

Working to create
safer homes and communities

Royal LePagers dedicate time and resources
to their own charity



At Royal LePage, we are committed to helping Canadians find their dream homes. However, we know that *a house is not truly a home* unless it's safe for women and children.

Every day in Canada, 3,000 women and their 2,500 children stay in an emergency shelter to escape family violence. One-third of teenagers have experienced dating violence and every year, 360,000 children witness their mother being abused. Royal LePage – the only Canadian real estate company with its own charity – established the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation in 1998 to help put an end to family violence. Since that time, Royal LePage brokers, agents and staff have raised more than \$16 million in support of local women's shelters and programs that help women and children rebuild their lives after violence. Since Royal LePage covers all the operating costs of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, 100% of every dollar raised goes directly to our cause.



We provide financial and in-kind support to 200 women's shelters partnered with Royal LePage offices across the country. Agent commission donations and the proceeds from fundraising events help shelters provide:

- 24 hour crisis lines
- Counselling for women and children
- Employment training, job placement programs and legal advice
- Activities to enhance the lives of women and children staying in the shelter
- Outreach and ongoing support to help women live on their own after leaving the shelter
- Renovations and construction of new shelters

When you work with a Royal LePage REALTOR®, you are bringing safety and hope to women and children in your community who have experienced abuse.

"Congratulations to the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation on your 15th anniversary and to all involved in the founding and sustaining of this wonderful organization. Hundreds of shelters across Canada have benefited from the generous support and friendship of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation and Royal LePage agents and staff. In fact, while donations from the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation have been life-altering and sustaining for many women's shelters, the work done by the foundation in spreading the message that violence and abuse should never be tolerated has meant even more to the thousands of women who know there are safe places for them and people that care."

Lesley Ackrill, Executive Co-Director
Interval House (Toronto, Ontario)

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The Homeowner



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"A realtor you can trust"

I hope you find this newsletter informative and entertaining.

Whether you are making a move or curious about the real estate trend in your area, please feel free to contact me at the number below. I am always happy to answer your real estate needs.

Fluent in English and Cantonese

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Canada Emerges from "The Housing Market Correction No One Noticed"

According to the Royal LePage House Price Survey released in October, the average price of a home in Canada increased between 1.2 per cent and 4.1 per cent in the third quarter of 2013.

The survey showed a year-over-year average price increase of 3.7 per cent to \$418,686 for standard two-storey homes, while detached bungalows rose 4.1 per cent to \$381,811. During the same period, the average price for standard condominiums saw a more moderate increase, rising 1.2 per cent to \$246,530. Sales volumes surged in a number of regions, as Canadians re-entered the housing market after sitting on the sidelines for more than a year – marking the end of the most significant housing market correction since the 2008-2009 global recession.

"Canada experienced a significant housing market correction over the last four quarters that most in the nation missed entirely," said Phil Soper, president and chief executive of Royal LePage. "Many regions experienced dramatic slowdowns in the number of homes trading hands, but news of double-digit unit sales declines went largely unnoticed, over-shadowed by a macabre fascination with the prospect of a U.S.-style home price collapse, which of course never transpired. Our over-heated real estate market of 2011 and early 2012 drove some to the sidelines. Home price appreciation ground to a halt for a year – a necessary breather and predictable market response."

"Our housing market turned a corner in the third quarter. Buyers returned to the streets in droves, resulting in a sharp increase in home sales. In many cities, there simply weren't enough properties on the market to satisfy

demand, which put upward pressure on prices for the first time in 2013," continued Soper. "We expect this positive momentum to continue through the all-important spring market of 2014, buoyed by a combination of pent-up demand, increasing consumer confidence and continued low interest rates."

"Job growth begets consumer confidence. An emboldened citizen is more likely to enter into a major financial transaction. Following almost six years of turbulent times, economic fundamentals are pointing to an era of renewed prosperity. The American economy is on an upward trajectory and businesses in Canada and around the world are finally loosening purse strings and investing in people for growth. This is vitally important for an exporting nation like ours. And as goes the Canadian economy, so goes the residential real estate sector," explained Soper.

Soper concluded, "while interest rates must of course rise from current historical lows, we anticipate the change to be modest in the medium term. As the country emerges from this extended correctional cycle, we believe the real estate market stimulus previously provided by low interest rates will be replaced by a strengthening labour market and true economic recovery."

For more information, please see the Royal LePage Survey of Canadian House Prices at www.royallepage.ca.

If you are wondering what your home is worth, please contact me and let me put my expertise to work for you!

Survey of Canadian Average House Prices in the Third Quarter 2013

	Detached Bungalow		Standard Two Storey		Standard Condominium	
	Q3 2013 Average	% Change	Q3 2013 Average	% Change	Q3 2013 Average	% Change
St. John's	\$ 296,000	12.1%	\$ 400,333	12.1%	\$ 315,333	12.1%
Halifax	\$ 299,000	2.0%	\$ 329,333	5.9%	\$ 214,000	5.9%
Charlottetown	\$ 173,000	0.6%	\$ 205,000	0.0%	\$ 128,000	0.8%
Moncton	\$ 148,000	0.1%	\$ 145,000	7.7%	N/A	N/A
Fredericton	\$ 207,000	1.0%	\$ 215,000	-2.3%	\$ 153,000	-3.2%
Saint John	\$ 176,092	-5.3%	\$ 278,895	2.3%	\$ 156,905	-0.8%
Montreal	\$ 289,306	0.6%	\$ 403,007	3.9%	\$ 239,819	1.2%
Ottawa	\$ 398,417	2.3%	\$ 401,500	2.4%	\$ 259,000	-1.1%
Toronto	\$ 577,563	5.0%	\$ 678,016	4.1%	\$ 355,483	0.3%
Hamilton	\$ 228,901	6.6%	\$ 294,919	1.8%	N/A	N/A
Winnipeg	\$ 307,069	4.2%	\$ 346,765	8.6%	\$ 195,226	3.5%
Regina	\$ 336,500	0.4%	\$ 372,250	3.5%	\$ 212,622	0.9%
Saskatoon	\$ 366,250	5.2%	\$ 399,750	7.0%	\$ 255,000	1.1%
Calgary	\$ 465,411	7.2%	\$ 446,411	3.4%	\$ 263,087	5.6%
Edmonton	\$ 337,804	0.7%	\$ 362,000	1.5%	\$ 203,637	0.5%
Vancouver	\$1,070,000	5.6%	\$ 1,156,500	2.7%	\$ 503,750	1.2%
Victoria	\$ 458,000	1.8%	\$ 462,000	1.5%	\$ 268,000	-2.5%
National	\$ 381,811	4.1%	\$ 418,686	3.7%	\$ 246,530	1.2%

Home Is Where The Heart Is

How Relaxing at Home Has Changed Over the Last Century

If “home is where the heart is,” then our homes are certainly the heart of family time and relaxation too. How we relax in our homes and enjoy time together with our friends and families has substantially changed over the past one hundred years. To commemorate the 100-year anniversary of Royal LePage, we invite you to reflect on these changes.

One hundred years ago, through even the last two to three decades, homes had much more formal sitting and dining areas. You may affectionately remember your grandmother’s parlour! While these rooms still exist for some, most of us have shifted to larger, open and more casual spaces for relaxation and play.

Technology is now pervasive in our homes with wireless connectivity, multiple screened devices and home automation that would once make us think of Nassau command. Home offices were almost non-existent until recent decades. Today, they are commonplace. Having a home office allows for flexible work arrangements for many Canadians, which means less commuting, more family and personal time, and a better, more relaxing balance overall.

Perhaps the most obvious example of the change in technology in our homes is television. We’ve brought the big screen home. Where 20th century families once gathered around the radio, and later a single furniture-sized television with no remote control in sight, going to a movie was a real treat. Today, television screens are super wide and plentiful in our homes. They have sophisticated sound systems too, bringing rock bands, hockey games and Top Gun™ jets right into the room with us.

Our homes today have items and spaces for entertaining that in previous decades we’d need to go out to enjoy. Basements a hundred years ago were dark areas for storing coal and wood. Today, having a basement games room and a pool table – once considered the realm of the elite – is not uncommon at all. Games rooms are where we gather and play, with retro juke boxes, pinball and karaoke machines, fooze ball tables, digital gaming areas and more. Hologram home entertainment is not far away!

The function of the kitchen has changed too. A hundred years ago, food was made and dishes washed – but we didn’t gather, watch TV and invite guests in for wine around a large granite island like many of us do today. It would be considered uncouth to entertain guests in the kitchen. Desirable kitchens today have wine fridges, multiple sinks and prep areas, and commercial grade appliances too.

Moving outdoors, Canadians have long loved their barbecue. But we’ve gone from taking hibachi’s on holiday to creating backyard spaces with heat lamps, hot tubs, and built in BBQs – beautiful outdoor rooms we enjoy at least two to three seasons a year. Where once we’d hang an old tire from a tree or pop up a quick retail swing set kit, our backyards now house play structures for all the neighbourhood to enjoy.

A nice thing that has persisted through time is the great Canadian backyard ice rink – a tradition that is sure to endure.

Our homes are our havens. Make space in yours for what you love.



YEARS OF HELPING YOU HOME



Glenbow Archives NC-39-321

5 Safety Tips for Fire-Proofing Your Home

Many people neglect the important precautions needed to fireproof a home. Every year, fires take hundreds of lives and destroy thousands of homes in Canada. Many of these tragedies could be prevented. To protect your home, loved ones and possessions, it is important to give a conscious effort to fireproofing your home. The following tips will get you started.

1. Avoid overloading outlets.

Overloaded outlets can cause house fires. Avoid plugging large appliances (i.e. refrigerators, microwave ovens, heaters, air conditioners) into the same outlet or circuit. Fix any loose wall receptacles, wires and lighting fixtures. Don’t use extension cords on a permanent basis and never run extension cords under carpeting.



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2. Sleep with bedroom doors closed.

A bedroom window can serve as a fire escape route. As such, keeping the bedroom doors closed can isolate smoke and heat in the event of a fire and provide more time to escape. For improved safety, install a smoke alarm in every bedroom and turn any portable heaters off before you go to sleep.

3. Routinely check electrical appliances and cords for irregularities.

Be sure to replace or repair any malfunctioning appliances or damaged electrical cords. Whether gas or electric, appliances need a careful watch. Use of appliances that have an automatic shut-off will mitigate your risk.

4. Use a chimney sweep service at least once per year.

In doing so, you remove soot, blockages and any accumulating creosote, thereby reducing the potential for a chimney fire. Creosote is a highly flammable substance that builds up inside your wood-burning chimney over time.

5. Remove combustible and flammable materials from your attic.

Your attic is often warmer than the rest of your home which can significantly increase the temperature of items stored there. Ensure any combustible or flammable materials are properly contained in fire-resistant containers and relocated to a cooler location in your home, or purge them responsibly.

If you take some simple fire safety measures around the home, you can sleep soundly knowing you’ve done your due diligence. Be vigilant and make these tips a part of your routine.

Bathroom Refresh

The bathroom may be one of the smallest rooms in our home, but we spend a lot of time there. It is essential to our daily routines and is often our retreat at the end of the day. In terms of resale value, it is also one of the most important rooms to pay attention to.

Here are some tips to give yours a lift:

Serenity now

Give your bathroom that soothing spa feel. Start with a palette of soft whites and layered neutrals; keep vanity surfaces clear and window coverings to a clean minimum. Heaps of big white towels are a must!

Fashion find

Steal your favourite colour from that fashion mag or the mall for a big hit of bathroom impact. The bathroom’s smaller size makes it a perfect place for a shot of drama and colour in your home.

Get artsy

Swapping out small, ho-hum wall art in favour of something big adds instant oomph to this room and can connect it to the rest of your surrounding décor.

Cheap tricks

If new cabinets are in order, they don’t have to cost a lot. One decorator trick is to install inexpensive ready-made cabinets with a high-end counter and faucet, taking the whole look upscale. If new cabinets are not in your budget, perhaps paint your existing cabinets, install fresh knobs and add a new, attractive tap.



Mirror mirror

Some of the fairest bathrooms envelop that swanky hotel feel by thinking big. A large mirror adds glamour and light to the room, making the room feel larger too.

Shimmer tips

Keep your metals consistent on knobs, accessories, and fixtures, for a cohesive feel. White metals, too, have a more current, modern feel.

Space changer

A sleek pedestal and well-placed vertical mirror can really open up and update an otherwise tight and dated powder room. Install a set of open shelves and use attractive storage boxes to keep supplies at hand.

Go first class

Whether it’s a custom glass shower and rich dark cabinets or a corner Jacuzzi tub, today’s bathrooms go far beyond function. They are the perfect place to splurge and add a little luxury to your life.

Even a few changes can make a big difference. Enjoy making yours!