

SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

Home *Guide*



Autumn Dwellings

Our pros offer tips for a home you'll fall for.

WRITTEN BY HEIDI BETHEL

As the housing market in Reno-Tahoe continues to boom, several local home experts weigh in on the elements that should be top of mind this fall.





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Figure Out Your Finances

Interest rates remain at historic lows, and property values have increased across the Sierra region. According to Shane Braninburg, mortgage consultant with Big Valley Mortgage in Reno, now may be the time to refinance.

"If you've bought in the last few years, you could easily refinance and get rid of your mortgage insurance, consolidate your debt, or take cash out to prep the house for the holidays," Braninburg notes.

Adore the Outdoors

With cooling temperatures and clear skies, your time is begging to be spent outdoors. Betsy Caron, Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Drysdale Properties in Sparks, encourages potential buyers to be extra observant when spending time at outside gatherings.

"Fall is a good time to start looking at houses again," Caron notes. "It's a great time to enjoy your outdoor space and entertain outdoors. You can have people over, open up the door, and let the crisp fall air in. When you're at a friend's house, start thinking about what you'd want in a new home and noticing what others have done that you like. Yard space can sometimes be intimidating, but there's so much you can do no matter the size."



Karen Walker Hill, residential specialist for Ferrari-Lund Real Estate in Reno, agrees, adding that now is the time to sell homes with great yards.

"It's not that hot. Fire pits, outdoor entertainment spaces, and big weeping trees are always lovely," Walker Hill says. "Right now is a good time to captivate the buyers who want the outdoor space; in the fall you can sell a house without air conditioning because it's not as noticeable."



No Leaves Left Behind

With beautiful outdoor spaces comes the maintenance needed this time of year.

"The late summer and fall months are the perfect time to double check that your gutters are clean and you have landscaping and flowerbeds sloped away from the house to control runoff," says Sam Olson, team lead/owner of The Olson Group of RE/MAX Gold in Reno.



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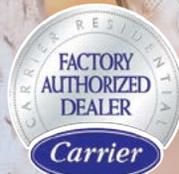
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Improper water control during the winter and spring can lead to water in a crawlspace or basement, which can breed fungus and mold.

"It's a transitional time, from exterior living to interior living, so make sure you're ready for that," Olson adds.

Rickey Hayes, marketing manager for Sierra Air Inc. in Reno, also reminds readers to schedule furnace maintenance and change air filters in the home.

"Now is the time to get this done before the weather gets bad," Hayes explains. "Servicing a furnace is like having an oil change for your car. You want to get them done once a year. In September and October, when it's not too hot out, run your furnace for 30 minutes to make sure it's working. If you wait until it gets super cold and you turn the furnace on and it doesn't work, every heating and air conditioning company will be busy that day, including us."





A Tidy Pantry

As the holiday season approaches, so does the bustle of shopping and preparing to entertain. Get a head start with a well-organized custom pantry from California Closets in Reno.

"There's no cookie-cutter design with our pantries because we work with every individual space; [the result] provides an incredible amount of pantry space," says Dan Du Mond, design manager for California Closets. "We utilize the entire vertical wall with adjustable shelving, baskets, pull-out drawers, wine storage, and, yes, even cookie sheet storage."



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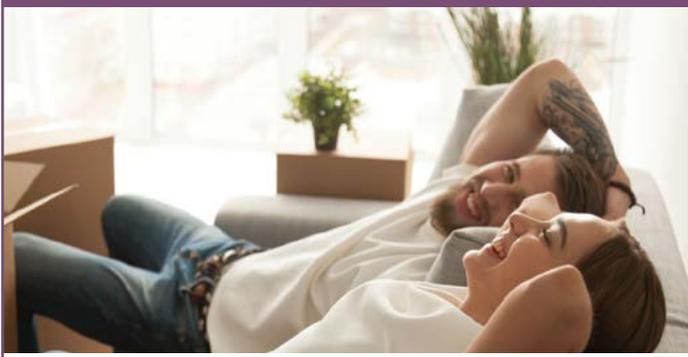
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"It's one less stress to worry about with the holidays coming up," he continues, explaining that a well-designed pantry enables you to spend money more wisely on groceries. "You know what you've already purchased so you don't overspend, and [the pantry is] more easily accessible for a quick inventory before you cook the big holiday dinners and have company over."

Hopefully, this expert advice will help you to enjoy the fall and planning for the holidays! If you need additional information, contact local professionals who are always happy to help. ❖

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A photograph of a vase of red carnations, a mug with whipped cream, and an open book on a windowsill. The scene is lit with soft, natural light from a window in the background. The vase is on the left, the mug is in the center, and the book is in the foreground. The mug has the text "I LOVE fall MOST of ALL" written on it.

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