside, musty smells can mean mold or pests. Water stains should prompt a deeper check. Appliances often stay, so note their condition and efficiency. Cosmetic flaws like paint or fixtures are easy to update.

Financial Smarts and Final Tips

Maintenance is ongoing—decks weather, AC units fail. Equity grows through smart upgrades like energy-efficient windows. In tight markets, be ready to compromise; your first home may simply be a stepping stone.

With a solid checklist—budget, neighborhood visits, inspections—you can avoid common pitfalls. Picture your daily routines to test fit. With patience, you'll find a place that feels like home.

For neighborhood-specific guidance or to start your search, contact your local neighborhood expert today.

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!

B
E
F
O
R
E



A
F
T
E
R



B
E
F
O
R
E



A
F
T
E
R



B
E
F
O
R
E



A
F
T
E
R





Client Testimonials



"Our home was on the market for 3 and a half months with 2 different realtors. It received very few showings and no offers. It had been cleaned, staged, and professionally photographed; what was missing? Then we hired Andrea Scott and she jumped into action. Cleaning, staging, small repairs and expert photography - Andrea had the marketing completely revamped in 1 week. We followed Andrea's expert advice and our home was sold over asking the asking price with only 3 days on the market. The changes weren't drastic but the results were. If you've ever been tempted to think that all realtors are the same, please heed my advice. Hire Andrea and experience the difference!"

-Eswar M, Walnut Creek



"Andrea is terrific- Does it get any better than selling your home for 20% over the asking price? Andrea is high energy and high performance. She creates an effective marketing plan and is on

top of every detail. It was a pleasure working with Andrea; she is a person of high integrity who devotes herself fully to real estate."

-Rand P, Alamo



"It was an absolute pleasure working with Andrea on the sale of our home. We had an aggressive timeline for getting the house on the market, and Andrea dove right in and delivered. Her marketing effort drove a ton of traffic and our home ultimately sold well over asking with multiple offers."

-Jenni D, Alamo



"Andrea gave us first class guidance on preparing our home; first class marketing; and first class execution. Even after we were in contract she never stopped selling, getting us a backup offer that resulted in our netting an extra \$35,000. She watched out for us every step of the way and she follows through on everything she promises. If you want a truly stand-out listing agent, Andrea is the one to hire."

-Jim B, Alamo

About The Agency

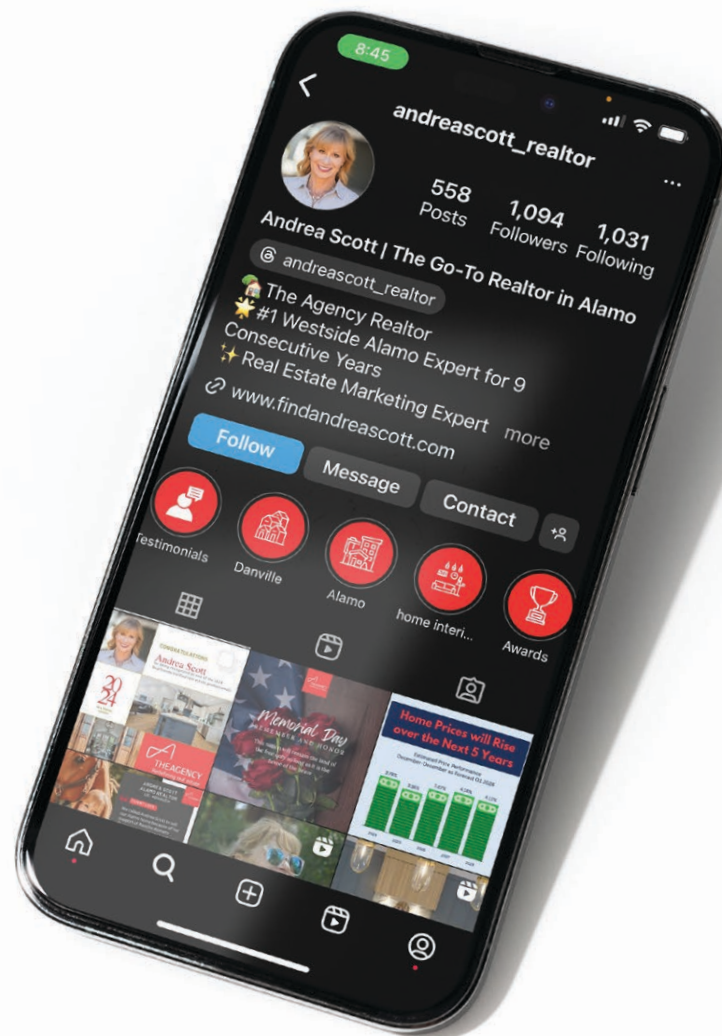
The Agency is a full-service, luxury real estate brokerage and lifestyle company representing clients worldwide in a broad spectrum of classes, including residential, new development, resort real estate, residential leasing and luxury vacation rentals.

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

Follow Andrea on Facebook or Instagram



[f @AlamoDiabloHomes](#) [@andreascott_realtor](#) [in @findandreascott](#)

www.Alamo.RealEstate



THE NEIGHBORHOOD
CONNECTION MAGAZINE

Andrea Scott

PRSR STD
US Postage PAID
Long Beach, CA
PERMIT NO. 2336

Scan to learn more



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



Andrea Scott | 925.788.9374 | Andrea@Alamo.RealEstate

www.Alamo.RealEstate