

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 17

Issue 13

Wednesday, August 16, 2023



Tips on selling your staff

... read on Page D6

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

A passion for pink with Barbie blooms



Pink geraniums are simple, yet classic, just like Barbie.

Photos Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

“My parents told me I’d point to a bed of flowers and say ‘Pink. Pretty’ before I could say any other words!” ~ Joni Mitchell

Pink, and all the shades and hues associated with this color, has always been a favorite of mine, not only in my wardrobe but in my home and garden designs. Who else has a passion for pink?

As a young girl, I had only one beloved Barbie. I sold her to my youngest sister for 5 cents when I thought I was too “grown-up” to play with dolls. Yet, like many females since the first Barbie debuted in 1959, I have always been fascinated by this glamorous, independent, and

highly talented career woman. Several years ago, I was flown to a studio in Los Angeles to play the role of Barbie in a short film project. How fun it was morphing into the various iterations of this iconic figure! One of the memorable professions I created for that shoot was “Barbie, Landscape Architect.” Channeling the public’s summer obsession with everything Barbie, I decided to focus on the flowers that I am certain Barbie would feature in her paradise.

Barbie Blooms:

For indoor décor, there is no doubt that Barbie would surround herself with orchids, mostly in shades of pink and mauve. Orchids evoke the exotic while adding a touch of sophistication to a home.

Barbie would have an affinity for roses and her garden would be filled with reblooming, highly fragrant, disease-resistant roses. Roses are regal and are available in numerous colors, but she would plant a variety of blush and deep pink specimens, probably favoring old roses.

The romantic charm of peonies with their ruffled showy flowers on small shrubs with shiny green foliage would be part of Barbie’s landscape. Peonies are beloved for their variety of shapes and their gorgeous rich colors, ranging from the palest pink to the deepest cerise. Barbie and her friends could enjoy the flowers indoors in long-lasting cut arrangements.

... continued on Page D14



For a tropical feel, Barbie grows pink hibiscus.

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	13	\$900,000	\$3,350,000
MORAGA	8	\$427,000	\$2,500,000
ORINDA	16	\$835,000	\$4,200,000

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

- 3423 Black Hawk Road, \$2,900,000, 4 Bdrms, 2688 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 07-05-23, Previous Sale: \$2,025,000, 03-26-15
- 3637 Brook Street, \$1,310,000, 3 Bdrms, 1545 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 07-07-23
- 639 Glorietta Boulevard, \$2,050,000, 4 Bdrms, 3659 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 06-27-23, Previous Sale: \$265,000, 03-01-79
- 1763 Ivanhoe Avenue, \$2,270,000, 3 Bdrms, 3662 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 07-06-23, Previous Sale: \$350,000, 06-01-85
- 1092 Laurel Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1523 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 06-26-23, Previous Sale: \$780,000, 07-19-11
- 3175 Lucas Drive, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 1739 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 06-27-23, Previous Sale: \$630,000, 12-06-17
- 3493 Monroe Avenue #A, \$900,000, 3 Bdrms, 1504 SqFt, 1934 YrBlt, 06-30-23
- 793 Solana Drive, \$2,525,000, 3 Bdrms, 3076 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 06-28-23
- 3484 South Silver Springs Road, \$3,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2705 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 07-03-23, Previous Sale: \$562,500, 04-06-98
- 3270 Theresa Lane, \$1,580,000, 3 Bdrms, 1811 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 06-27-23
- 1216 Upper Happy Valley Road, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 2118 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 06-29-23, Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 09-14-12
- 1110 Via Media, \$2,160,000, 4 Bdrms, 4332 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 06-30-23, Previous Sale: \$1,401,000, 04-28-14
- 3292 Walnut Lane, \$1,985,000, 8 Bdrms, 2674 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 06-30-23
- 30 Woodbury Highlands Court #12, \$485,000, 2 Bdrms, 1150 SqFt, 2021 YrBlt, 06-09-23

MORAGA

- 2087 Ascot Drive #225, \$427,000, 1 Bdrms, 790 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 07-07-23, Previous Sale: \$354,000, 03-13-06
- 28 Ashbrook Place, \$1,675,000, 4 Bdrms, 2090 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 06-26-23
- 863 Augusta Drive, \$1,573,000, 2 Bdrms, 1552 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 07-06-23, Previous Sale: \$543,500, 03-15-04
- 12 Benedita Place, \$1,180,000, 3 Bdrms, 2095 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 07-06-23, Previous Sale: \$896,000, 03-19-18
- 6 Canning Court, \$1,350,000, 3 Bdrms, 1587 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 06-29-23, Previous Sale: \$340,000, 03-03-98
- 6 Lance Court, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 1701 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-03-23, Previous Sale: \$927,500, 08-06-13
- 6 Netherton Court, \$2,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 2552 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 06-30-23, Previous Sale: \$329,500, 07-01-86
- 5 Teodora Court, \$2,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 3668 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 06-02-23, Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 08-11-15
- 413 Woodminster Drive, \$855,000, 3 Bdrms, 1572 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 06-29-23, Previous Sale: \$582,000, 04-12-13

ORINDA

- 2 Austin Court, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 1870 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-05-23, Previous Sale: \$1,395,000, 03-01-19
- 2 Camino Del Monte, \$835,000, 3 Bdrms, 1290 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 06-28-23, Previous Sale: \$875,000, 03-28-22
- 2 Dalewood Terrace, \$3,402,000, 3 Bdrms, 3749 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 07-07-23
- 45 El Gavilan Road, \$1,825,000, 4 Bdrms, 2780 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 06-26-23, Previous Sale: \$400,000, 04-01-90
- 14 Hacienda Circle, \$2,410,000, 4 Bdrms, 2016 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 06-26-23, Previous Sale: \$1,220,000, 05-25-07
- 16 Los Amigos, \$1,300,000, 3 Bdrms, 1098 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 06-29-23

... continued on Page D13

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All information herein deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



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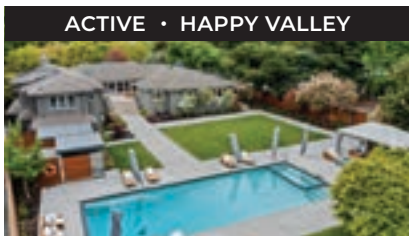


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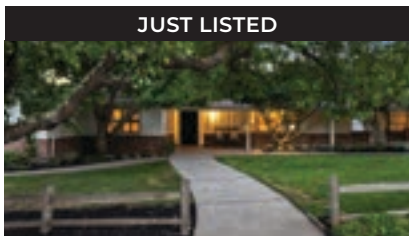
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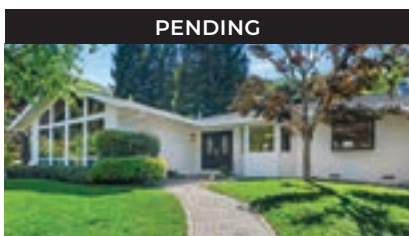
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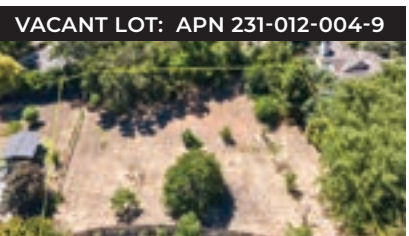
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246 ORCHARD ROAD, ORINDA
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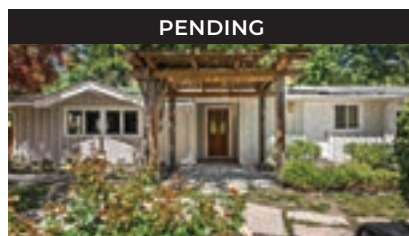
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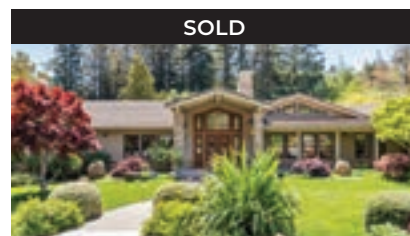
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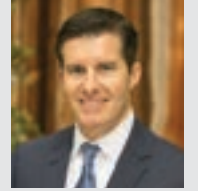
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SOLD

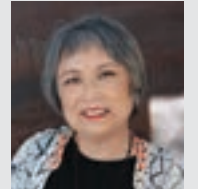
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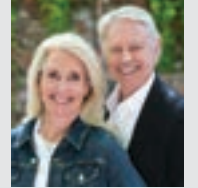
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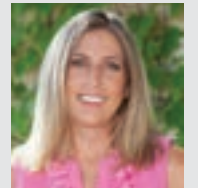
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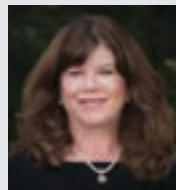
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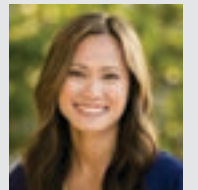
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Can I sell my stuff and is it worth it?



Photo W. Scheck

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO

If you are wondering if something in your home is worth selling, how can you find out if it has value and can you sell it?

This is a question that I am often asked by my clients. If you have jewelry, furniture, artwork or decor that you believe is of high value, try searching the artist's or designer's name on Google or similar platform to see if you get any results. If that name shows up in a search engine, you might be in luck.

Unfortunately, I have found that just because an item has value, it doesn't mean you can get money for it and just because you paid a large sum for the item doesn't mean it has monetary value now.

For consignment stores, such as Hilton House in Orinda (www.hilton-housedesigns.com) or Divine Designs in Lafayette (www.divineconsign-shop.com) or auction houses, the item usually needs to be trending for them to sell it. Recently, a client had a beautiful large armoire from Italy that they spent a fortune on years ago, and now hoped to sell. Unfortunately, they could not sell or even donate this piece because of its size. Large furniture can be hard to sell because it costs a lot of money to transport the item both to the consignment shop and then to the buyer's home, and the buyer has to have room to accommodate it. I recommend taking photos and sending them to an auction house or consignment store to have them evaluate whether they will take the item.

... continued on Page D12

Turning Up the Rock Star Treatment

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LUXURY WITH

views of the Orinda Hills



59 Tiger Tale Ct, Orinda

This tastefully updated and decorated home has a fabulous floor plan for families of all stages & ages. The oversized entry hall invites the outdoors in as you see through to the sweeping and incredible views of the Orinda hills. This spectacular estate has high ceilings and custom designer touches throughout, gorgeous hardwoods, a fabulous new top of the line eat-in kitchen, new bathrooms, a stunning backyard with pool, hot-tub, fire-pit and breathtaking views on a private and beautifully landscaped 1.65 acre lot. You're going to love this house!

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FINDING THE *Right* FIT



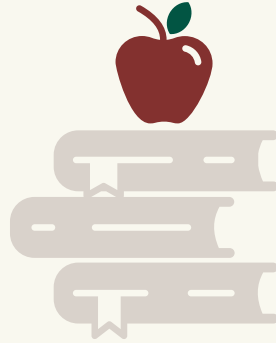
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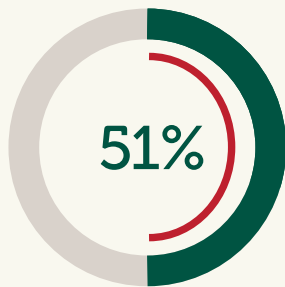


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Can I sell my stuff and is it worth it?



Shutterstock

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Selling platforms

Ebay: Ebay can be very deceiving when you first look up your item. Just because someone has a price on an item, doesn't mean it has sold for that amount. Here are a couple of steps to get to the actual information on what someone has paid for this item:

1. Go to the Ebay website and enter your item in the search bar.
2. Look at the menu on the left-hand side of the screen where it says BUYING FORMAT and choose AUCTION. Now choose SHOW ONLY, then COMPLETED AND SOLD ITEMS. These are the true amounts someone paid for the item.

Nextdoor, Facebook Marketplace, Lamorinda Treasures, Craigslist: To be able to sell on these platforms, it helps to be somewhat familiar with taking photos and posting on your phone. You will need to register on the platforms first, then take several pictures of the item from all angles, measure the width, length and height, and write a detailed description. If your item has any damage or flaws, be sure to indicate that too. One of the drawbacks of selling this way is that you have strangers coming to your home. If you live alone, this can be risky. Keep in mind that selling on this platform can be very time consuming as you may receive many responses that you have to follow up on and people don't always respond or show up after expressing interest in an item. It's important that you decide in advance how much time you are willing to spend for the amount of money you may receive for the item.

Estate Sale: This is a great way to sell an entire house's contents. The estate sales team will come to your home, put items together strategically and then price them. Some companies will promote your sale on social media and post signs around town. Customers will come directly to your home or online to shop and purchase the items. At the end of the sale, most companies will donate or haul everything that remains (there is a charge involved). My preferred local estate sale company is Beehive Estate Sales, www.beehiveestatesales.org. If

you are considering this option, you will need to make an appointment with the estate salesperson to see if you have enough items for an entire sale. The estate sale company will go over all of their costs to manage the sale for you which includes their percentage of the sales.

MaxSold Estate Sales: MaxSold is another kind of estate sale company where the auction is held entirely online. A team will come to your home, group items together, photograph and list the descriptions of each group to create an online catalog. The auction catalog will be live for a couple of weeks and buyers will purchase the items through the MaxSold site. Then, the buyers are assigned a set day and time to pick up their items. The team comes back on pickup day to give the buyers their items. This type of sale can be helpful if you live in a community that does not allow in-person estate sales. To learn all about the Maxsold process, go to the website www.maxsold.com. There is a fee to create the catalog and for the team on pickup day. Like any consignment, they charge a percentage of the total sales. As another option, the homeowner can run the sale and create the catalog which will save you money.

Auction Houses: This is a good option for items that you believe have high value, such as artwork, decor, collectibles and furniture. The auction houses are very selective about what they consign. Again, just because you paid a lot for your items, doesn't mean they will sell. Keep in mind, if you want to sell it at a reputable auction house, they will most likely require a certificate of authenticity. If you don't have any official certificate, you can hire an appraiser.

Garage Sales: Garage sales can be an efficient way to sell a lot of items in one weekend. This can be a huge amount of work – setting up, pricing everything and advertising your sale – so you need to decide what amount of money is worth all the time it takes. Don't forget, whatever is left over, you should put in your car and donate or haul at the end. Don't put it back in your house. Good Luck! Do you have a freshman college student heading off to university later this summer? Visit my blog on my website to get some tips on organizing dorm rooms, and what to and what not to bring. This article also appeared in the Lamorinda Weekly in August of 2021.

Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO® founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals. She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com





A Happy Valley Playground for All Ages!

3941 Happy Valley Road | \$9,950,000 3941HappyValleyRd.com

This 8,620 sq. ft. magnificent retreat sits on 2.3 acres at the end of a private drive, a world away from life's cares. It offers entertainment for those of any age; a tennis court, basketball court, batting cage, swimming pool with waterfalls and slide, two Jacuzzi spas, children's play area, movie theatre and much more!



Ann Newton Cane

415.999.0253

a.newtoncane@ggsir.com
annnewtoncane.com

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Golden
Gate

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Lamorinda home sales recorded

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ORINDA ... continued

- 2 Lost Valley Drive, \$1,350,000, 2 Bdrms, 1742 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 06-01-23,
Previous Sale: \$640,000, 06-18-10
- 345 Miller Court, \$4,200,000, 5 Bdrms, 5160 SqFt, 2014 YrBlt, 07-03-23,
Previous Sale: \$2,498,500, 08-03-15
- 17 Normandy Lane, \$3,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 3908 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 06-28-23,
Previous Sale: \$1,650,000, 02-11-10
- 17 Paintbrush Lane, \$2,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 3353 SqFt, 2017 YrBlt, 06-29-23,
Previous Sale: \$699,000, 05-05-16
- 11 Rae Drive, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 1812 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 07-05-23,
Previous Sale: \$1,685,000, 12-17-20
- 1 Valley Court, \$2,675,000, 4 Bdrms, 3494 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 06-28-23,
Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 05-23-01
- 29 Van Ripper Lane, \$1,850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1766 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 06-30-23,
Previous Sale: \$830,000, 11-05-12
- 631 Watchwood Road, \$1,550,000, 3 Bdrms, 2541 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 07-03-23,
Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 07-07-05
- 32 Whitehall Drive, \$2,502,000, 5 Bdrms, 2909 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 06-30-23,
Previous Sale: \$1,615,000, 10-11-17
- 15 Wilder Road, \$2,850,000, 5 Bdrms, 4920 SqFt, 2015 YrBlt, 06-26-23,
Previous Sale: \$2,500,500, 12-11-17
- 75 Zander Drive, \$2,080,000, 4 Bdrms, 2987 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 06-30-23



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **A passion for pink with Barbie blooms**

Photos Cynthia Brian



For borders and mass plantings, begonias rule.



Deep pink hydrangeas are gorgeous growing or dried.



The tubular trumpets of gladiolus shine in the garden.

... continued from Page D1

Because hydrangeas boast huge heads of dramatic blossoms that can also be dried, Barbie would find hydrangeas especially appealing. In acidic soil, pink blooms change to blue, reflecting Barbie's preferred colors. Hydrangeas are hardy and disease-resistant, and most can be grown in full sun or shade.

Since Barbie enjoys traveling and summer fun, the vibrant and tropical flowers of hibiscus would also be on her list of must-have plants. Many varieties have huge dinner-plate-size flowers that are attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. We know that Barbie cares about the planet (why else would she have had over 200 careers?) so bringing birds, bees, and other beneficial insects to her garden would be imperative. Barbie is ecologically friendly. Plus having pollinators in the garden increases the health and integrity of the landscape, making it more enchanting.

The simplicity and classicism of geraniums and pelargoniums would interest Barbie. She could easily propagate them by snipping off a stem, allowing the stem to harden off, then planting it elsewhere to grow additional geraniums. In beds and borders, geraniums shine and continue blooming from spring to early winter. They are also lovely in window boxes, which would be a fun project for Barbie to create.

My favorite pink summer blooms are the Naked Ladies, Amaryllis Belladonnas and I know that Barbie would find these sassy stunners to be as unique and fascinating as she is. Naked Ladies have trumpet-shaped flowers and shoot skyward on 20- to 24-inch bare stalks, erupting from the ground in the height of the heat when no one is watching. These "magic lilies" or "resurrection lilies" as they are often called, are graceful and classy, yet they do not belong to the genus *Lilium*. Their long legs with their fascinating faces are reminiscent of Barbie's stature!

Barbie would love lilies of all kinds and want to plant as many bulbs as possible. Lilies are captivating with their large, fragrant blooms and diverse array of colors, shapes, and sizes. They are easy maintenance and enjoy cultural significance linking them to gods and goddesses. Barbie would be a Goddess Gardener and have multiple dazzling bouquets cut from her garden to complement her elegant events. Sword lilies, also known as gladiolus, are available in an array of pigments, except true blue, and the pink varieties are especially fascinating. Propagated by corms, gladiolus is an economical way to bring a riot of color to the August landscape.

As delicate border choices or planted in masses in shady areas, I would advise Barbie to plant rows of pink begonias. Begonias are also marvelous in hanging baskets with their intricate foliage adding drama to any patio or porch.

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... continued from Page D14

Begonias are not divas and require minimal deadheading or maintenance yet provide a blast of beauty. Tuberous or wax, double or single, large or tiny blooms, begonias are vibrant and spectacular, just like Barbie.

When it comes to a favorite tree with fluffy pink puffs, I imagine that Barbie's preferred summer sensation would be the Persian silk tree with its fabulous fern-like leaves. It is a messy tree dropping its seed pods in the fall so it needs to be planted in an area where tidiness is not required. Growing on my hillside where it gets very little water and has not been invasive, my Persian silk tree with its pretty pom pom blooms reminds me of exotic lands far, far away. Having been an airline pilot and an astronaut, Barbie loves to travel the world and beyond. As a suitable souvenir-rooted memento, the Persian silk tree checks all the boxes for

her adventures abroad.

What wouldn't Barbie want in her oasis? Although colorful, pretty, and long-blooming, Barbie most likely would shy away from the hardy ornamental oleander because of its toxicity. Barbie babysits often and has had over 40 pets, so she wouldn't want children or critters sampling this shrub. Traditionally used as a hedge or border, especially along freeways, oleander is one of the most poisonous plants. The entire plant can be deadly to humans and animals. The milky sap causes skin irritations. It is dangerous in fire-prone areas because burning oleander can cause smoke intoxication. Protective clothing is essential when working with oleander and it should never be disposed of in the compost pile.

Like me, Barbie would prepare now for fall by listing the bulbs she wants to buy for her spring garden. With their bright hues and graceful shapes, tulips would top her list, and naturally, she'd have a plethora of shades of pink.

It's been fun embracing my inner Barbie as I walk around my garden enjoying my personal passion for pink. Of course, I also adore blue, purple, and all the colors of the rainbow. As Claude Monet scribbled, "I feel the landscape. I can be bold and include every tone of blue and pink: it's enchanting, it's delicious."

Barbie, the movie, is a billion-dollar box office smash. My Barbie would make a laudable landscape architect. Her gardens would be as unique and unconventional as she is showcasing her diverse interests, imagination, and creativity. Delicious, enchanting, and pink!

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Barbie Summer!



Cynthia Brian channels Barbie in her bright pink rose garden.

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. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, Family Forever, from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available for PRE-ORDERS now at <https://www.CynthiaBrian.com/online-store>. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com <http://www.GoddessGardener.com>

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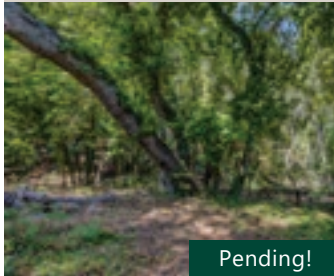
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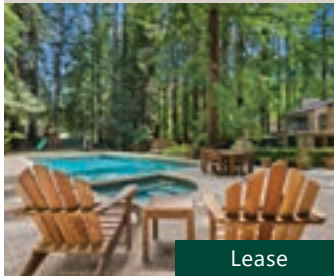
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