



KARIN SMITH

604.787.3720
karin@karin smith.com



MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE

My Real Estate Update for March 2007

Hi Everyone:

Spring is here and so is the Spring real estate market. As prices take what seems to be their annual jump, I thought I'd at least let you know what really expensive real estate looks like. My husband recently returned from a trip to Madrid and London so I've included some current real estate information on London.

Our terrible weather doesn't seem to have put a damper on Buyers or prices. I've included details on our Spring '07 market for the West Side and Downtown.

More news next month!

MARKET UPDATE



West Side: Single family homes and building lots have started off strongly with record prices being paid for building lots. In Dunbar, 50 foot lots have sold for prices in excess of \$1.2 million. This upward pressure on prices is a result of very low inventory. Point Grey continues to lead the way

in pricing with fairly ordinary homes on 47 ft lots selling in excess of \$2.2 million, again a result of very low inventories in very popular family areas.

Duplexes remain strong as an affordable alternative to houses.

The condo market has also remained strong with multiple offers in key buildings with reputations for quality construction and good locations.

Downtown: The market began slowly with high inventories in January/February but beginning in March, we saw the Buyers re-enter the market. I had a few listings downtown which were heavily marketed with advertising and open houses but I just didn't feel any sense of urgency from the Buyers, even those who loved these homes. That changed quickly in early March when two of them quickly sold, one with multiple offers and the other at full price. 🏠

NEW CONSTRUCTION



West Side: Again, record prices are being paid for new homes, with low inventory putting upward pressure on price. New homes are simply replacing existing inventory rather than adding to it. Builders need to recover their costs which are always on the rise.

Downtown: Pre-sales are continuing to be strong although I don't see a lot of those sales going through my own office which is a change from a couple of years ago. It is definitely more of a risk as inventories increase, especially in 2007. Many of these Buyers plan on selling, either on an assignment of contract or upon completion and if you don't have one of the better units, it could take a while. There have been a lot of condos put on the market in recently completed projects such as Icon, Koret Lofts, and Yaletown 1-3. 🏠

HAVE A TOUGH REAL ESTATE QUESTION?


Call me and remember no matter where you live, I can help you with market advice and real estate expertise.

I would also be happy to connect you with my network of local specialists, from mortgage brokers to home contractors. 🏠



WHERE IS THE MONEY COMING FROM?




This is a frequently asked question, especially when you look at the prices being paid but Buyers have made their money in real estate, the stock market, inheritance, or are being helped out by family. With a shortage of workers, industries such as high tech are paying big \$\$ to attract good people to Vancouver and to their companies. With big salaries these Buyers can afford to pay big mortgages. 

REAL ESTATE TV

Is it just me or are you sick of it too? If I believed everything I see on TV, anyone can buy a home to flip. Yes, apparently renovation costs are really low and it's really easy to do — if only! It's scary to think that there are Buyers out there who believe it. What happens when the reality of what it actually costs sets in? What do they do to reduce costs? That's why I appreciate really good building inspectors.

The decorating shows are bad enough and now everyone is a decorator after watching HGTV. It doesn't cost more to make the right choices of colour or to create flow and consistency in design, but that's what is usually missing from homes that have been redone.

And don't get me started on the realtor shows! "Buy Me" and Million Dollar Listings" are two that come to mind and rarely do I see a competent realtor — of course, that wouldn't make for good TV. I was recently asked to be filmed on "Buy Me" and the Seller, using ERealty and working in media in Vancouver, had decided to get them involved. I absolutely refused to the surprise of the Seller. Doesn't everyone want to be on TV?? 

REAL ESTATE FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Prices were very high when we lived in London but shortly after we left five years ago, there was a downturn in both rental and property prices. They're back-and then some!

Not only am I interested in prices but also companies and how they do business. Here are some that may be an indication of the future in Vancouver.


"The largest sellers of the smallest flats." There's a market niche in an expensive market. This company specializes in Studio and One Bedroom Apartments.

"...Specialist Agent handling the marketing of London's more unique, individual, and one-off properties since 1994." *"...finely tuned method of matching these sometime very specialized properties to a very specialized buyer — from 300 hundred GBP to 20 million GBP."* And "specialized" in an eccentric country like England is saying something.

More on this next month. 

FINANCING TRENDS



Lenders are now requiring more information for lending against condos and more time to process the applications, even on pre-approvals. With all the building problems, lenders are being more particular about which buildings they will lend against. Initially they may just want the Form B but if there are any indications of trouble, they will ask for more. Attractive lending and special deals are available with specific brokers — always look for your best options. 

You're on this mailing list because I value you as a client or friend and wish to keep you informed of real estate market conditions. If for any reason you do not wish to receive future editions of this newsletter, please contact me and your name will be removed immediately.

HAVE DINNER ON ME!



Benefit from my referral program!

I have a very simple plan to reward those who refer someone who is thinking of buying or selling a home. I'll send you a gift certificate for dinner for two.

MARKET FAST FACTS

The following reports are always available:

- a six month Recap of Sales in Your Area
- my premium price sales plan
- what's covered in a Home Inspection and Why You Need One
- information on Unused or Decommissioned Oil Tanks
- the most current market statistics

Remember, I'm never too busy to look after any of your referrals.

**Call today!
604.787.3720**