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# Home *Guide*



## Spring Sanctuaries

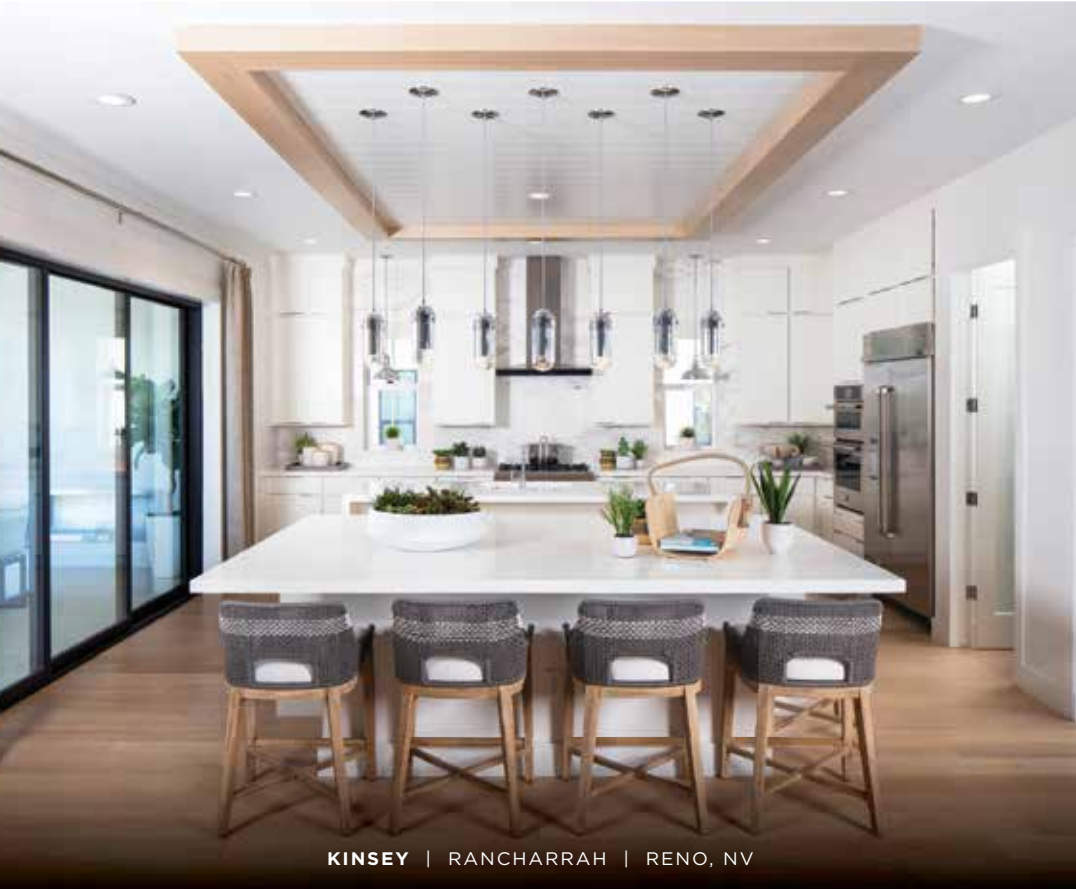
**Making the most out of Reno-Tahoe homes.**

WRITTEN BY HEIDI BETHEL

Springtime in Reno-Tahoe is simply blissful. As the weather begins to warm and life emerges all around, area experts have great ideas to amplify your living space and life this time of year.



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### Take a Step Outdoors

Now is a great time to start thinking about the outdoors. Sam Olson, team lead and owner of The Olson Group of RE/MAX Professionals in Reno, says, "After a long winter inside, spending some time refreshing your outdoor space can be very invigorating. Especially if you're thinking about selling this year — curb appeal is so important. And making sure any exterior plantings and curb appeal enhancements have time to establish themselves. While kitchens and bathrooms sell homes, curb appeal gets people out of the car."



The team at Toll Brothers have long shared an appreciation for the outside and builds homes that embrace indoor/outdoor living.

"Communities like Toll Brothers' Cinnamon Ridge and Harris Ranch in Sparks include large home sites, open-flow floor plans, and optional sliding glass doors that open up the great room to a generous, covered patio," explains Donna O'Connell, president of Toll Brothers' Reno division. "Numerous options are available to enhance your outdoor living areas, such as a primary-suite deck, RV parking, and detached casita with a kitchenette and full bath."



Cinnamon Ridge Caraway homesite backyard.  
Photo courtesy of Toll Brothers



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Betsy Caron, Realtor with Chase International Real Estate in Sparks, appreciates the entryway to a home and encourages readers to make theirs distinctive.

"The entryway to your home is more than just a door; it's a glimpse into your world and a warm invitation to the future," Caron explains. "Whether it's a bold statement piece or a practical landing area with cubbies for backpacks and shoes, the key is to make it welcoming and peaceful. Create a space where friends, family, and potential buyers can feel at home, envisioning a place filled with warmth, comfort, and connection."

**A Touch of Greenery**

When it comes to plants and foliage, options abound for adding some color inside and out.

Cary Yamamoto, general manager of Dayton Valley Turf, which expanded to include Bonsai Blue Garden Market in 2020, is introducing pollinator plants this year. Continuing his parents' legacy of sustainable farming, Yamamoto has remained committed to making lasting contributions to the community since the family moved here in 1957. Initially involved in row crops, such as garlic, onions, grains, and potatoes, Yamamoto's family entered the sod business in the 1980s.



Story continues on page 40






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Continued from page 37

"When we started growing sod, it was just a fledgling way of getting another rotation of crop in, and it turned into a mainstay," Yamamoto explains.

Today, he and his team produce grasses climatized and grown in the high desert, which do very well in the region.

"Our emerald blue sod is our most popular, but we do have other sources with varieties we're developing to include native and ornamental grasses. Bonsai Blue Garden Market will offer different grasses, trees, shrubs, pollinator-specific plants, natural landscapes, and more."



Photo courtesy of Sierra Water Gardens

With her shop, Sierra Water Gardens in Reno, owner Samantha Stremmel offers indoor plants and thoughtfully curated home goods, garden items, clothing, and jewelry aligning with the business' ethos of small-batch, responsibly made pieces.

"We work hard to source local and [international] products to our community," Stremmel explains.



Monarch Blue Grass Blend. Photo courtesy of Dayton Valley Turf

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When it comes to bringing plants indoors, Stremmel sees many benefits. "Of course, there's the boost in air quality. I really think the biggest benefit is that plants bring life into the home. A plant will transform a space very quickly with its presence and the care you give it. They add an organic, outside feel to any space that brings comfort and just makes you feel good."

**Manmade Materials**

When it comes to outdoor pathways and patios, porcelain pavers are a great option considering the weather extremes in the region. According to Shaun Klein, director of business development for Nova Tile & Stone, with stores in Reno, Sacramento, Minden, and Fernley, "Porcelain doesn't absorb moisture like brick might, and porcelain pavers can be used in the same applications, including placed directly on gravel or a raised patio."

When selecting the colors outdoors, Klein has excellent insights: "Color selection in outdoor use is important year-round. You want to avoid extremely dark and white colors to avoid excess heat and light reflection."

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### Energy Efficiency Matters

Sol-Up, Nevada's leading solar energy company, continues to expand the number of home lifestyle products available to Northern Nevada customers seeking energy efficiency and innovation.

In its newest offering, Sol-Up's Midtown Reno showroom offers access to a line of "e-life partner" products that bring new concepts and energy independence to the home. E-life partner products include eco-friendly appliances, e-bikes, e-foils, water dispensers, water-vapor fireplaces, and energy-storage options, including the Tesla Powerwall 3.

"Renewable energy as an industry is changing rapidly, as are the products that use energy much more efficiently or that offer energy independence," says Steve Hamile, Sol-Up's CEO. "Our Midtown Reno showroom is aimed at helping educate consumers about the many possibilities to reduce their electricity costs and usage."

Sol-Up is Nevada's leading independent installer of the Tesla Powerwall 3, which allows customers a new path to energy efficiency. The Powerwall 3 provides a higher continuous power output, so more devices can be powered simultaneously compared to previous models. When combined with solar panels, the Tesla Powerwall 3 can power a home when the sun goes down or the power goes out.



Blue Star Appliances is another e-life partner. The company manufactures high-quality, American-made ranges, refrigerators, air conditioners, and other products that provide unique performance, craftsmanship, and customization options. Years before it was required, the company moved to eco-friendly refrigerants that don't deplete the ozone layer. Blue Star ranges use technology that helps clean the oven while it's being used, reducing the power required for ongoing, scheduled self-cleanings.

"As our temperatures continue to rise and the cost of energy goes up every year, there are many reasons to consider energy-efficient and renewable-energy-powered products throughout the home," Hamile says.



Photo courtesy of [Bluestarcooking.com](http://Bluestarcooking.com)

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### Bee Friendly

Molly LeGoy and Kim Hansen have joined forces to offer bees for rent to Northern Nevada residents through Red, White & Bees in Reno.

"With bee populations on the decline, we see a need to make supporting our bees more accessible to residents and businesses alike," LeGoy explains.

The pair offers one-, two-, and three-hive subscription packages that are installed and filled with locally bred bees. Monthly inspections of the hives encourage healthy, productive pollinators.

"Working with our local customer base, we have been able to help gardens, communities, and the environment," Hansen says.

Red, White & Bees provides extraction and delivery services for each customer's honey at the end of the season. Customers can choose to have their honey donated, jarred, or labeled for an additional fee.



LDCmodern offers crafting classes and more

### Arts and Culture Make the Neighborhood

Linda Demers, owner of LCDmodern in Reno, embraces March and April as a time to emerge from hibernation and welcome fresh beginnings. She's thrilled to host workshops and gatherings in her shop, fostering creativity and connection among like-minded individuals as they come together to create and share ideas.

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"I'm collaborating with local small businesses to bring fresh ideas and fun activities like home décor projects, vision boards with designers, cookie decorating, and fiber art," Demers explains. "It's all about crafting circles and our ability to share, learn, and connect. I'm excited to bring people together, spark creativity, and make the most of the season!"

The Tahoe Philharmonic, created by Maestro James Rawie and Nancy Rawie in 2024, will bring new life to the thriving music scene with a seven-concert series scheduled throughout the year in Reno-Tahoe.

"We believe music is food for the soul, and classical music is its finest nourishment," explains Valerie Forte, Tahoe Philharmonic board member and Realtor with Compass, which has offices across Nevada, California, and nationwide. "Our area's vibrant arts and culture scene is thriving, and we're here to make it even stronger. We are committed to bringing everyone together through the universal language of music."

Whether it's enjoying a beautiful musical performance or craft event, enhancing the outdoors with foliage and stunning accents, or listening to bees buzzing around, Reno-Tahoe is a splendid place to call home, and these experts can help make any place your own. ❖

*Thank you, Maestro James Rawie and Nancy Rawie, for bringing beautiful music to our Greater Lake Tahoe area for more than 19 years! Your dedication and talent have truly enriched our community.*



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**Valerie Forte | 530-305-1220**  
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