

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 18

Issue 17

Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2024



The Real Estate Quarter in Review

... read on Page OH4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Endless Summer

By Cynthia Brian



Manzanita is a native shrub.

Photos Cynthia Brian

"Magnificent Autumn... It is the funeral anthem of the dying year." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

When I was young, I was a surfer girl. I spent many weekends catching waves in Santa Cruz, Bolinas, and Hawaii. My favorite movie was *The Endless Summer*. I dreamt of traveling the globe in search of the perfect ride.

Today, I surf gardening catalogs and magazines looking for the waves of new plant species and hardy specimens that are deer-resistant and drought-tolerant to thrive in our clay soils.

The first few days of autumn were refreshing. The cooler temperatures prompted me to start digging and enhancing the soil as I anticipated the joys of fall plantings. But Mother Nature had other plans and decided to shower us with an endless summer of sizzling sunshine and stifling nights. The winds have been so ferocious that I awoke to my patio umbrellas blown across my backyard. Until recent years, summer has always been a favorite season, but as our globe warms, an endless summer portends a major drought in the future. While the East Coast suffers from torrential rains, hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes, the



Tomato vines intermingle with Jacobinia Justica Carneia.

West Coast endures another heat wave and increased risk of deadly wildfires.

As temperatures soared to 103 degrees, our street suffered a fire hydrant leak this week, resulting in our neighborhood's water being shut off for twenty-four hours without warning. It was disconcerting to turn on the tap with no drip available. My empathy for those anguishing in disaster areas and war zones soared when water and basic necessities are unavailable. Water is life.

Before I provide tips on drought-tolerant plants that you may wish to include in your landscape, I want to remind you that although fire season in California is considered year-round, October is an especially monstrous month for wildfires. Make sure you have your home Go-Bag up-to-date and ready to go in the event of an emergency. It's a smart idea to keep an additional Go-Bag in your car in case you get stranded and can't make it home.

... continued on Page OH8

VLATKA BATHGATE

IF I HAD A BUYER FOR YOUR HOME WOULD YOU SELL IT?

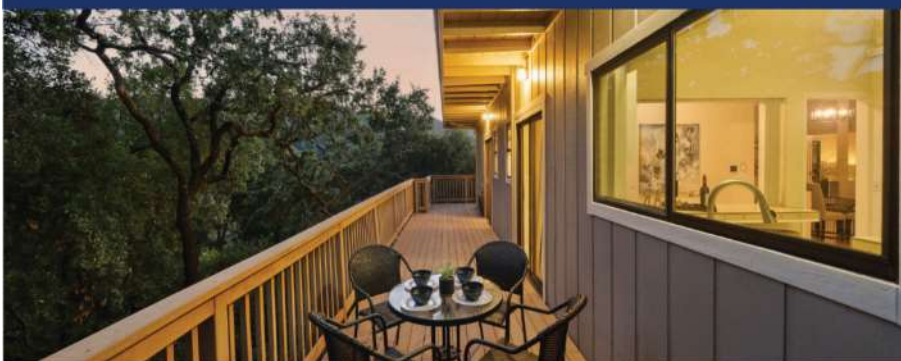
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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	12	\$499,000	\$6,500,000
MORAGA	7	\$463,500	\$1,715,000
ORINDA	16	\$1,228,000	\$3,000,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE

1189 Bacon Way, \$1,350,000, 2 Bdrms, 1722 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 08-28-24
4200 Canyon Road, \$6,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 5990 SqFt, 2002 YrBlt, 08-26-24, Previous Sale: \$895,000, 02-22-00
4153 Hidden Valley Road, \$1,575,000, 3 Bdrms, 1241 SqFt, 1945 YrBlt, 08-26-24, Previous Sale: \$1,065,000, 07-06-18
210 Lafayette Circle #101, \$499,000, 1 Bdrms, 567 SqFt, 2021 YrBlt, 08-27-24
839 Las Trampas Road, \$2,850,000, 4 Bdrms, 1711 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 08-30-24, Previous Sale: \$900,000, 01-17-23
493 McBride Drive, \$1,700,000, 3 Bdrms, 2467 SqFt, 1975 YrBlt, 08-27-24
3268 Park Lane, \$1,690,000, 3 Bdrms, 2097 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 08-29-24, Previous Sale: \$1,160,000, 01-18-24
1681 Pleasant Hill Road, \$1,701,000, 5 Bdrms, 2852 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 08-27-24, Previous Sale: \$726,000, 07-11-12
3500 School Street, \$1,725,000, 2 Bdrms, 1699 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 08-30-24
3744 Sundale Road, \$870,000, 2 Bdrms, 771 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-03-24, Previous Sale: \$735,000, 08-27-20
1209 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$2,635,000, 4 Bdrms, 2939 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 08-30-24, Previous Sale: \$525,000, 06-01-87
917 Webb Lane, \$4,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 4242 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 09-06-24

MORAGA

502 Augusta Drive, \$1,665,500, 3 Bdrms, 2486 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 09-06-24, Previous Sale: \$1,030,000, 01-03-07
1375 Camino Peral #A, \$596,000, 2 Bdrms, 951 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 08-30-24, Previous Sale: \$550,000, 06-17-21
282 Paseo Bernal, \$1,175,000, 3 Bdrms, 2044 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 08-29-24, Previous Sale: \$1,060,000, 05-30-23
249 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,715,000, 3 Bdrms, 1810 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 08-28-24, Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 06-07-22
259 Rheem Boulevard, \$1,022,000, 3 Bdrms, 1456 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-06-24
8 Silvia Court, \$1,595,000, 4 Bdrms, 2467 SqFt, 1967 YrBlt, 09-03-24
809 Villa Lane #3, \$463,500, 2 Bdrms, 952 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 08-28-24

ORINDA

10 Corte Del Rey, \$1,710,000, 4 Bdrms, 1823 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 08-28-24
38 El Gavilan Road, \$1,660,000, 4 Bdrms, 2702 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 08-26-24, Previous Sale: \$1,350,000, 04-01-20
15 Glorietta Court, \$1,835,000, 3 Bdrms, 1845 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 08-30-24, Previous Sale: \$1,390,000, 05-24-19
639 Miner Road, \$1,228,000, 2 Bdrms, 2396 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 09-06-24
4 Sager Court, \$3,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 3415 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 09-03-24, Previous Sale: \$925,000, 07-17-07
24 Southwood Drive, \$3,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 3823 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 08-30-24, Previous Sale: \$1,015,000, 01-03-05

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DRE# 02047712

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HURLBUT TEAM



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DRE# 02038791

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BROKER/OWNER



ACTIVE

1268 SKYCREST DRIVE, #1, ROSSMOOR
OFFERED FOR \$649,000
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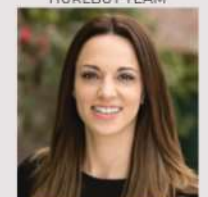
PENDING

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The Real Estate Quarter in Review

By Conrad Bassett, CRP, GMS-T

The third quarter of 2024 showed consistency in the volume of closings on the residential side of Lamorinda real estate. The recent softening of interest rates did not help increase the number of closings over the last several months due to a continued lack of supply. The recent changes in how real estate agents might be compensated has not really affected things in areas of high prices like Lamorinda.

Per Contra Costa Association of Realtors statistics reported from July 1 through September 30, 2024, 69 single-family homes closed in Lafayette which was consistent with the 66 in the year ago quarter and below the 85 that closed in the third quarter of 2022.

Sales prices ranged from \$705,000 to \$8,495,000. The average number of days on market was 27—almost identical to the year ago when it was 26. The average sales price was \$2,339,175, a solid increase from 3Q 2023 when it was \$2,198,109. This is the highest quarterly price average in Lafayette ever. In 2022 it was \$2,273,646. In 2021 it was \$2,067,747. In this same quarter in 2020 it was \$1,972,380.

In Moraga, the number of single-family closings was 31, up from a year ago when it was 25. Prices ranged from \$1,022,000 to \$3,197,000. The average sales price was down at \$1,922,527. In the same period a year ago it was \$2,094,182. This was an increase from \$1,890,272 in 2022. In 2021 it was \$1,993,792. The average marketing time was 27 days, up from 15 days a year ago.

In Orinda, the number of single-family closings rose to 63, up from 48 last year. Sales prices ranged from \$875,000 to \$4,800,000 with an average price of \$2,120,476. In this quarter last year, it was \$2,265,458...close to 3Q2022 when it was \$2,243,571. It took an average of 26 days to expose a home to the market this last quarter. One year ago, it took 20 days.

In the third quarter of this year, on an average price per square foot basis, Lafayette detached single-family homes sold at \$834.12 ... essentially the same as last year's \$835.79.

Moraga homes sold for \$780.77, down from \$822.43. In Orinda it was \$791.24. A year ago, it was \$821.29.

The biggest change came in the area of list price versus sales price. In Lafayette, the average sales price was again 102% of the final asking price like in this quarter of 2023. In Moraga, it was just over 100% of asking and in Orinda it was just over 102%.

This is likely a factor of sellers realizing that they needed to be more realistic in pricing and buyers understanding that there were fewer buyers to compete with so they were not as aggressive in their offers.

On the Oakland/Berkeley side of the hills, many agents have still been asking far below the market value of homes in order to generate the multiple offers and the sales prices well above asking. Often this has failed to work, so they raise the asking price and call the list price "Transparent." This phenomenon (sometimes known as "Teaser Pricing") is not as prevalent in Lamorinda.

In Lafayette, 41 of the 69 sales sold at or above the final listing price. A year ago, it was 40 of the 66. In Moraga, 14 of the 31 sales sold at or above asking. A year ago, it was 16 of the 22 sold. In Orinda it was 35 of 63 and a year ago it was 28 of 48.

In the condominium/town home category, Lafayette had seven closings reported to the MLS. They were priced from \$685,179 to \$1,498,000. Moraga had 13, down from 17 a year ago. Sales prices ranged from \$463,125 to \$1,625,000. Orinda had four sales from \$535,000 to \$1,600,000.

As of October 6, 2024, there were 58 pending sales in the three communities combined. A year ago, there were 50 pending sales per the MLS. The asking prices for the pending single family detached homes range from \$1,098,000 to \$5,850,000. It should be pointed out that there are no "Potential Short Sales" or foreclosures that are currently pending although this trend may change.

It is interesting to note that of the 58 pending sales in the area, 10 received acceptable offers in the first six days of October. That is an average of almost two per day.

Usually many of the sales are completed prior to the start of school. Depending upon how many of the homes are being purchased by families with children who are new to Lamorinda, it may impact certain grades at the elementary level.

Inventory, however, is finally starting to rise. When looking at the available homes of all types in Lamorinda, there are 123 homes listed in the MLS. In Lafayette there are 52 homes on the market as of October 6 and there were 36 at this time one year ago.

In Moraga buyers have their choice of 32 properties, up from the 20 properties a year ago.

Orinda inventory has increased to 39 currently available up from 23 one year ago.

Current asking prices range from \$450,000 for a Moraga condo to \$25,000,000 for a Lafayette property.

At the high end, 22 homes closed above \$3,000,000 in the three communities combined during the quarter—up from 17 one year ago.

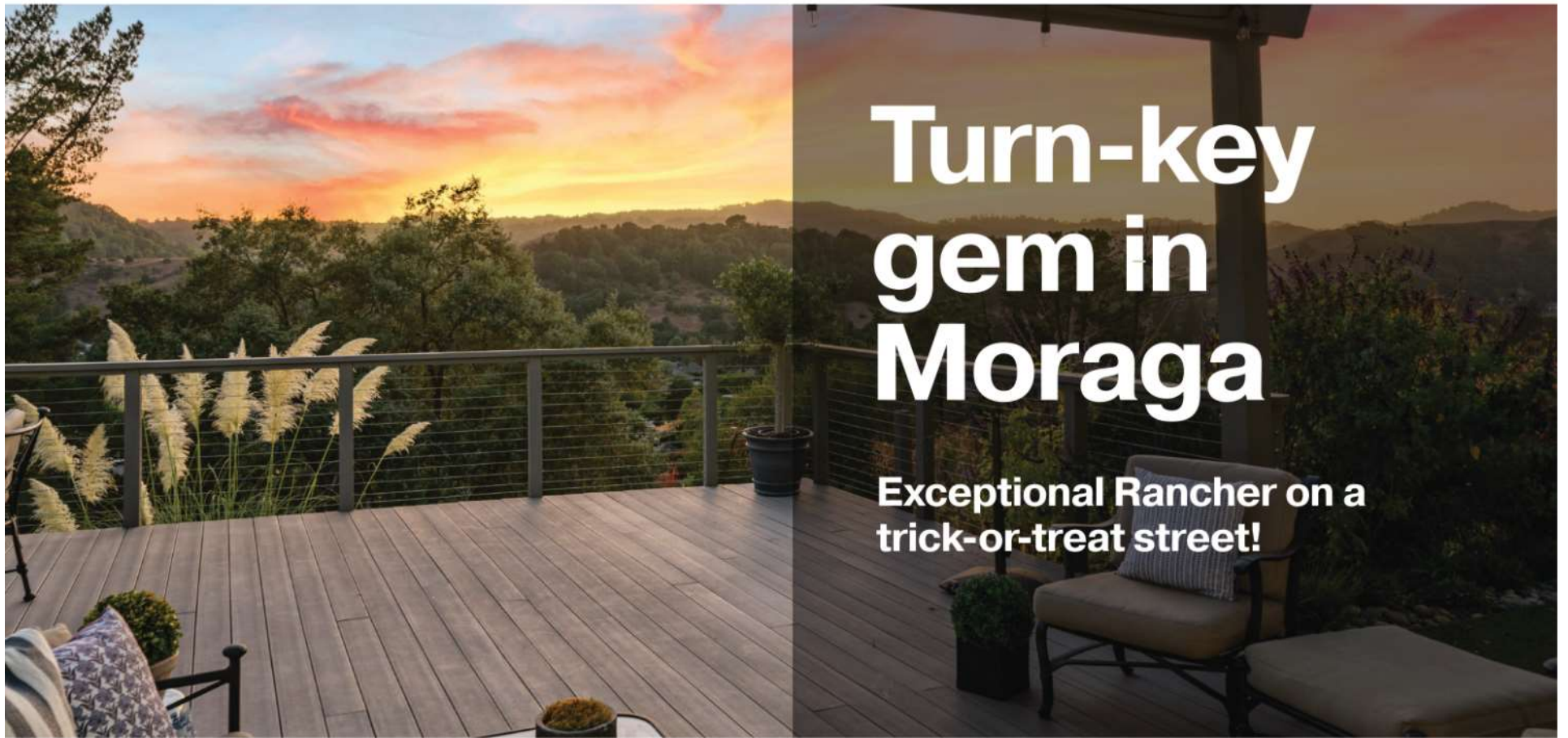
There are 30 currently available above this amount...a year ago there were 19.

You also have a lot of homeowners who refinanced when rates were very low and are reluctant to sell their homes because they do not want to have to give up this "cheap money" and buy something to pay 6% or more. This will help limit supply.

And, some buyers are in the market to buy anything, regardless of the interest rates. They feel that if rates fall, two things will happen...more buyers will be back in the buyer pool AND if rates go down...they will just refinance again.

We are still seeing Oakland, San Francisco, Silicon Valley, and Peninsula agents representing buyers in their purchase of Lamorinda homes. They are coming from higher priced areas and have more available equity to use in Lamorinda.

Corporate relocation has also increased as more workers who were working remotely from their old locations are now moving to work in the destination offices.



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JEANNETTE BETTENCOURT

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KELLY CRAWFORD | VANGUARD TOP PRODUCER 2023

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Endless Summer



A bee savors the lavender blossoms.



Many salvias are California natives.

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page OH1

Fill these Go-Bags with all the necessities you, your family, and your pets will need for three days, including water, protein bars, a first-aid kit, medications, masks, gloves, extra chargers, blankets, change of clothes, jacket, socks, headlamp, and a flash drive with your important documents, photos, or other digital items that you don't have in the cloud.

When working in your yard, on red-flag days, scorching hot or windy days, refrain from using any equipment that could cause a spark: lawnmower, weed whacker, or chainsaw. Do not ignite a fire pit, cook over an open flame, vape, or smoke outdoors. Be fire-safe.

In September articles, I discussed how to prepare your soil for fall plantings (Prescription to Plant: <https://lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1815/Digging-Deep-with-Goddess-Gardener-Cynthia-Brian-Prescription-to-Plant.html>) and also suggested plants that are deer resistant, (Dear Deer! <https://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1816/Digging-Deep-with-Goddess-Gardener-Cynthia-Brian-Deer.html>). But how do we move forward in an endless summer of heat and heavy winds?

The answer is to keep your landscape appropriately watered so that established plants and trees don't perish. WAIT to plant anything until the weather cools. The soil will still be warm, but the air temperatures will be lower. In this scenario, with minimal watering, the roots can establish themselves and be less stressed.

If you are considering reseeding your lawn or adding sod, start preparing the soil. Turn the soil six inches, mix in compost, then WAIT for chillier weather. Double-check your irrigation system to make sure that your sprinklers will reach every part of your grass. If you are ordering sod, start now researching the type of grass you want to install and get a quote from a reputable landscaper or grower. In the past few weeks, I had to replace my irrigation controllers. I hired my handyman from Honey-Homes to help me. I also repositioned several sprinkler lines. Thankfully, everything is working perfectly now after several years of pulling hoses. If you need help, this company has qualified service people in Lamorinda and you can get a major discount with my code <https://honeyh.me/eXEn>. As soon as the weather cools, I'll be reseeding and overseeding, knowing that when I turn on a sprinkle, it will work.

... continued on Page OH9

... continued from Page OH8

Drought-tolerant plants to consider for fall:

If you've been perusing my garden columns, you already have a list of deer-resistant plants and know how to prepare the soil with mulch and drainage that retains moisture without waterlogging. Here are a few of my favorite low-water options that can be planted before the winter cold arrives and after our endless summer has ceased. Remember, no matter how drought-tolerant a plant is, every plant needs some water. California natives will be the most tolerant, conserving more water and requiring less maintenance. Many natives are also deer-resistant.

Natives:

- Manzanita
- California Poppy
- California lilac (ceanothus)
- Muhly grass
- Pink flowering currant
- Blue-eyes grass
- Salvia
- Yarrow
- California fuchsia
- Blue elderberry
- Shaw's Agave

Other Drought-Tolerant

Plants:

- Lavender
- Aloe Vera
- Echeveria
- Barberry
- Sedum
- Russian Sage
- Feather Reed Grass
- Black-eyed Susan
- Pride of Madeira
- Stonecrop
- Succulents
- Cacti
- Many wildflowers



For a flash of annual border color, buy pansies, which use minimal water. ... continued on Page OH10

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **Endless Summer**



If you have the space, Pride of Madeira is a gorgeous statement shrub.



Barrel collecting rain water

Photos Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page OH9

For a flash of annual border color, buy pansies. They use relatively little water, are low maintenance, and provide beauty in the winter.

You can create a beautiful and sustainable landscape with native and drought-tolerant plants. Biodiversity is increased, and you'll cultivate a garden that will thrive in arid and water-scarce conditions. Save every drop of water by putting a bucket in your shower or a bowl near your sinks. I use the water for my indoor plants and patio potted plants. If you want to go the extra mile, install a rain catcher or barrel to collect the wa-

ter from downspouts.

On a positive sunny note, my tomato plants are enjoying this endless summer. They have mingled with my Jacobinia Justica Carneia and continue to sprout new flowers which will provide me with tomatoes for a few more months.

As we look forward to a magnificent autumn, catch a gardening wave in this endless summer! Soon enough, the funeral anthem of a dying year will be playing, and we'll be longing to surf the sunshine again.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing!



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"Thanks to those who said hello and bought books at the Pear Festival," exclaims Cynthia Brian

For more gardening advice for all seasons, check out Growing with the Goddess Gardener at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/books>. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3 which was just honored as the 2024 Nonprofit of the Year by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, Books in the Barnyard: Oh Deer!, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com>

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LAMORINDA'S LEADING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE FIRM



60 Coachwood Terrace, Orinda
7 Bd | 5.5 Ba | 6602 Sqft | \$6,995,000

This secluded property offers views & a European vibe w/ close to town convenience & excellent schools!



27 Orinda View Road, Orinda
5 Bd | 5.5 Ba | 5335 Sqft | \$5,150,000

This private retreat is above it all offering unobstructed sweeping views out nearly every window!



291 Monte Vista Ridge Road, Orinda
5 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 5576 Sqft | \$4,250,000

This exquisite home combines luxury, comfort, quality, privacy, & convenience to SF & top tier Orinda schools.



523 Miner Road, Orinda
5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3945 Sqft | \$3,750,000

Experience luxury living in this modern architecture masterpiece, designed by Bud Evenson & stylishly remodeled in 2015.



24 La Campana Road, Orinda
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3858 Sqft | \$3,495,000

In the heart of the OCC neighborhood, this custom home offers breathtaking views from the glass walled veranda!



188 Lombardy Lane, Orinda
5 Bd | 4 Ba | 3948 Sqft | \$3,350,000

Fabulous home in coveted Sleepy Hollow w/ wonderful floor plan & spectacular private backyard!



108 Oak Road, Orinda
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3377 Sqft | \$2,995,000

Built in 2000 & nestled in one of Orinda's close to town neighborhoods, this bright spacious home has everything you are looking for!



11 Idyll Court, Orinda
6+ Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4020 Sqft | \$2,695,000

Located at the end of a cul-de-sac on a generous .67 acre, this home enjoys over 4000 sqft of living w/ a pool & sports court!



New Listing!

258 Glorietta Blvd, Orinda
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1846 Sqft | \$1,650,000

Charming & cheerful single-level home in a most loved Orinda neighborhood!



152 Ravenhill Road, Orinda
3 Bd | 3 Ba | 2546 Sqft | \$1,550,000

Located in the prestigious Orindawoods development this 3 bd/ 3 ba, modern light-filled townhome is stunningly updated & has it all!



76 La Cuesta Road, Orinda
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 1762 Sqft | \$1,395,000

Va-Va-Views! This stylishly updated Orinda home is immersed in nature & a peaceful escape, yet right in town.



New Price!

3930 Quail Ridge Road, Lafayette
4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 3771 Sqft | \$2,850,000

Stylish retreat in Happy Valley hills offers a sparkling pool, wine room, greenhouse & views from every room all on 1+ acre!



3580 Boyer Circle, Lafayette
3 Bd | 2 Ba | 2158 Sqft | \$1,795,000

Beautifully sited on a large, level lot featuring views of Mt. Diablo & the surrounding hills, this mid-century home offers privacy & remarkable indoor-outdoor living.



New Listing!

78 Shuey Drive, Moraga
4 Bd | 2 Ba | 2203 Sqft | \$1,875,000

This home is the total package: stunning design, epic views, & endless opportunity to make it your own!



655 Augusta Drive, Moraga
2 Bd | 3.5 Ba | 2352 Sqft | \$1,495,000

This lovely townhome situated in desirable MCC offers vaulted ceilings & French doors leading to a patio perfect for entertaining!



122 Ascot Court Unit C, Moraga
1 Bd | 1 Ba | 858 Sqft | \$455,000

Sweet unit w/ updated kitchen/bath, in-unit laundry & a sunny deck overlooking verdant views!



1200 Leisure Lane Unit 4, Walnut Creek
2 Bd | 1 Ba | 1262 Sqft | \$450,000

Bright, charming condo conveniently nestled within the vibrant & serene community of Rossmoor.



6681 Charing Cross Road, Oakland
3 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2199 Sqft | \$1,295,000

This sleek Hiller Highlands townhome seamlessly combines comfort & style w/ its functional split-level design.



201 Hidden Creek Court, Martinez
3 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 1382 Sqft | \$640,000

This darling condo has an open floor plan featuring a large living room & front/backyard patios perfect for entertaining or relaxing!



1167 Kaski Lane, Concord
4 Bd | 3 Ba | 2237 Sqft | \$1,149,000

Fall in love with this beautifully updated, single-level home w/ an ideal layout!

The Village Associates:

Ashley Battersby • Shannon Conner • Meara Dunsmore • Linda Ehrich • Emily Estrada • Joan Evans • Linda Friedman • Liz Gallagher
Claudia Gohler • Ari Hatton • Gillian Judge Hogan • Dexter Honens II • Christina Linezo • April Matthews • Hillary Murphy • Karen Murphy
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