

## Goodbye, Housing Slump

By Andi Peterson Brown

Dear Housing Slump of 2008 to 2012,

I must admit that it is with quite a bit of excitement that I write this parting letter to you. While I have genuinely taken to heart your lessons on sound fiscal policy, minimizing leverage, and curbing reckless real estate purchases, I must admit that as the years went by I began to feel very suffocated by you. You were constantly there, looming over me and casting murky shadows on every street and every house, even the good ones. And while I will never forget your back-to-basics lessons, I am happy to see that we are finally going our separate ways.

The 2013 Lamorinda real estate market is back in business and hotter than the bottom of this laptop right now. Q1 results are in, and we sold 122 homes this quarter, up almost 8% from 2012 YTD. Prices are up across the board, too. The median price in Lamorinda right now is \$1,035,000, up 35% from last year's \$765,000. The average price is \$1,140,000, up 24% from \$841,000. Our lack of inventory coupled with five years' worth of pent up buyer demand is creating multiple offer situations and pushing prices up.

And there you have it, Housing Slump. Parting is such sweet sorrow.



andi  
PETERSON  
brown

Real Estate Broker  
AndiBrownHomes.com  
925.818.4588



DRE# 01738605

real local • real knowledge • real value

©2013 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker® is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office is owned by a subsidiary of NRT LLC. DRE License # 01908304

## The Home Designer Color Blind

By Brandon Neff

Nothing seems to freak out my clients more than choosing paint – color, finish, brand – you name it. It seems that for some, picking from myriad color chips and options turns a creative endeavor into a nightmare. My patent response to individuals struggling with the “paint” conundrum is, “Don’t panic – if you don’t like it, you get a do-over.” Paint is one of the least expensive ways to update any room, and is never permanent. With that said, I’m here to offer a bit of solace and help you get it right the first time. Here’s your paint primer (so to speak) – a few tricks-of-my-trade designed to guide you through one of the most gratifying elements of a room.

**Color Me Mine.** For many, color is subjective. Most people looking to make a change to their walls and ceilings gravitate toward either cool or warm hues – color hits us viscerally and in a very personal way. Some choose white (or a variation of beige), as a way to stay neutral and non-committal. However, it’s been my experience that deep down everyone has a passion for one color over another. But where to begin?

I often tell clients to look to their closets for inspiration – colors you wear in the world are colors you like to have around you at home. It’s no coincidence that denim jeans and the color blue are two of America’s favorites. I also like to use fabrics and rugs to help determine a wall color – a little trick is to search out the least dominant color in your pillows, bedding or area rug, and choose that as your wall color – an easy way to create continuity in your space.

**Finish Line.** Beyond color, choosing the right finish is essential to both the look you’re trying to achieve and for lasting results. Here are a few key things to remember: Flat Latex is best for living rooms, bedrooms and ceilings, or for anywhere you want a more matte finish. Flat emulsions offer a beautiful, “powdery” look to walls, and are the most flattering to walls with surface imperfections and cracks. However, flat paint offers only minimal protection against scuffs and scratches. Low Sheen (Eggshell) is great for rooms with higher moisture such as bathrooms and kitchens.



Deep blue walls add a warm and dramatic background in this art-filled living room.

Photos Brandon Neff Design