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Staging Tips for Selling During the Holidays

It's the time of year that calendars are packed with holiday parties, budgets are strained by gift-giving and the roads are covered in freshly fallen snow. Alas, 'tis not the season for real estate. But the good news is that the few brave house-hunters who do venture out are serious about buying a house and stylish trimmings will make them want to ring in the new year in *your* home.

"Holidays can be personal on a lot of levels, but you want to make sure your decor is neutral," advises Amy Powers, owner of Accent Home Staging & Interiors of Atlanta. "You want to romance your buyer, not invite them to your Christmas party."

Try these tips to get buyers in the right spirit:

Clean and stage.

"Before you decorate, your house needs to be staged," Powers says. If your living room is already piled high with clutter and tchotchkes, your ceramic reindeer collection is only going to add to the sense of overcrowding.

Create a cozy vibe.

The less-is-more mantra of home staging may tempt you to forgo holiday cheer this year. But a few subtle touches like a bowl of pinecones, an evergreen wreath, or a pot of cider simmering on the stove can create a warm and festive feeling in your home.

Complement your palette.

Before you start untangling your tinsel, make sure your holiday collection matches your current decor. If your living room is painted a soothing ocean-blue hue, skip the clashing red garland and opt for white snowflakes or a silver glass-ball wreath. If you've got an earthy color scheme, accent with rich tones like cranberries, forest greens and gold.

Accentuate the positive.

Too many trimmings may distract buyers, but the right accessories can draw attention to your home's best features. Dangle mistletoe in an arched doorway, or display your menorah on the ledge of a bay window; just don't block a beautiful view with stick-on snowflake decals or clutter an

elegant fireplace with personalized stockings.

Go light on lights.

Step away from the inflatable snowman, Clark Griswold. One man's "merry" is another man's "tacky," so tone down any garish light displays while your home is on the market. (No, your neighbors didn't pay us to say that.) Instead, use simple string lighting to play up your home's architecture or draw attention to the gorgeous fir tree in your front yard.



Be an equal-opportunity decorator.

Leave the life-sized Nativity scene in storage this year, because overtly religious flourishes may be off-putting to some buyers. "You want to keep neutrality throughout, so you can attract any type of buyer," Powers says. Not sure what qualifies? Powers adds, "No matter what your religion is, you're not going to feel offended by a nutcracker."

Mind the tree.

A tall Christmas tree can help you show off your two-story great room, but make sure the wide base won't overwhelm the floor space. If your living area is on the small side, save space with a skinny tree. Swap the gaudy heirloom ornaments and trim your tree in a cohesive theme such as icicle lights and silver tinsel, for example, or blue and gold glass balls.

Clear the clutter.

A few decorations can stir the holiday spirit, but don't feel obliged to hang every last ornament. "A lot of people, when they decorate, tend to use all the extra space in their house," Powers says. "You still want each space to look as spacious as possible." Limit yourself to a few hints of holiday flair, but stash the rest in the basement for now. If you start to miss your Santa figurines, just remember that with a little luck, you'll be celebrating next year's holidays in a new home. And you can decorate *that* place any way you please.

<http://www.hgtv.com/design/real-estate/staging-tips-for-selling-during-the-holidays>



Best November Ever!

722 homes sold in November 2016, 15.3% over last November and the best November since the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR) began keeping track in 1978. "To get to the runner up for best November ever, you have to go back twenty years to 1996, when 673 homes exchanged hands," says the 2016 President of LSTAR, noting that 2016 continues to break records, scoring the best September, April, June, August, October and now November - six months in total. Year to Date, sales are up 9.8%.

December 2, 2016 - London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®.



Breakdown of September Residential Sales

Type	Units Sold	Average Price
2 Storey	171	\$386,434
Bungalow	144	\$258,237
Ranch	69	\$342,967
Townhouse Condo	67	\$179,935
High Rise Apt. Condo	35	\$156,184

2015 Average Prices (YTD)

Type	Average Price	Increase from 2015
Detached	\$296,943	5.2%
Condo	\$200,804	5.9%
Total Residential	\$278,758	5.3%

Sales were also very brisk in London's Sister City of St. Thomas. 70 homes exchanged hands in that City, up 12.9% from the previous year. The average price for a home in St. Thomas stands, Year to Date, at \$231,444, up 6.8%

Upcoming London & Area Events

Christmas in the Harbour - Port Stanley

November 12th to December 31st

<http://www.christmasintheharbour.com/>

Toys for Tots Program

November 1st to December 20th

1st Choice Home Solutions

<http://www.1stchoicehs.com/toys-for-tots/>

Victorian Christmas

November 26th, 2016 to January 1st, 2017

Eldon House

<http://www.eldonhouse.ca/>

Santa Claus is coming to Victoria Park

November 25th to December 23rd

<http://www.tlcfoundation.ca/>

Alice in Wonderland Jr.

December 7th to 16th

Oakridge Secondary School Auditorium

<https://www.onstagedirect.com/buy/main-info.action>



The Trews & Bleeker

December 9th at 7:00 pm

London Music Hall

<http://www.londonmusichall.com/event/1267459-trews-london/>

Argyle BIA Santa Claus Parade

December 10th - 9 am to 2 pm

<https://www.argylebia.com/scp>

Christmas Extravaganza on Ice

December 10th, 2016

Budweiser Gardens

<http://www.budweisergardens.com/events/2728>

Children's Christmas Party

December 11th

Eldon House

<http://www.eldonhouse.ca/childrens-programming/>

A Christmas Carol

December 13th to 24th

McManus Studio Theatre

<https://www.grandtheatre.com/index.php/mcmanus-theatre/presentations/a-christmas-carol/>



*Wishing you a Happy, Healthy
and Magical Holiday Season
and a New Year filled with
Growth, Prosperity and Joy.*