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# BUYING PARADISE

*During the Holidays*





# BUYING PARADISE

## Thinking of Selling Your Home During the Holidays?

WRITTEN BY SAM SCHUNK  
VENICE GULF COAST LIVING MAGAZINE

**I**f visions of selling your current residence are dancing in your head this holiday season, you may wonder whether you should list it now or wait until the new year. For those living in the Gulf Coast, many advantages can be found to putting your home on the market during the holiday season.

The conventional wisdom in certain parts of the country would have it that spring is the ideal time to sell a home; however, part of that reasoning hinges upon people hunkering down during the winter months or being too busy during the holidays to entertain the thought of purchasing a new home. The first part of that argument doesn't hold up here in the Suncoast, particularly because surveys show that the weather is one of the primary attractions driving a decision to relocate to our region. What that means is that a significant percentage of folks seeking homes here choose to do so partially because they enjoy being active during the winter months.

While buyers in previous years may have had to contend with busier schedules during the holiday season, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a season that, for many, has meant fewer social engagements and other commitments. Individuals who prefer having a fuller schedule may prioritize finding their new home, devoting more time, energy, and focus on this task. As a seller, the advantage of this is that buyers tend to be more serious in making a move.

Given the current circumstances this year, when many people have been staying closer to home for considerably longer spans of time, having the chance to go out may be a welcome reprieve. By physically changing our surroundings, it has the advantage of allowing us to emotionally reset as well, something that is even more important nowadays. When buyers are motivated, house-hunting provides an additional incentive: they can set a goal and



keep that target in sight, resulting in a greater sense of accomplishment when they have achieved that objective. Plus, since folks have been home for more protracted periods, they have had greater opportunity to evaluate how well their living space works for their lifestyle. For example, those who work from home may now put a higher priority on having a dedicated office space, one with plenty of storage, sunlight, and privacy, while those who enjoy culinary pursuits may want a roomier kitchen. If their current space can accommodate it, they might consider remodeling, but oftentimes, meeting these needs may necessitate making a move. As such, many motivated buyers are out there, seeking a home space that's a better fit for them.

While going to open houses may be a popular activity for many Americans, the chances are that if someone is looking at a home at this time of year, that they are ready to buy. Those who are shopping for a new home during the holidays tend to be more serious, as they may be motivated due to a job transfer or seeking to take advantage of end-of-the-year tax breaks. When people are notified that they need to move for a promising new position, they will want to find a home and get settled sooner rather than later, leading to their holiday home search. Reducing the property tax bill would most likely not be the main reason for purchasing a new home, but it can influence a serious buyer to want to make a move during the holidays. In this scenario, the buyer will want to close on or before December 31, since this allows them to deduct the mortgage interest, property taxes, and interest costs of the loan, which could result in significant tax savings. As a result, putting your home on the market at this time of year can often result in a quicker sales process.

Having your home tastefully decorated for the holidays may provide a measure of normalcy that has greater appeal to

buyers, especially at this time. In a year full of changes, having your home stylishly adorned in festive lights and decorations, a traditional signature of the season, can be wonderfully appealing to buyers. If your neighborhood decks the common areas, signage, light poles, and other features with decorative accents such as wreaths, candy canes, stars, or lights wound around palm trees, this seasonal décor not only conveys a sense of holiday cheer, but it also showcases its communal spirit, giving them a sense of what they can look forward to as future residents.

No matter what time of year it is, one of the ways that potential buyers consider whether they want to make an offer on a home is to envision themselves living within it. When a home is decorated for the holidays, it provides even more food for thought as this enables buyers-to-be to visualize how they would celebrate the season within those walls. While less can be more during other seasons, staging your home to have a homey, comfy holiday vibe can help buyers make that crucial emotional connection that leads them to place an offer.

**T**he principles of supply and demand can also work in your favor when you list your home for sale during the holidays since many people may wait until the new year to put theirs on the market. By listing when there are fewer competing homes, it may mean selling your home more quickly and commanding a better asking price. If home inventory is more limited, it means that serious buyers are less likely to have endless options to choose from, making it easier for them to focus on yours.

Selecting a local Realtor to research and market your home can be a powerful first step in attracting the ideal buyer. Additionally, your real estate professional can help you stage your home and price it accordingly, ensuring that the right buyer is able to find it and make an offer. Sell your home during the holidays and you could soon be on your way out the door, onto the home of your dreams!

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