

Real Estate Matters – March, 2009

Open House viewing made easy

Today's buyers have a lot to choose from these days, with a large inventory of homes listed for sale. Some real estate representatives hold Open Houses in an effort to attract potential buyers to their listings. There's a lot of information available about Open Houses from the seller's perspective, but surprisingly few guidelines for the buyers who come to view them. Here are some helpful tips on Open House viewings from the buyer's side.

- If you plan to visit an Open House, inform your sales representative prior to your visit. You may be surprised to learn that visiting an Open House without your sales representative present may result in conferring certain rights on the salesperson who is showing the property. It all depends on the rules of the real estate board where the property is located and any other agreements that may be in place.
- Ask your sales representative for information about the surrounding neighbourhood. Your **Coldwell Banker®** sales representative can be a valuable source of information about planned developments in the area and other aspects that may impact a home's resale value, and may even be familiar with the individual property.
- If you're planning a tour of several Open Houses, start out with a map. Plot out the addresses where the Open Houses are located and the times of showings to ensure that you make the most productive use of your time. Make sure you identify where schools, amenities and major transportation routes are located. The Coldwell Banker Web site, www.coldwellbanker.ca can help make your planning process easier with helpful location maps. The site even flags properties that are holding Open Houses, so your list is made for you!
- Start your Open House tour with a drive to get a feel for the entire neighbourhood before you devote any time to viewing individual houses.
- When you visit an Open House, be direct and ask questions. You've got a lot at stake, so this is no time to be diplomatic. The salesperson showing the home is well aware that it won't be right for everyone. Being open and direct allows the hosting sales representative to better understand your needs and objections and then offer solutions to meet them.

Do you have any other questions about viewing homes for sale? Or about home prices and affordability in today's real estate market? Call your local **Coldwell Banker®** and take advantage of their helpful advice. It's a great time to buy, so why not make the most of it!

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