



Handyman's power tools

... read on Page OH4

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

June Boon

By Cynthia Brian



A branch of tangy Bing cherries.

Photos Cynthia Brian

"Life is just a bowl of cherries. So live and laugh at it all." Lyrics by Lew Brown, Sung by Rudy Vallée, 1931

The birds are flocking to the two trees. Every day I watch them devour my precious, unripe fruit, as I impatiently wait for the sunshine to turn the orbs into deep reds and purple. Finally, I can't take it anymore. I grab my pruning shears and put on my boots, taking a colander.

To the orchard I tramp, eager to pick as many cherries as possible before all are eaten by my feathered friends. The Queen Annes are almost ripe, but the Bings are still small. Nevertheless, I fill my colander to the brim.

Because of a miniscule harvest last summer, I cut my trees back by a third. This June, my efforts were rewarded with a bounty of sweet cherries, even enough to share with the flying acrobats. Most people are familiar with Bing cherries sold in supermarkets. The deep red-purple black colored Bings are firm, juicy, and known for their rich sweet taste with a hint of tartness. Compared to the Bings, the mild, honeyed flavored, and lesser-known Queen Anne varieties are crunchier, marbled with bright red and yellow hues. Like the birds, I gobble them fresh from the branch.

When I was a kid, our family always worked on neighboring farms picking cherries, which usually ripened in late May. The pay was minimal, but the perks included opportunities to eat these delectable fruits as we filled the buckets for sale. One year my siblings and I competed for who could pick the most cherries in the fashion of "one in my mouth, one in the bucket." Becoming painfully sick, we all paid the price of our childishness. For years, none of us could tolerate the sight of a single cherry.

As adults, we laugh at our cherries mishap. We are again enamored of this luscious crop and enjoy it in salads, pies, and jams, eating in moderation. The birds have been dropping the pits throughout my garden, small cherry trees sprouting where they land.

While June gloom engulfs Southern California, Northern California boasts June boon! Because of our mild winters and hot summers, we can expect a wide range of blooms in June. Stunning clematis experiences its second seasonal display, climbing and covering a pipe. Like most plants, clematis prefers well-drained soil filled with rich organic matter. Once clematis is established, it is relatively low maintenance, requiring minimal water, occasional fertilizer, and pruning to promote healthy growth and abundant flowering, which attracts bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

... continued on Page OH8



A second wave of clematis attracts pollinators.

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Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	9	\$1,400,000	\$3,675,000
MORAGA	2	\$1,925,000	\$2,695,000
ORINDA	4	\$1,350,000	\$2,500,000

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

- 918 Brown Avenue, \$1,298,000, 2 Bdrms, 1526 SqFt, 2022 YrBlt, 05-07-24
 1247 Chatton Court, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1124 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 04-30-24
 1138 Garden Lane, \$1,750,000, 3 Bdrms, 1201 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 05-08-24,
 Previous Sale: \$970,000, 09-18-15
 1176 Glen Road, \$2,950,000, 4 Bdrms, 2578 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 05-13-24,
 Previous Sale: \$1,895,000, 10-08-18
 663 Glenside Drive, \$4,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 3541 SqFt, 2012 YrBlt, 05-10-24,
 Previous Sale: \$2,575,000, 01-09-15
 56 Hidden Oaks Drive, \$4,400,000, 5 Bdrms, 4619 SqFt, 2005 YrBlt, 05-10-24,
 Previous Sale: \$2,925,000, 06-27-06
 923 Janet Lane, \$1,700,000, 3 Bdrms, 1801 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 05-02-24,
 Previous Sale: \$1,409,500, 03-08-18
 1056 Leland Drive, \$1,080,000, 3 Bdrms, 1420 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 04-30-24
 789 Los Palos Mnrx, \$4,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 4051 SqFt, 2007 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
 Previous Sale: \$2,295,000, 07-12-10
 618 Lucas Drive, \$2,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 1977 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 05-17-24
 4041 Marianne Drive, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1427 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 04-30-24
 3355 Mcgraw Lane, \$5,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 5184 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 05-02-24
 3480 Monroe Avenue, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 2039 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 05-10-24
 3484 Monroe Avenue #A, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 1946 SqFt,
 1950 YrBlt, 05-02-24, Previous Sale: \$37,500, 06-11-99
 3497 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,975,000, 3 Bdrms, 1420 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 05-06-24,
 Previous Sale: \$1,186,500, 03-09-23
 8 Mountain View Place, \$1,374,500, 3 Bdrms, 2061 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 05-08-24,
 Previous Sale: \$934,000, 11-12-03
 7 My Road, \$1,700,000, 4 Bdrms, 4204 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 05-17-24,
 Previous Sale: \$750,000, 11-25-02
 3678 Nordstrom Lane, \$2,100,000, 4 Bdrms, 2606 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 05-08-24
 3807 Palo Alto Drive, \$4,425,000, 4 Bdrms, 4292 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 05-02-24,
 Previous Sale: \$2,960,000, 07-29-16
 2577 Pebble Beach Loop, \$1,735,000, 4 Bdrms, 1894 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
 Previous Sale: \$555,000, 04-06-12
 1583 Pleasant Hill Road, \$1,200,000, 3 Bdrms, 1434 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 05-13-24,
 Previous Sale: \$375,000, 11-12-98
 1605 Pleasant Hill Road, \$1,100,000, 2 Bdrms, 1687 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 05-15-24,
 Previous Sale: \$83,500, 10-01-78
 3104 Ramada Court, \$1,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 2178 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 05-07-24
 17 Shreve Lane, \$1,160,000, 4 Bdrms, 2031 SqFt, 2013 YrBlt, 05-10-24,
 Previous Sale: \$942,500, 09-11-17
 1280 Summit Road, \$2,550,000, 3 Bdrms, 2939 SqFt, 1983 YrBlt, 05-17-24,
 Previous Sale: \$1,841,000, 04-17-19
 1084 Via Roble, \$1,500,000, 4 Bdrms, 1871 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
 Previous Sale: \$615,000, 09-30-09
 2980 Windtree Court, \$4,100,000, 5 Bdrms, 4378 SqFt, 1992 YrBlt, 05-01-24
 50 Woodbury Highlands Place #24, \$1,600,000, 3 Bdrms, 1975 SqFt,
 2022 YrBlt, 05-08-24

MORAGA

- 1950 Ascot Drive, \$780,000, 3 Bdrms, 1410 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 05-13-24,
 Previous Sale: \$175,000, 02-01-92
 764 Augusta Drive, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1749 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 05-09-24
 164 Calle La Montana, \$2,250,000, 4 Bdrms, 2416 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
 Previous Sale: \$1,550,000, 05-28-20
 181 Calle La Montana, \$2,075,000, 5 Bdrms, 2680 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 05-17-24
 6 Camelford Court #T, \$1,665,000, 3 Bdrms, 1461 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
 Previous Sale: \$550,000, 09-17-01

... continued on Page OH10

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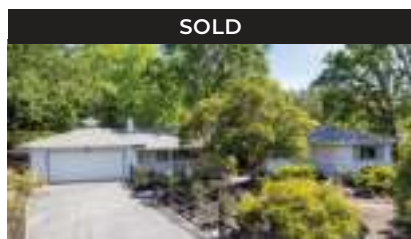
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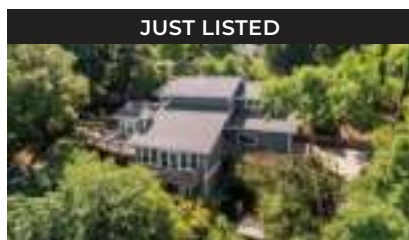
SOLD

3950 RANCHO ROAD, LAFAYETTE
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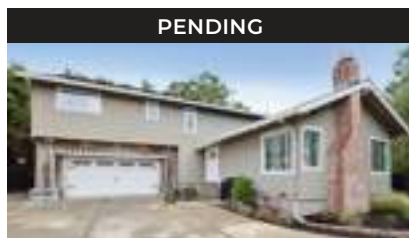
SOLD

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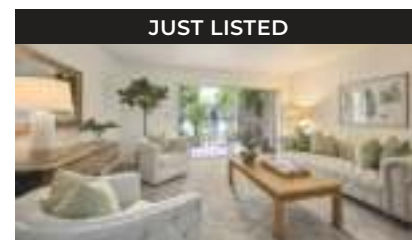
SOLD

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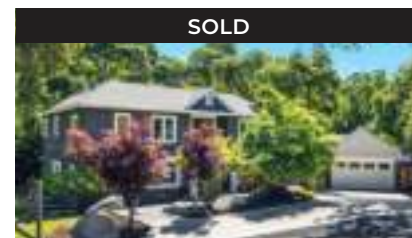
SOLD

3309 MILDRED DRIVE, LAFAYETTE
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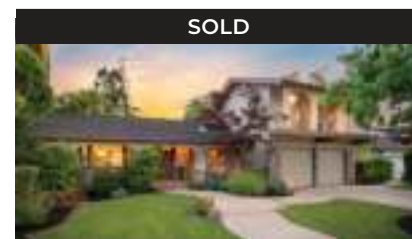
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651 MORAGA ROAD, #26, MORAGA
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Power tools for your home repair project

By Jim Hurley



Photo Jim Hurley

A Multi-Tool can be adapted for sanding as well as sawing.

“The right tool for the job”. I had to google that phrase to assure myself that it is not a direct quote from someone. How many times has someone said it to you when they’ve completed a difficult repair? I heard it once from a person who had just tightened a loose screw with a table knife. We laughed for five minutes.

What are the right power tools for you? A trip to the big box stores reveals a plethora of both battery and plug-in (corded) tools. The following tips will help you make good choices for acquiring “the right tool” for your workbench.

Your first choice is the manufacturer. There is a rainbow of colors to choose from: Red for Milwaukee, Green for Robie, Blue for Makita, and Yellow for DeWalt. What is the difference between them? Price and quality, of course. As a professional who reaches for

his tools almost daily, I have a preponderance of Red in my truck. They give me reliable power and versatility for the myriad of tasks I encounter. They are a little higher priced and that’s OK, because in my business the tools pay for themselves. If you’re buying a few power hand tools for home use and expect to need them less than once a month, a nice Green collection will probably last you several years and not cost nearly as much as Red, Blue, or Yellow. Please be aware that all these manufacturers put their products on sale during the year. So if you do want a higher priced product and your spouse can wait for you to finish that project or make that repair, it is best to shop on major holiday weekends.

Your next decision point is very important: corded or battery. Power tools that plug in are much less expensive than those with a battery. If you buy a good quality extension cord, one with 14- or 16-gauge wire (not a lamp cord), you will have a serviceable tool at the ready for life. Cordless, or battery-powered tools are convenient only if the battery is charged.

Rechargeable batteries can lose their charge over time while waiting for you to need them. The start of your project might be delayed 40 minutes when you find that your batteries are flat after you knock the dust off them. Leaving them plugged into the charger also shortens the life of the battery. Batteries are expensive to replace, sometimes costing as much as the tools they power. The result is that battery-powered tools need maintenance when you are not using them, if you expect them to have power when you need them. Corded tools only require an extension cord long enough to reach your jobsite.

Another thing to consider is that each color has proprietary battery configurations. You can’t plug a Red battery into a Blue tool. They are (mostly) interchangeable within the color: I own five Red tools and keep seven Red batteries in my truck. Of course, there is also an exception to that rule. The major brand batteries come in various power levels: Red’s smaller M12 batteries don’t fit their

larger M18 tools. Unless money is no object, pick a color and power level that you are comfortable with and buy all your tools in that line so that the batteries work for all of them.

Which of my tools are cordless? The tools I reach for most. My battery-powered screwdriver and drill motor are essential. I also have a Multi-Tool (fine saw blade for precise cutting), and mini shop vacuum that are all portable and cordless in Red. Plus, I have a battery-powered nail gun that shoots finish nails for baseboards and trim moulding.

Which of my tools for advanced home repair jobs have cords? My circular saw, reciprocal saw, Roto-hammer drill (for concrete drilling), sander, and jig saw. I don’t use them as often and they work very well with an extension cord.

A word about extension cords: Buy yourself two 25-foot cords for your corded tools so you can reach 50 feet when you need to. Never wind your cord around your arm. It twists the wire and makes it harder to unwind the next time you need it. Store your cord in large gentle loops. There are extension cord-clips available; they look like little handcuffs but keep the coiled cords neatly in loops. Your cords will last a lot longer if you treat them gently.

By adding these power tools to your workbench, you can be assured of having the right tool for the job every time.

Jim Hurley is an independent handyman with over 25 years of experience in residential repairs. Hopefully this free advice is helpful to someone attempting Do-It-Yourself home repairs. The information presented is intended for informational purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk.



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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **June Boon**



Tasty nasturtium cascades over a raised bed.



Fire-engine red geraniums punch up the ambiance.

... continued from Page OH 1

Roses bloom profusely in my garden adding beauty and perfume, while the common corn-flags add spires of fuchsia pink torches. My perennial, spicy-scented Asiatic lilies attract pollinators with captivating fragrances amidst big, bold blooms. Although these lilies make gorgeous bouquets, as the splendid stars of my garden, I am loathe to cut any!

The fern-like foliage of yarrow adds visual interest while improving drainage with its deep roots that assist in breaking up compacted clay. The leaves accumulate nutrients, making yarrow an excellent compost companion. By attracting pollinators and ladybugs, yarrow increases biodiversity, promoting a healthier ecosystem. As a medicinal plant with compounds containing anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, and analgesic properties, yarrow has been used for centuries to treat wounds, alleviate symptoms of colds and fevers, and reduce the pain of insect bites.

The edible flowers and leaves of nasturtium add a peppery punch to salads, sandwiches, and sides. These “Nonna” plants, as I call them because they grew in my grandmother’s gardens, are easily grown from seed. Their dense flowers and foliage can cascade over walls, fences, and raised beds, or create a living mulch as a ground cover to suppress weeds.

... continued on Page OH10



Fruit trees in blossom in a friend's rustic orchard carpeted with low-cut green grass.

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

June Boon



Queen Anne cherries are crunchy and sweet.



Fragrant and bold Asiatic lilies are prized for their stunning blooms.

... continued from Page OH 8

Nasturtiums attract beneficial insects that control unwanted pests including aphids, whiteflies, and squash bugs.

To bring vibrant color to your patio or porch, plant a container of bright red geraniums. Geraniums will grow in full sun or partial shade, easily root from cuttings, and require very minimal care. Prune back spent flowers or leggy stems to encourage bushier blooms that will continue through the fall. Geraniums are the no-fail June boon.

Are you finding a plethora of spider webs in your landscape? Congratulations! Gardens that avoid chemical pesticides tend to have a higher spider population. As a natural pest control, spiders help to maintain a balance between predator and prey species. Although it is unnerving to run head-first into a nearly invisible web, I welcome these hunters of mosquitoes, flies, aphids, beetles, and more.

Despite the prevalent trend to rip out lawns to minimize water usage in fire-prone areas, having a well-maintained, cut to three inches or less green grass area adds a defensible space to homes, reducing the risk of ignition and spread of a wildfire. Although no landscaping choice is fire-proof, a healthy, mowed, and watered lawn may reduce the amount of combustible material available to fuel a fire. Lawns are visually appealing and offer a restful environment, providing a refreshing respite to our eyes from the hustle and bustle of modern life. Whether in a park or a small backyard, a lawn soothes the senses and invites people to play. Cartwheels, croquet, picnics, and stargazing connect us to the natural elements.

Sitting on green grass is the perfect place to eat a bowl full of cherries. So live and laugh at it all.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy June Boon!

Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page OH2

MORAGA ... continued

- 2 Carnoustie, \$2,175,000, 3 Bdrms, 3424 SqFt, 1987 YrBlt, 05-06-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,200,000, 03-20-17
- 50 Corte Maria, \$2,325,000, 4 Bdrms, 3243 SqFt, 2001 YrBlt, 05-16-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,500,000, 05-14-15
- 108 Danefield Place, \$1,875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2145 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,600,000, 09-14-21
- 10 Doral Drive, \$1,775,000, 3 Bdrms, 2238 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 05-10-24,
Previous Sale: \$967,000, 10-30-19
- 80 Gaywood Place, \$1,750,000, 5 Bdrms, 2570 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 05-16-24
- 4 Haven Court, \$2,511,000, 4 Bdrms, 2552 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 04-30-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,905,000, 10-22-20
- 13 Merrill Drive, \$2,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 3916 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 05-16-24,
Previous Sale: \$130,000, 06-01-88
- 126 Miramonte Drive, \$1,130,000, 2 Bdrms, 1514 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 05-06-24,
Previous Sale: \$710,000, 10-09-18
- 1938 Saint Andrews Drive, \$1,600,000, 2 Bdrms, 1552 SqFt,
1978 YrBlt, 05-06-24, Previous Sale: \$535,000, 12-01-11
- 39 Sea Pines Street, \$1,720,000, 2 Bdrms, 2273 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 05-02-24,
Previous Sale: \$694,000, 03-29-11
- 17 Tamarisk, \$1,925,000, 3 Bdrms, 2828 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 05-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,355,000, 04-06-17
- 168 Via Joaquin, \$1,345,000, 3 Bdrms, 2018 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 05-10-24,
Previous Sale: \$742,500, 06-17-15
- 7 Windeler Court, \$2,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 3116 SqFt, 1995 YrBlt, 05-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$785,000, 06-15-98

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- 7 Bates Boulevard, \$2,030,000, 3 Bdrms, 2270 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 05-16-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,290,000, 10-10-17
- 25 Bear Ridge Road, \$2,175,000, 5 Bdrms, 2852 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 05-10-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,685,000, 04-18-18
- 29 Brookside Road, \$3,000,000, 5 Bdrms, 4442 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 05-15-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,616,000, 04-16-12
- 143 Camino Pablo, \$1,695,000, 4 Bdrms, 2280 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 05-08-24
- 224 Camino Sobrante, \$2,480,000, 4 Bdrms, 3597 SqFt, 1941 YrBlt, 05-15-24,
Previous Sale: \$2,225,000, 08-08-16
- 166 Canon Drive, \$877,000, 2 Bdrms, 1831 SqFt, 1934 YrBlt, 05-16-24,
Previous Sale: \$200,000, 10-17-03
- 21 Donna Maria Way, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 2710 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 04-30-24,
Previous Sale: \$289,500, 06-01-87
- 122 El Toyonal, \$1,570,000, 3 Bdrms, 2162 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,125,000, 12-14-16
- 3 Hilary Way, \$1,500,000, 3 Bdrms, 1367 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 04-29-24
- 212 Ivy Drive, \$285,000, 4 Bdrms, 1832 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 05-03-24
- 91 La Cuesta Road, \$1,820,000, 3 Bdrms, 2401 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 04-29-24
- 40 La Encinal, \$1,175,000, 2 Bdrms, 1898 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 05-17-24,
Previous Sale: \$462,500, 05-05-23
- 271 Lomas Cantadas, \$1,700,000, 2160 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 05-14-24
- 151 Overhill Road, \$1,515,000, 3 Bdrms, 1496 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 04-29-24,
Previous Sale: \$750,000, 06-27-02
- 10 Ranch Road, \$6,337,500, 6 Bdrms, 6416 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 05-13-24,
Previous Sale: \$2,700,000, 08-30-13
- 170 Ravenhill Road, \$1,550,000, 3 Bdrms, 2245 SqFt, 1981 YrBlt, 05-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,100,000, 07-12-19
- 2 Vallecito Lane, \$2,131,000, 4 Bdrms, 2904 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 05-07-24
- 11 Valley View Road, \$2,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 2349 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 05-15-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 05-15-17
- 48 Via Floreado, \$2,520,000, 4 Bdrms, 2649 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 05-03-24,
Previous Sale: \$1,800,000, 06-02-21
- 316 Village View Court, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2080 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 05-17-24

Drainage Systems

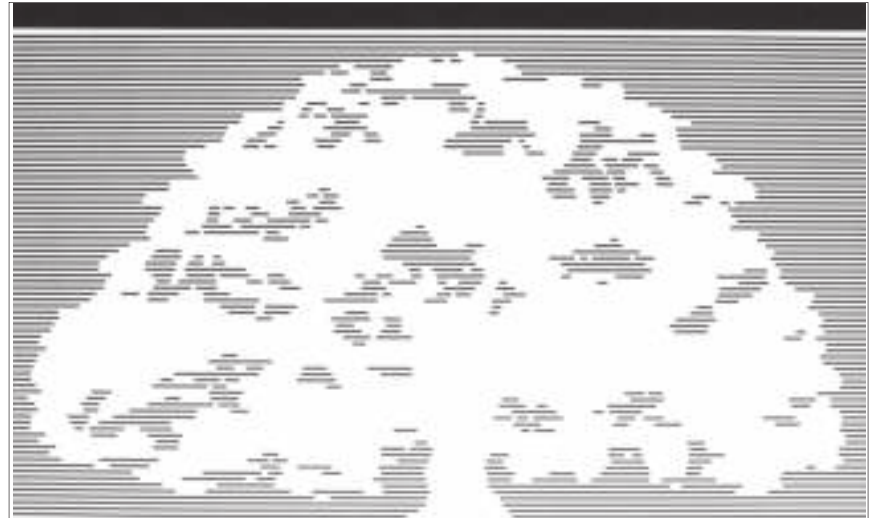
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5 Bd + Office | 4.5 Ba | 5267 Sqft | \$5,500,000
Magically set in an heirloom garden is this stunning, private, one of a kind Classic Orinda Country Club home!



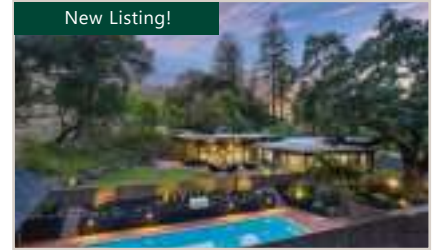
20 El Patio, Orinda

6 Bd | 4.5 Ba | 4552 Sqft | \$3,250,000
Totally renovated & updated in 2013, this light-filled 6 bd/ 4.5 ba w/ bonus room & possible au-pair suite is a fabulous place to call home.



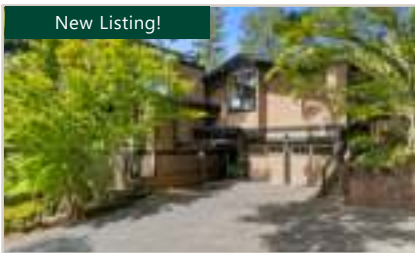
66 Van Ripper Lane, Orinda

4 Bd + Office | 3.5 Ba | 3031 Sqft | \$2,895,000
This Sleepy hollow gem features 4 bd + office/ 3.5 ba on a rare, flat lot w/ a beautiful view!



135 Camino Pablo, Orinda

4 Bd | 4 Ba | 2832 Sqft | \$2,495,000
Rare 4 bd/ 4 ba mid-century modern stunner sits on large, private 1.57 acre fully usable lot & has the ability to expand!



5 Shadow Creek Lane, Orinda

4 Bd | 3 Ba | 3812 Sqft | \$2,395,000
Mid-century style gem fits open layout in a serene & private atmosphere. 4 bd/3 ba + office & add. .5 acre lot perfect for ADU!



7 Los Conejos, Orinda

3 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2173 Sqft | \$1,695,000
Private & tranquil 3 bd/ 2.5 ba retreat in the heart of Orinda! Versatile detached studio, flat yard, new baths.



3235 Mt. Diablo Blvd #104, Lafayette

2 Bd + Office | 2 Ba | 2148 Sqft | \$1,895,000
Luxury 2 bd + office/ 2 ba single-level condo on a cul-de-sac features hardwood flooring, beamed ceilings, Anderson windows & so much more!



3346 Woodview Court, Lafayette

4 Bd | 3 Ba | 2714 Sqft | \$1,738,000
Charming, private retreat nestled in the Lafayette hills - only a short distance to hiking trails, Los Trampas swim club, & local shopping!



1603 Reliez Valley Road, Lafayette

4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2406 Sqft | \$1,499,000
Quietly tucked, charming, Traditional Farm House nestled in the hills overlooking Reliez Valley to Las Trampas.



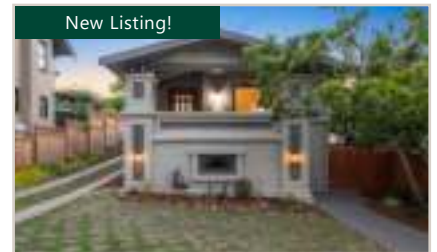
237 Rheem Blvd, Moraga

4 Bd | 2.5 Ba | 2457 Sqft | \$1,895,000
Set up a private driveway, this expanded single story home combines a super floor plan w/ high quality updates & relaxing outdoor spaces.



300 N Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

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Corner unit at the end of the complex enjoys a light & bright private setting. Convenient location close to vibrant downtown & easy access to freeway and Bart for



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