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Real Estate Matters

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How to Update Your Hardwood Floors

Can't decide whether a patch-up paint job or full-on replacement is called for? We've got you covered.

The Replacements: If you're thinking about refinishing, check first to see how much wood you have to work with. You'll need more than an 1/8-inch of wood above the tongue-and-groove to refinish your floors. If that's not the case, or if you have considerable damage or imperfections, you may want to replace your floors instead. The good news is that there's a vast selection of woods available now, and choices are thicker and more durable than ever. Laminates are a great, economical option as well, but note that they can't be refinished later.

The Cover-Up: If refinishing your hardwood floors is the option for you, you're in luck because it's more affordable than replacing altogether. There are still a few other choices to make, though. Matte, gloss or semi-gloss? Should you paint, white wash or stain? In the past, painting was a top choice for refinishing your floors because it was affordable and fast. But it's fallen out of favour because it can be so easily damaged, says Megan Zarzecki, hardwood-flooring specialist with All Type Hardwood Flooring Inc. in Brampton, Ontario. Painted floors are quick to chip and scratch, and imperfections can be pronounced, resulting in a high-maintenance floor. Not only that,

but oil-based paints take a long time to dry and are high in VOCs, while water-based ones don't last long.

Whiteout: White washing was often used on walls and paneling, as well as wood floors, to give a bright feeling to a room. However, in recent years, the demand for this refinishing has dwindled as manufacturers now offer prefinished white wood to replace old floors altogether.

Get the Look: Staining is the most popular refinishing option today, with a great variety of options that are meant to last. While natural stains are more affordable than darker stains (because they're easier to apply), Zarzecki says darker colours such as ebony, chocolate brown, espresso and royal mahogany are the most popular.

Clean-Up Act: Refinishing or replacing your hardwood floors is only part of the equation of great-looking floors. Be sure to take proper care of your floors to maintain the look. For hardwood floors, Zarzecki recommends cleaning with simple warm water, vinegar and a damp mop. Other products may have oil or wax in them that can dull and reduce the lifespan of your floors.

Market Watch for April 2011

Market conditions tightened markedly over the last year. April 2011 sales accounted for 62 percent of new listings during the month – up substantially from 53 percent in April 2010. Tighter conditions resulted in the average April selling price growing by nine per cent annually to \$477,407.

“The number of listings has been below expectations so far this year. Increased competition between home buyers has led to an accelerating annual rate of price growth,” said Jason Mercer, TREB's Senior Manager of Market Analysis. “The strong price growth experienced in April should result in more listings and more balanced market conditions.”

Median Price

In April, the median price was \$402,000, from the \$373,000 recorded during April of 2010.

April Market Stats			
	April 2010	April 2011	% of Change
Sales	10,898	9,041	(-17%)
New Listing	20,683	14,494	(-30%)
Active Listings*	22,951	17,466	(-24%)
Days on Market	21	22	(5%)

* All figures for single-family dwellings.

TERM	BANK RATE
1 YEAR	3.70%
2 YEAR	4.05%
3 YEAR	4.55%
4 YEAR	5.19%
5 YEAR	5.69%
Prime	3.00%
Variable	2.85%

Certain conditions may apply and rates are subject to change without notice

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As my valued clients I am always happy to provide you with a yearly comparable market analysis of your property. So please do not hesitate to call. I will be happy to assess the current market value of your home and talk about any Real Estate queries you may have. It's always a pleasure!

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Featured Listing



Brooklin – Detached 2 Storey all brick 4 bedroom home. Located on highly desirable Apsley Cres. Gourmet kitchen with island, open concept family room with vaulted ceilings. Palladium window and gas fireplace. Main floor office/library. Professionally landscaped yard, large cedar deck. Interlock driveway. Don't miss this!!

For information on this and many other listings visit
www.JudyDempseyHomes.com or
 call Judy at 905-430-2320

Celebrating their Birthday this month

**Laurie Williams,
 April 14th**

This Month's Testimonial

Brian and I just wanted to thank you for all of your hard work, patience and humour during our search for our "perfect" home. You went above and beyond during our search of over 22 homes in 2 days! You helped us refine our "wish list" and in the end we surprised you by choosing a home that was nothing like our wish list!

As we were not from the area, we really counted on you for direction on which areas would suit us, even though some times we forced you to venture out of those comforts zones! You continuously reminded us to think of re-sale value, property potential and money pits. You were always only a phone call or text away. Your advice and knowledge of the industry was extremely helpful. We can't thank you enough for everything you have done.

Sincerely,

Kara-Lynne and Brian

This Months Recipe

RISOTTO WITH ASPARAGUS



Ingredients

- 2 bunches thick asparagus (about 2 pounds) 1 sprig fresh thyme or lemon thyme
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 large shallot, diced
- 2 cups arborio rice
- Kosher salt
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1/3 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 head Bibb lettuce, cut into strips
- 8 ounces robiola or taleggio cheese, thinly sliced
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Directions

Peel the bottom third of the asparagus stalks with a vegetable peeler. Snap each stalk where it breaks naturally; reserve 4 of the peeled bottoms for crostini (below). Thinly slice 6 asparagus bottoms and place the rest of the bottoms in a saucepan with 8 cups water and the thyme to make asparagus broth; bring to a simmer.

Heat 2 tablespoons butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the shallot and cook, stirring, until translucent, about 2 minutes. Add the rice and cook, stirring, until glossy, about 1 minute. Add 1 1/4 teaspoons salt. Pour in the wine and stir until absorbed. Stir in 1/2 cup of the asparagus broth until absorbed (use a ladle to add the broth, keeping the solids in the pan). Continue to add broth in 1/2-cup increments, stirring constantly and allowing the liquid to be absorbed before adding more, about 10 minutes. (You should have about half the broth left.) Stir in the sliced asparagus bottoms and the lemon zest. Add the remaining broth, 1/2 cup at a time, until the rice is just tender, 5 to 8 more minutes.

Meanwhile, place the asparagus tips in a large skillet, cover with water and season with salt and pepper. Simmer over medium-high heat until just tender, about 5 minutes.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons butter, the parmesan and lemon juice to the risotto. Stir in the lettuce, remove from the heat and season with salt. Divide among bowls, top with the robiola and season with pepper. Drizzle the asparagus tips with olive oil and spoon over the risotto.

Serve and Enjoy!!

