

Homes with Craig

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A Word From Craig

Doesn't it sometimes feel like winter lasts forever? When it gets that way, I look on the bright side. As I was writing this, it was 6:30 pm and still light outside. That's a sign of good things to come, including good things for the real estate market. Things started out slow this year, but we are seeing more and more inventory of homes for sale every day. A lot of people have told me they are waiting until the spring to sell. That is great, and means ... call me NOW. There is usually some work to be done prior to listing. I can help you focus on what matters most with a free Room-By-Room Review.

If you are looking to buy, the word in the market is that mortgage rates will rise soon. Doesn't it make sense to get pre-approved with your financial institution and get the best rate locked-in? Getting pre-approved doesn't take long, it is free, and helps when negotiating for a home. It gives sellers more confidence in dealing with you. As always, feel comfortable introducing me to people you care about that I may be able to help. Have a great month. Cheers, Craig

Projects that can increase - or decrease - the value of your home.

Canadians are investing in home improvement like never before: According to an Ipsos-Reid survey, two-thirds of homeowners intend to undertake renovations this year. While most plan to spend reasonable sums, others say they'll go all out: luxurious materials, home theatres, a Jacuzzi on the patio...even \$60,000 kitchens are not that unusual! But how much of their investment will be recovered when their house sells?



A house that looks nice inside will sell at a slightly higher price, but above all, it will sell faster. It has to be fashionable and in line with current trends; people are increasingly inclined toward luxury. At the same time, though, beware of passing fads.

One rule seems to apply in all cases: avoid projects that will set your house apart from other properties in your neighbourhood.

The Appraisal Institute of Canada posts this warning on its website: "If the value of your house exceeds the average market value in your neighbourhood, your renovations will not yield much return. But if your house value is below the average, you can recover a larger part of the renovation costs."

Hot home improvement trends: Home theatre, Hardwood floor in kitchen, Laundry room on main floor, Built-in kitchen appliances, Office on the ground floor, Kitchen island.

Source: <http://www.styleathome.com>

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Not intended to solicit those
already under contract

Market Stats - Robust Sales and Price Growth in February

➤ “Even with the record low temperatures last month, we still saw an increase in the number of people purchasing homes in the GTA. This speaks to the importance households place on home ownership and the fact that buyers continue to view ownership housing as a quality long-term investment in which they can live,” said Mr. Etherington.

➤ The overall average selling price for February 2015 home sales was \$596,163— up by 7.8% compared to the average for February 2014. Driving this increase was the detached market segment. In the City of Toronto, the average detached selling price moved above \$1 million dollars for the first time in a calendar month.

To read the full Market Watch Report, visit my website at www.HomesWithCraig.com

Summary of Existing Home Transactions				
	New Listings	Active Listings	Avg. Sold Price	Avg. Days on Market
Durham Region	1085	1009	100%	17
Eastern GTA	902	796	104%	21
York	1973	2292	100%	22

This Month’s Recipe Pork & Broccoli Thai Noodle Salad

Crunchy broccoli slaw—available in most supermarkets near the other coleslaw mixes—is the secret to making this Thai noodle recipe super-fast.

Ingredients

- 8 ounces wide rice noodles
- 1 pound lean ground pork
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint, divided
- 6 teaspoons fish sauce, divided
- 2 tablespoons sweet red chili sauce
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 12-ounce bag broccoli slaw
- Lime wedges for serving

Makes: 4 servings

Serving Size: 2 patties & 1 2/3 cups noodles

Active Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes



Directions

Cook noodles according to package directions. Drain, rinse well with cold water and let stand in the colander to drain.

Meanwhile, combine pork, 1 tablespoon mint and 2 teaspoons fish sauce in a bowl. Form the mixture into eight 3-inch patties.

Heat a large grill pan or cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Coat with cooking spray, add the patties, partially cover and cook for 3 minutes. Turn over and cook for 3 minutes, then turn back over and cook on the first side again until cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes more.

Combine the remaining 4 teaspoons fish sauce, chili sauce, lime juice and sesame oil in a large bowl. Add the rice noodles and broccoli slaw and gently toss until well combined. Serve the pork patties on the noodles, sprinkled with the remaining 1 tablespoon mint. Serve with lime wedges, if desired.

Source: www.eatingwell.com

Ask Tracey

www.TraceyMacInteriors.com

Q. We've moved into a new home and would like to shop for furniture that will last. How can we ensure that we will be happy with it for years?

A. Establish a budget and purchase quality furniture. There is a design adage, "Buying quality only hurts once". Choose fabrics and finishes that will stand up to a whole lot of living. Pick up home decorating magazines or look online to see what speaks to you. Limit trendy colours to accessories, not large pieces. Choose pieces that are timeless and versatile: a console table, sofa table, occasional chair, small dresser or slipper chairs. Take the time to find things that you truly love, and you will enjoy them in your new home for years.



Tracey is the owner of Tracey Mac Interiors, visit: www.TraceyMacInteriors.com