



L  V E

(*& Real Estate*)

IS IN THE AIR

Are your pedals going up or down?

It's fine. We're fine. Everything is fine. For as long as I can remember, there has been so much talk about the status of the market. Is it good? Are we headed for a repeat of 2008? What the heck is going on!

While I don't have a crystal ball, I can tell you with certainty, there is a lot of misinformation out there. Anyone with a megaphone- from mainstream media to a lone blogger- are out there making their "scary" predictions. It doesn't take a genius to know that bad news sells and these folks are all over it. No one can truly make predictions. As real estate consultants, we can make sure you turn to a reliable source and interpret historical and market trends to look at what to expect from the house market this year.

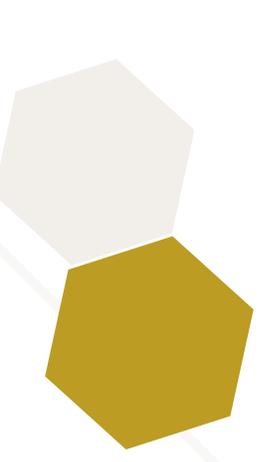
Want the nitty gritty real estate details? Here's what I am seeing in the marketplace:

1) Buyers are looking NOW and they are ready to purchase.

Increasing interest rates are causing buyers to get off the fence. Buyers who are willing to house hunt in a winter market, when there are fewer options, are typically more serious. Additionally, year-end bonuses and overtime payouts give people more purchasing power.

2) Sellers are listing earlier this year.

Listing earlier in the year rather than "waiting for spring" gives sellers a chance to capture those hungry buyers! Rates have already jumped a few times this year and buyers are anxious to lock in their rates.



3) New Construction Homes is where the inventory has been hiding.

Labor shortages, rising material costs and supply chain bottlenecks have created some unique challenges for the new home construction market.

For many buyers, this is where our inventory is! Buyers considering new homes should be mindful of delays in construction, surprise pricing increases, and the uncertainty of being able to lock in their interest rate.

4) This is a great time to consider “Glowing-Up” to your next home

If you’re moving into a larger, more expensive home, consider doing it now. Prices are projected to appreciate by 6%-8% over the next 12 months. Waiting may cost more (both in down payment and mortgage payment) if you wait. Sell high and lock in your rate.

5) Use your equity wisely.

Did you know the average Tucson homeowner made over \$50,000 in equity over the last 2 years? I repeat over \$50,00! If you purchased a home in the last 5 years, you’ve made some cash. Want to leverage some of that equity? Consider an investment property make your cash work for you. Sit down with your financial planner and figure out a reasonable amount to invest.

As a Tucson homeowner, what does all this mean for you?

Whether you are staying put or considering a move, give yourselves a pat on the back for the ups and downs of the last two years. I am always available to chat about what’s happening in love, life and real estate!

Ciao for now!



I can't think of a better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than with baking some delicious cookies with love! National Bake For Family Fun Month, celebrated all of February, provides a reason to put down the take out menus and get the entire family involved.

Baking serves to connect us to our family, our home, and our community. Let's shy away from the growing trend of takeout food, and enjoy another opportunity to be near your loved ones as you bake together this month.

It's National Bake for Family Fun Month!

~Insert Recipe for Sparkle Sweetheart Cookies~

Description

These sparkle sweetheart cookies are dressed up in Valentine's Day sprinkles and a chocolate heart on top! This is a simple cream cheese drop-style sugar cookie that only requires 30-60 minutes of cookie dough chilling.



Ingredients

- 3 cups (375g) all-purpose flour (scoop & leveled)
- 1 and 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks; 240g) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 2 ounces (56g) block cream cheese, softened to room temperature
- 1 cup (200g) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract*
- 3/4 cup (150g) sanding sugar, pink and red or assorted colors*
- 32 chocolate hearts, unwrapped*



Instructions

1. Whisk the flour, baking powder, and salt together until combined. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl using a hand-held or stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat the butter and cream cheese together on high speed until relatively smooth, about 2 minutes. Add the granulated sugar and beat until combined and creamy. Add the egg, vanilla extract, and almond extract and beat on high speed until combined, about 1 minute. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl as needed to combine.
3. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix on low speed until combined. The dough will be thick. Cover dough tightly with aluminum foil or plastic wrap and chill for at least 30-60 minutes and up to 3-4 days. If chilling for longer than 2-3 hours, allow the dough to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before rolling and baking because the dough will be quite hard and the cookies may not spread.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. (Always recommended for cookies.) Set aside.
5. Pour sanding sugar in a bowl or, if using multiple colors, a few separate bowls.
6. Roll balls of cookie dough, about 1 Tablespoon of dough per cookie, then roll each ball in the sanding sugar to coat. Place each dough ball 2 inches apart on the baking sheets. Using the back of a measuring cup or drinking glass, gently press down on each dough ball to slightly flatten. Bake the cookies for 12-13 minutes or until very lightly browned on the edges.
7. Remove from the oven and allow to cool on the baking sheets for 5 minutes. Press a chocolate heart into each cookie and quickly stick the baking sheet in the freezer or fridge so the warm cookie does not completely melt the chocolate heart. Let the chocolate set (about 15 minutes) on the cookies in the freezer/refrigerator.
8. Cookies will stay fresh covered at room temperature for 1 week.

Notes

1. Make Ahead Instructions: You can make the cookie dough and chill it in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. Baked cookies freeze well for up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator and bring to room temperature, if desired, before serving. Unbaked cookie dough balls (without sanding sugar coating) will freeze well for up to 3 months. Let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes, pre-heat the oven, then roll in sanding sugar. Bake as directed.
2. Almond extract adds a wonderful flavor to the cookies, but you can leave it out if desired. No need to replace with anything.
3. Chocolate hearts are a seasonal item around Valentine's Day. I like Hershey's or Dove brands.



Sonoita Day Trip...Wine not?

When the rest of the country is shoveling snow, us desert dwellers get to enjoy the best weather this time of year. One of my favorite things to do on the weekends when the sun is shining and the air is crisp is to pack some snacks and take a road trip to Sonoita with my fiancé.

Sonoita not only offers picturesque scenery but is also becoming an Arizona wine destination. So gas up your car and enjoy an afternoon of wine tasting! Sonoita is home to array of award-winning wines ranging from crisp and fruity to bold and complex. Most wineries are located within 5 miles of each other so plan on 2-3 and make sure you have a DD assigned. Some of my favorite locations include:

- Dos Cabezas Winery-For bold red wines!
- Rune Wines-Awesome outdoor atmosphere with beautiful views! Their wines include a Counoise (Arizona's lightest red grape and similar to an Oregon Pinot Noir), a Mourvèdre, Syrah, Grenache, Viognier, and Rosé, to name a few.
- Arizona Hops & Vine-If you are looking for a fun and funky vibe, this is a must-stop! Women Owned & Operated, this is not your average winery. Eclectic décor, Cheetos snacks at the bar, live music and firepit, make this winery a dynamic place for some afternoon wine tasting. Don't forget to say hi to their peacock!

