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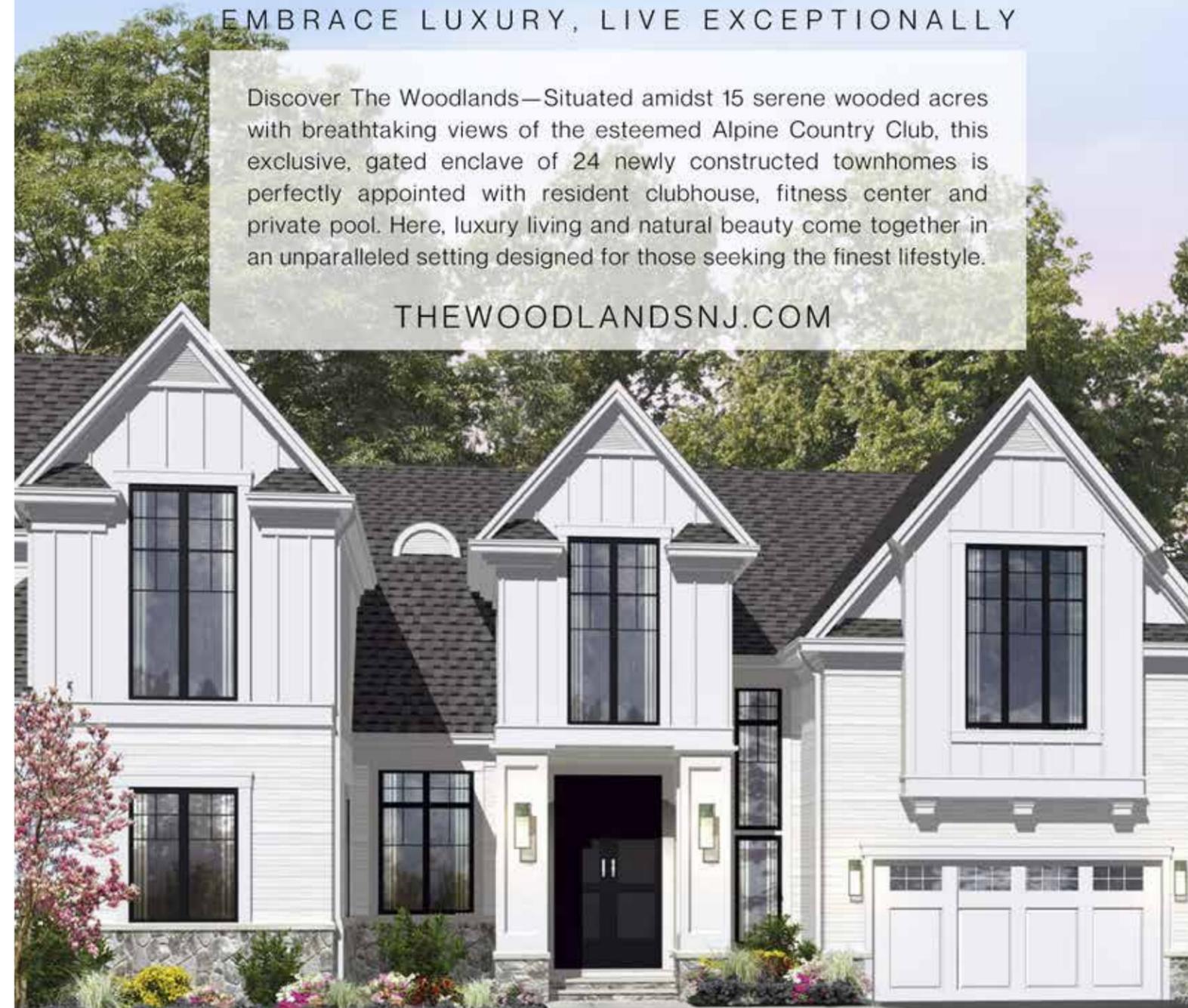
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Meet Valerie & Sofia

Stroll Alpine's Newest Contributors



Valerie Arciniegas

Introducing Valerie Arciniegas, a lively and adorable just-turned-10-year-old Aquarius baby who reigns supreme in Alpine! And yes, she loves astrology and mythology and plenty of other “ologies” lol. As a star honor roll student, and all around good, kind and sarcastically funny kid, Val-Val (the nickname that all her pals use) isn’t just a fan of reading; she’s a storytelling magician who crafts hilarious tales. When she’s not trying to improve her skills on the soccer field or smashing it on the tennis court, you’ll catch her serving up some serious skills in Pickleball!

This year, she’s thrilled to join the school band, playing her violin while jamming on the drums—talk about a musical dynamo! With a brush in one hand and dance moves on standby, Valerie’s artistic flair is limitless. A proud homebody and Korean barbecue aficionado, she’s also a steak enthusiast who can’t resist a good roller coaster. Talk about well-rounded!

Valerie has B-I-G aspirations. She dreams of studying in Boston, whether at Harvard or Brown University, with a focus on history and the arts. Valerie also envisions herself singing and dancing on Broadway, while also aiming to become an actress, a movie director, and even an astronaut!

And guess what? Her favorite color is purple and her favorite city to visit is LA and next on her travel itinerary is Tokyo this summer! Valerie is bubbling with joy as she prepares to write the kids’ guide for *Stroll Alpine* magazine—get ready for a blast of fun and excitement!



CONTINUED →



Sofia Arciniegas

Meet Sofia, an energetic and quirky 8-and-a-half-year-old who brings sunshine to Alpine! Known for her sweet and kind nature, Sofia adores her family, her puppy Oliver and home more than anything. Always ready to help out, she has a heart of gold that shines bright. Sofia, with an “F” (a fun fact she loves to share), is a magnet for friends wherever she roams!

An astrology enthusiast and a true empath like many Cancers, Sofia is wise beyond her years and has her sights set on success. Looking ahead, Sofia has big dreams—she hopes to become a plastic surgeon, a business owner, a YouTuber, an actress, and a humanitarian! Her vibrant personality and can-do spirit promise to bring those goals to life. With a passion for cars, she launched her Bugatti fund, saving every dollar from the tooth fairy, birthdays, and Christmas in pursuit of her dream ride. (Calling any Bugatti owners in Alpine for a test drive, lol!) She even got to see her dream car in Miami this summer!

A huge fan of the Dog Man series, she can't wait for the new movie. Crazy about pink, a chicken nugget lover, a fashionista and beauty enthusiast (who's favorite pastime is shopping at Ulta), Sofia is also a tech whiz and a code ninja who designs her own video games. With her besties Charlotte and Matteo, Sofia dives into the exciting universe of Roblox, where they collaborate on building games and exploring new challenges together. This year, she's excited about writing the kids' guide for *Stroll Alpine* magazine and visiting Japan with her cousins!



CHECK OUT
THEIR MONTHLY
ARTICLE IN THE
KIDS 2 KIDS
SECTION.

CONTINUED →



Both girls' vibrant personalities and can-do spirits showcase the magic of being kids in Alpine!





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Hello, Fashion & Beauty Lovers!

Welcome to my Style Fashion file!

These are my Top Five Red Dresses for Valentine's Day: A Love Letter to Fashion

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and whether you're planning a romantic dinner, a fun night out with friends, or a cozy evening at home, the right dress can make all the difference. This year, I've rounded up my top five favorite red dresses that will make you feel like the belle of the ball. With stunning options from REVOLVE, FWRD, Nieman Marcus, Nordstrom, and Bloomingdale's, you're sure to find the perfect ensemble to celebrate love in style. Plus, I'll share my go-to shoe choice that pairs flawlessly with each look. Let's dive into these sizzling selections that are bound to turn heads!

1. The Classic A-Line Dress

This first selection covers two styles on my check list.



One, being that it's a stunning A-line dress and two, that it is off-the-shoulder and flatters everyone. The dress is the Chara Off-the-Shoulder dress by Alice and Olivia and can be found in Bloomingdale's. This classic silhouette features a fitted bodice and a flared skirt, perfect for twirling on the dance floor. The off-the-shoulder design adds a touch of flirtation, making it an ideal choice for a romantic dinner date. The rich red hue is both timeless and modern, making it a versatile choice for any Valentine's Day activity.

2. Cupids Loves flowers

Next up, we have a fabulous 3D Tulip Floral mini strapless dress from Nadine Merabi from Nordstrom. This number exudes confidence with its fitted bodice and multitude of small flowers adorning it all around.



slit dress from Revolve is a must-have. This dress hugs your curves in all the right places and features a playful hem that dances with every step. It's perfect for a night out, whether you're heading to a trendy restaurant or a romantic night with dancing the Michelle Gown by Sau Lee will guarantee that all eyes are on you.

4. The Elegant Cape dress

If you prefer something a bit more sophisticated, check out this elegant red Badgley Mischka Funnel Neck Cape Midi dress from Nieman Marcus. With its midi-length

design and delicate detail, this dress is all about making a statement. Pair it with some statement jewelry for a truly captivating look.

5. The Playful Cutout Mini Dress

Last but not least, we have a playful mini dress from FRWD. This fun and flirty option features an asymmetrical neckline and waist cutout with large red bows that is perfect for a fun night out with friends. The Blendie Knit mini dress from Cult Gaia is a great way to showcase some skin while still looking chic.



The Perfect Pairing: My Top Shoe Choice

To complete any of these stunning looks, I recommend pairing your dress with a classic pair of nude or metallic heels. My personal favorite is the Manolo Blahnik Horna Crepedchube 105 pump. The pump is very feminine and demure and can be dressed up or dressed down but most certainly it will go with any of the dresses from my list. The right heel will not only elongate

your legs but also complement the boldness of the red dress without taking away from its allure. Opt for a strappy design to add a touch of elegance and sophistication.

Here are some of the mention-worthy contenders

- Gianvito Rossi Ribbon D'Orsey heels
- Alaia Heart pumps
- Amina Muaddi Ami Mirror Pump



CONTINUED →



These are some honorable mentions because what is Valentine's Day without some ruffles, corsets, bows, sheer, leather and lace ensembles?

House of CB, Ilkyaz Ozel, Norma Kamali, Loveshackfancy, Aknvas and Bottega Venetta

This Valentine's Day, turn heads and set hearts aflutter with these fabulous red dresses that promise to make you feel like a goddess. Whether you lean towards classic elegance, chic modernity, or playful sass, there's a perfect option for you. And don't forget the shoes—because every great outfit deserves the perfect

finishing touch! So, go ahead, pick your favorite dress, and get ready to celebrate love in style this February 14th. Happy Valentine's Day!

So neighbors, I hope that you enjoyed my Style File. Stay tuned for next month's issue where I will continue to share fun fashion trends and style tips.

Xoxo,
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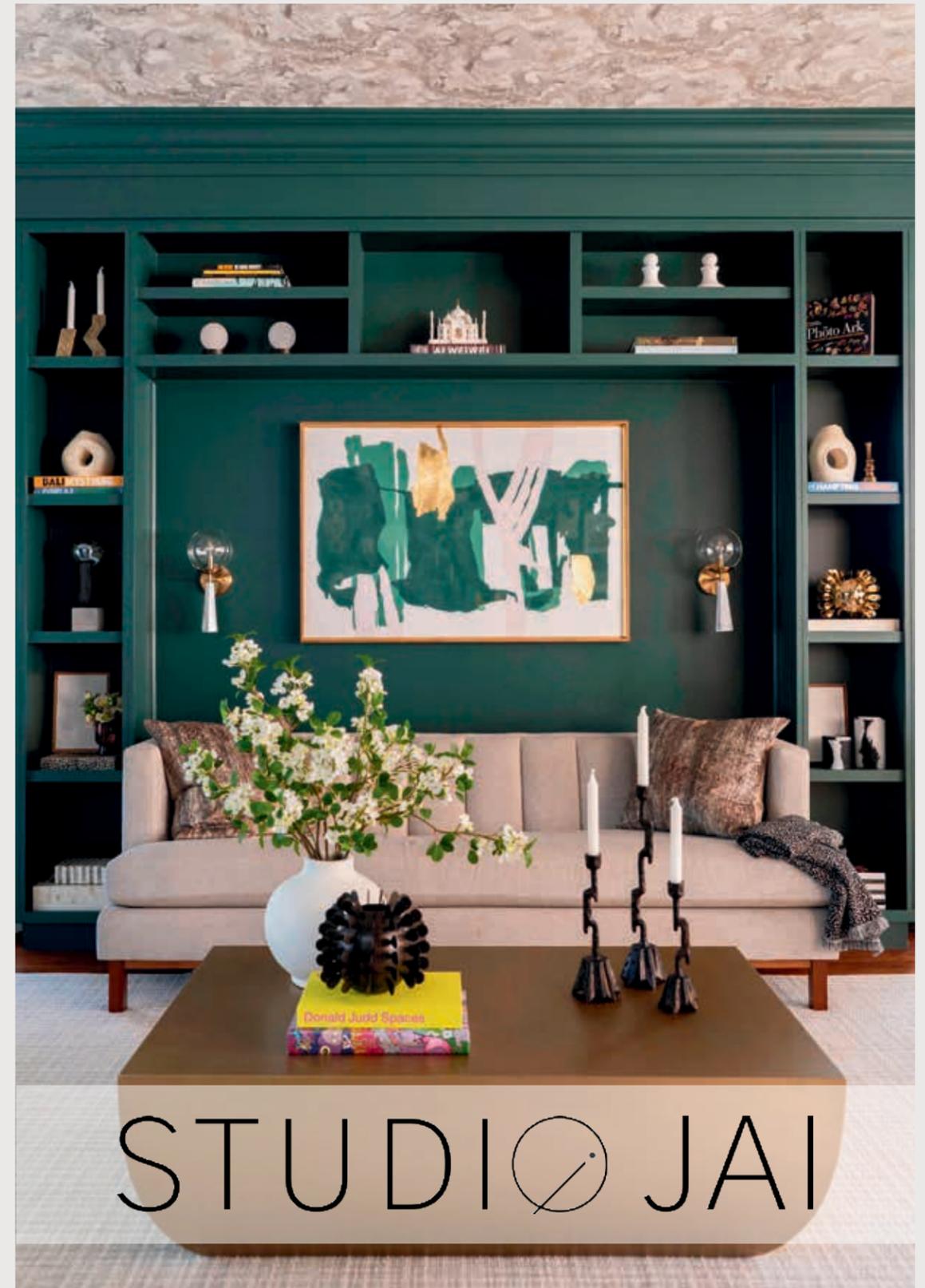
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Cell Phone Usage in Schools

BY ELLIOTT MALONE, ESQ.,
ALPINE RESIDENT

For years, teachers have been competing with cellphones for students' attention in class. In an effort to cut down on the distractions that cellphones cause, 18 states have passed either total bans or restrictions on using them in school, according to an analysis by Education Week.

In September 2024, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed the Phone-Free Schools Act into law, joining Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Virginia, in requiring that all schools adopt a policy to restrict cellphone use during the school day.

Three other states, Florida, Louisiana and South Carolina, have instituted statewide bans on cellphone use on school grounds. While Florida's ban was signed into law in 2023, it will not go into effect until 2026. South Carolina's ban will begin in January 2025. Louisiana's ban, which went into effect in May 2024, prohibits students from using their cellphones on school grounds and while on the bus. The law makes exceptions for students with Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that require the use of electronic devices.

The Boards of Education in six additional states have passed resolutions strongly encouraging local school boards to adopt policies that limit the use of cellphones in schools. The governors in another four states have passed laws to encourage schools to restrict cellphone use by providing funds to develop such policies. The funds can be used to purchase lockable smartphone bags that block cell signals.

In 2024, New Jersey's Department of Education has released new guidance to school districts about creating cellphone policies in schools, amid growing concerns over the impact of their use on students' learning and mental health.

Currently, New Jersey school districts may create their own policies dictating students' cellphone use while in school.

While policies should consider the benefits of smartphones — such as accessing digital resources in class — the guidance pointed to research showing the negative impacts of excessive cellphone use on students, including increased anxiety and depression and poorer academic performance.

Students who used phones during lecture for non-academic purposes understood the material being taught, but did not retain the information as well as those who did not use phones, the study said.

Schools that have placed restrictions on cellphone use, the state said, have seen “improved social interactions, with students more likely to engage with each other and their teachers.”

Some New Jersey school districts have issued policies requiring students to surrender their phones or drop them into a bag while on premises. Other policies authorize district administrators to seize them. Linden, New Brunswick, East Orange, Pennsauken, Jersey City, Willingboro and Bridgeton school districts use lock bags for cellphones.

In September 2024, the Ridgewood School District implemented tighter restrictions on cellphone usage. According to Superintendent Mark Schwarz, elementary school students must place their phones in a backpack while middle school students can keep them hidden in their lockers. At the high school, students tuck their phones into unlocked caddies during instructional time. They can pick them up after class and power up during free time.

Prior to the 2024-2025 school year, the policy was optional, which led some teachers to allow students to have their phones during class while others did not.

Schwarz says parents are “generally happy with it,” but admits some parents have expressed concerns about not being able to contact their children during a crisis. Schwarz notes that the district has protocols in place to deal with emergencies and local authorities are well equipped to respond to any violent incident.

More than 700 high school students in the Ramsey school district locked up their cellphones, smartwatches and earbuds in January 2025. Officials say going phone-free for kindergarten through 12th grade was always part of the policy. The district is using a cellphone storage pouch system to help lock up the electronics and focus more on learning.

High school students bring the pouch to and from school, placing all electronic devices inside the bag and then having it sealed. If they are leaving for lunch or in the cafeteria or upper gym, phones can be unlocked to get used, but officials encourage students not to use them. The superintendent says for students who don't follow the new policy, there are consequences, like confiscating your phone or detention.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams held off on issuing a widely expected cellphone ban throughout its schools.



Elliott Malone, Esq.
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Elliott Malone is an Alpine Resident and has a legal practice in Cresskill.

WOMEN IN LUXURY REAL ESTATE

BY ELLIOTT MALONE, ALPINE RESIDENT

IN THE EARLIEST DAYS of the real estate industry, women were been notably absent. In fact, when NAR itself was founded in 1908, its membership was 100% male.

Bringing women into real estate led to unique perspectives on how to conduct business and nurture relationships in this field. Their inclusion into the home loan process (without the need for a male cosigner) in 1974 only enhanced their autonomy within the marketplace, further increasing their interest in real estate opportunities.

When it comes to leadership in the field, women are no longer confined to the sidelines. Zillow, one of the leading real estate platforms, has been steadily working toward increasing its female leadership numbers—boosting the number from 34% in 2019 to 40% in 2022.

Despite females holding a majority in the industry, real estate leadership is not always representative of this. A report found women currently occupy only 9% of C-level positions in commercial real estate, but about 32% of women realtors have their sights set on the C-suite. This number is a 4% increase in women who aspire toward the executive level in the past five years.

Wealthy women are becoming significant figures in the luxury real estate market in the United States, earning the nickname “she-elites.” This trend is detailed in Coldwell Banker Global Luxury's Trend Report 2025.

Data from Wealth X indicates that women with a net worth of \$5 million or more now own 15.2% of high-priced residential properties.

The high-end real estate segment remained strong throughout 2024, with women playing a key role. Hannah Jones from Realtor.com observed that homes sold for over \$1 million increased by 7.1% year over year in 2024. She added: “Despite a challenging housing market, the luxury segment picked up last year as luxury buyers tend to be less affected by elevated mortgage rates.”

The report forecasts that wealthy women will increasingly influence luxury real estate in coming years. McKinsey & Company projects that by 2030, American women will control most of the \$30 trillion in assets held by aging baby boomers.

While older men still dominate luxury homeownership among those aged 35–64 years, younger generations show different trends. A study found that women under 35 constitute 54% of luxury-home owners.

The influence of married and single women on real estate decisions is growing. A survey cited in the Coldwell report revealed that 94.5% of respondents believe women share decision-making power or have authority over home purchases.

Single female homebuyers are also increasing their presence; they represented 20% of buyers in 2024 compared

to just 8% for single men, according to the National Association of Realtors.

Women are investing more not only in real estate but also other financial assets. Fidelity research found that “71% of women own investments in the stock market,” which Sangeeta Moorjani described as encouraging progress for women's financial independence.

Here are some recent sales in the area during November 2024 (from NJMLS):

ALPINE: 1 Sale
421 Route 9W \$3,700,000

CLOSTER: No Sales

Cresskill: 5 Sales ranging from \$557,500 to \$2,403,000
287 County Road \$557,500
55 Magnolia Avenue \$1,470,000
63 Hoover Drive \$2,403,000

DEMAREST: 6 Sales ranging from \$780,000 to \$2,650,000
81 Knickerbocker Road \$780,000
3 Central Avenue \$900,000
26 Duane Lane \$2,650,000

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS: 5 Sales ranging from \$1,088,000 to \$4,300,000
191 Jenkins Drive \$1,088,000
55 Elm Street \$2,175,000
40 Laurie Drive \$4,300,000

TENAFLY: 9 Sales ranging from \$770,000 to \$4,450,000
35 Jewett Avenue \$770,000
90 Essex Drive \$2,200,000
51 Suffolk Lane \$4,450,000

UPPER SADDLE RIVER: 6 Sales ranging from \$730,000 to \$3,100,000
584 W Saddle River Road \$730,000
144 Carlough Road \$1,305,000
27 Dogwood Hill Road \$3,100,000



Elliott Malone
Alpha Global Realty, LLC

Elliott Malone is an Alpine resident and runs a real estate research and marketing firm.



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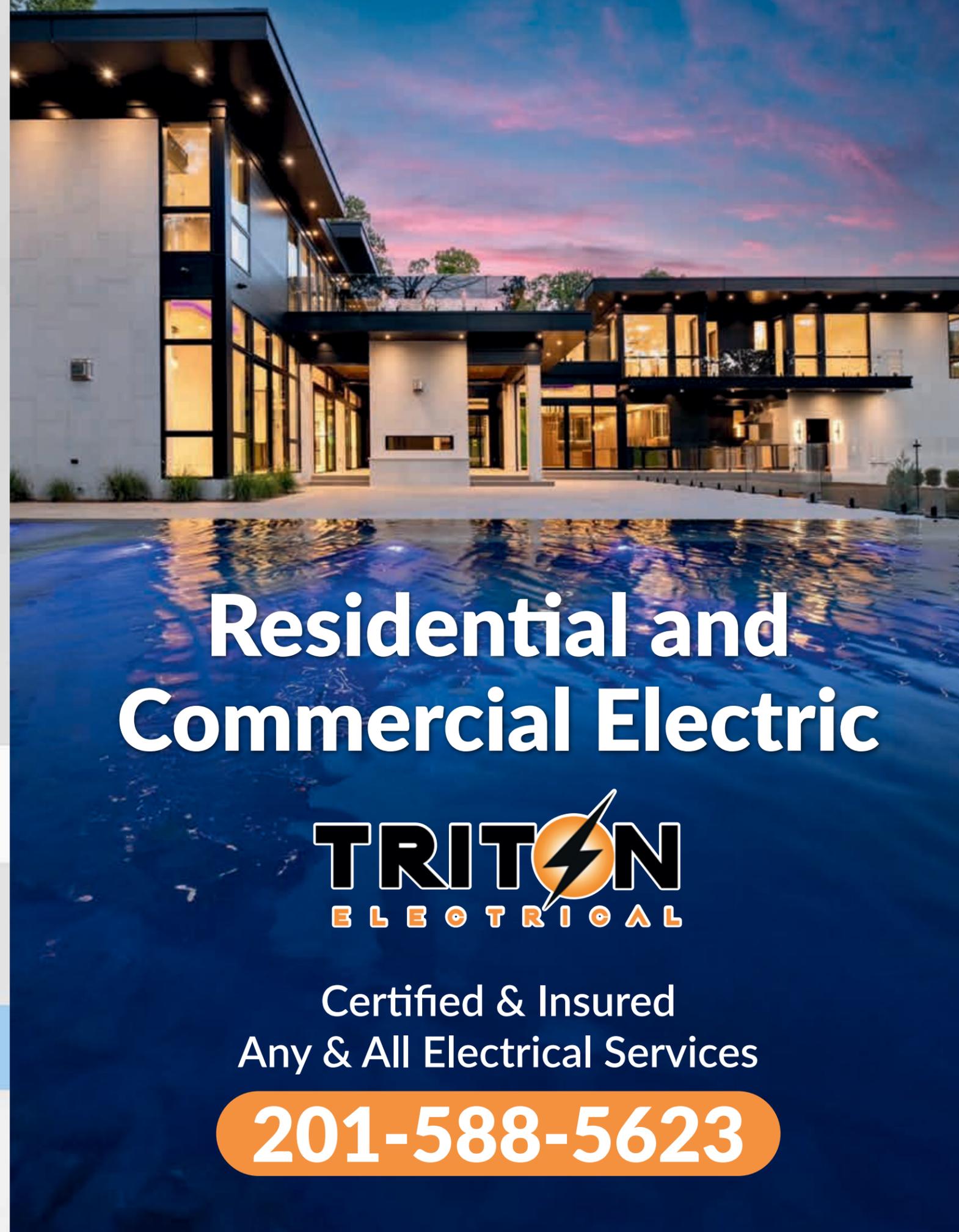
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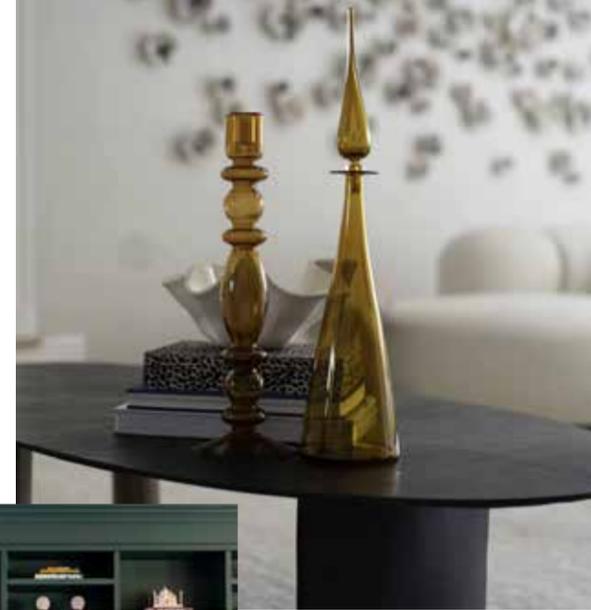


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STUDIO JAI

Exploring the Bold Interior Design Vision



Studio Jai stands out as a beacon of bold design, co-founded by sisters Kanika Gupta and Parul Ghei. Together, they've built an interior design studio that balances boldness with functionality, crafting vibrant, multifaceted spaces. Studio Jai was born from a chance opportunity when Kanika, then working on a new build project, tapped into Parul's expertise. Parul, a Parsons New School of Design graduate with experience in various design firms, brought her creativity, while Kanika's background in finance helped create structured processes. Since then, Studio Jai has been transforming interiors for over three years with a team of skilled consultants and project-based hires.

What Makes Studio Jai Unique?

Studio Jai's philosophy is simple yet powerful: each space should be bold and functional. Their approach to design goes beyond aesthetics, aiming to create areas that evolve with clients' lives. "We believe in versatility," Kanika explains. "For example, a parent's office can double as a family workspace with a few tweaks." Parul, a visual artist, customizes each design to reflect her clients' unique personalities. Whether bold or serene, their designs are a blend of simplicity and sophistication, striking a balance between playful and refined. This dedication to versatility, along with meticulous project tracking, ensures a seamless experience for their clients.

CONTINUED →



“
 We’re not just
 transforming interiors;
 we’re building homes that
 nurture and connect.
 ”

The Inspiration of Family

For Parul and Kanika, family is more than just a theme; it’s woven into the fabric of their business. As co-founders, they share a bond rooted in shared values and a love for design. Their family’s influence extends to their creative approach, and they aim to create spaces that resonate with warmth and individuality. “We’re not just transforming interiors; we’re building homes that nurture and connect.” Studio Jai is dedicated to making spaces not only beautiful but also inviting, reflecting the lives and stories of the people who inhabit them.

The Journey to Now

Growing up on Long Island, NY, the sisters spent over 25 years in the area before branching out. Today, Parul resides in Greenwich, CT, with her husband and two sons, while Kanika lives in Roslyn Heights, NY, with her own family. Their shared childhood memories and family ties continue to fuel their design philosophy, helping them create spaces that feel warm, inviting, and timeless. The support of friends and family encouraged them to take the leap into the design world, and the community’s enthusiasm for their work validated their decision.

Beyond Design

Outside of their work, Kanika and Parul enjoy traveling, skiing, and spending quality time with their families. Their trips to India hold a special place in their hearts, immersing them in a culture that enriches their design perspective. “We want our kids to experience the vibrancy of India, from its cuisine to its architecture,” they say. Whether they’re on the slopes, participating in community events, or cozying up at home, family time remains a central part of their lives.

A Message to the Community

Kanika and Parul are thrilled to connect with others who share their passions. They look forward to bringing their love for design, culture, and community into everything they do at Studio Jai. Through Studio Jai, they aim to inspire others to embrace bold, functional spaces that make life both beautiful and meaningful.

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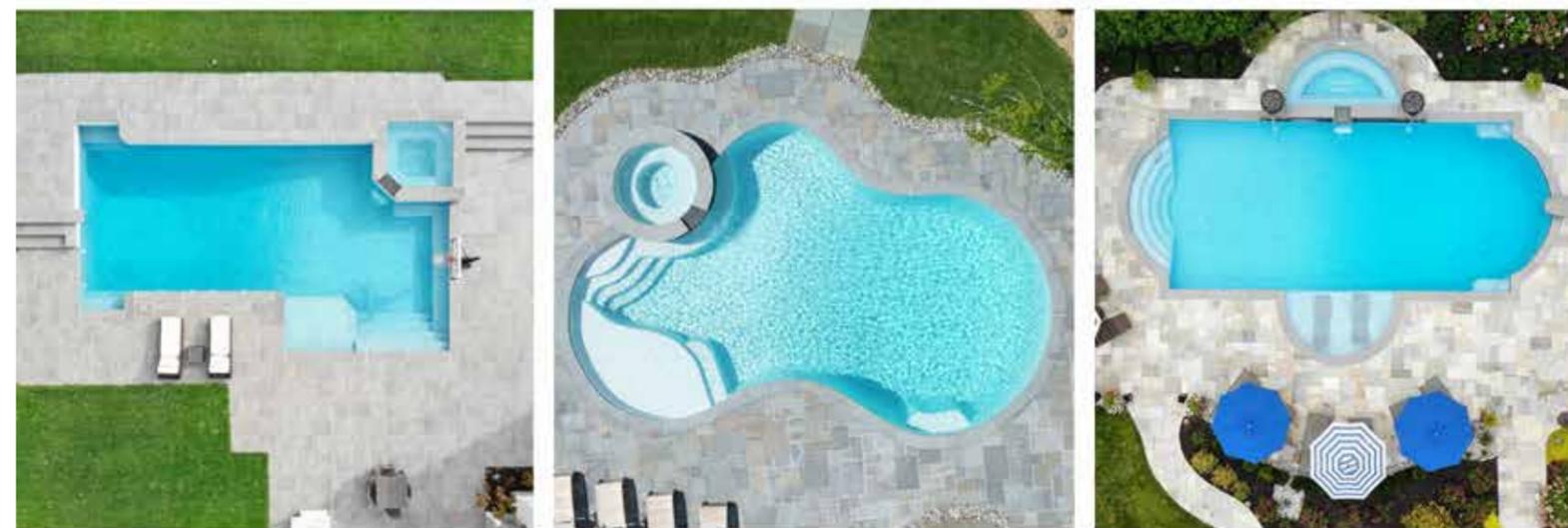
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Valerie and Sofia's Kids Guide TOP FIVE THINGS TO DO IN BERGEN COUNTY THIS FEBRUARY

BY VALERIE & SOFIA ARCINIEGAS, LIFELONG ALPINE RESIDENTS AND ALPINE SCHOOL HONOR ROLL INDUCTEES, MEMBERS OF THE ALPINE SOCIAL CLUB

HEY NEIGHBORS! We're Valerie and Sofia, with an "f", and we're excited to share our favorite things to do in Bergen County this February. Whether you love playing outside in the snow or having fun indoors, there's something for everyone. So, grab your family and friends, and let's make some amazing memories this month!

1. Ice Skating at the Ice House in Hackensack

What's more fun than gliding on ice? The Ice House offers public skating sessions perfect for beginners and experienced skaters alike. Grab your skates (or rent some there) and enjoy a chilly day with friends and family. Remember to bundle up!

2. Visit the Bergen County Zoo in Paramus

The Bergen County Zoo is a great place to visit all year round! In February, you can see animals like the snow leopards and red pandas. Plus, the zoo often hosts special winter events where you can learn about animal care and conservation. Don't forget to check out the educational programs!

3. Enjoy some skiing, snowboarding, and tubing!

You can have an icy blast at Big Snow in American Dream, an indoor ski and snowboarding park where you can hit the slopes without the cold weather! Enjoy a hot cup of cocoa and have mom join or watch from inside while keeping toasty. (Our mom prefers

the latter). It's the perfect way to enjoy winter fun all under one roof.

4. Explore the Tenafly Nature Center

If you like being outdoors, the Tenafly Nature Center is perfect for a winter hike. The trails are beautiful, and you might even spot some wildlife. Make sure to wear warm clothes and bring some hot chocolate to enjoy after your adventure!

5. Experience the Nickelodeon Theme Park at American Dream

For an action-packed day, head to the American Dream complex! The Nickelodeon Theme Park is filled

with exciting rides and attractions based on your favorite characters. And don't forget to stop by Dylan's Candy when you exit for a sweet treat whether you're a little kid or a big kid with a sweet tooth like our dad!

Bonus Activity: Mood Fashion Studios in Closter

Another fun option this February is joining classes at Mood Fashion Studios in Closter. They offer a variety of creative activities for kids, including fashion design, hand-

stitching and sewing classes. It's a great place to unleash your creativity and make some new friends!

Whether you prefer indoor activities or want to embrace the winter weather, Bergen County has plenty to offer this February. We hope you check out these fun spots and have a fantastic winter break! Enjoy the season and make some unforgettable memories with your family and friends!

Have a great February!



For an action-packed day, head to the American Dream complex!



Health Benefits of Saunas

BY DAVID FOLK, MD



During these cold winter days, few activities can bring as much comfort as basking in the dry heat of a fired up sauna. Saunas have long been cherished for their relaxing and therapeutic qualities. Originating in Finland, saunas have become popular worldwide as a way to promote health and well being. Regular sauna use offers a range of physical and mental benefits, making it a great addition to your wellness routine.

One of the primary benefits of using a sauna is detoxification. The high heat causes the body to sweat, which helps eliminate toxins and impurities from the skin. This process can aid in improving skin appearance, reducing the risk of breakouts, and giving you a healthy glow. Sweating in a sauna also helps open pores and cleanses the skin. Saunas are also known for promoting relaxation and reducing stress. The warmth helps relax muscles and soothe tension, providing a sense of calm and relaxation. Many people find that regular sauna sessions reduce feelings of anxiety and help improve sleep quality by promoting a state of relaxation.

For those with muscle pain or joint discomfort, saunas can provide significant relief. The heat improves circulation, allowing for increased blood flow to muscles and tissues. This can help alleviate soreness after exercise, reduce inflammation, and promote faster recovery from physical exertion. Another key benefit of saunas is their potential to improve cardiovascular health. The heat increases heart rate, mimicking the effects of moderate exercise. This can enhance circulation, improve heart function, and even lower blood pressure over time. Some studies suggest that regular sauna use may reduce the risk of heart disease. Finally, saunas provide a social experience, often enjoyed with friends or family. The quiet, peaceful atmosphere fosters conversation and relaxation, making it a perfect way to unwind and connect with others. Incorporating regular sauna sessions into your routine can offer a range of health benefits—from improving skin and muscle health to reducing stress and enhancing heart health.

As always, feel free to connect @drdavidfolk or www.drdavidfolk.com!



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2024 Alpine Market Update - Listings & Sales by Rosemarie Campi

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SOLD 8 Duck Pond Road	SOLD 1 Deer Hill Road	UNDER CONTRACT Alpine	AVAILABLE 9 Marie Major Drive

Alpine
Sales - Dollar Volume by Company
January 1-December 23, 2024

The Alpine market is strong. Please call me for a complimentary market analysis or to chat about current market conditions.

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Chart based on data from January 1 - December 23, 2024. Data in whole or in part is supplied by the New Jersey MLS and they are not responsible for accuracy. Data provided by the N.J.M.S. may not reflect all the real estate in the market. Data taken 12/23/2024. Information is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed. © 2024 Sotheby's International Realty. All Rights Reserved. Sotheby's International Realty is a registered trademark and used with permission. Each Sotheby's International Realty office is independently owned and operated, except those operated by Sotheby's International Realty, Inc. The Sotheby's International Realty network fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act.

The Future of Bergen County

EMERGING TRENDS IN REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT

BY SANDRA GARCIA, ALPINE RESIDENT – COMPASS REAL ESTATE, REALTOR®



AS A SEASONED REALTOR with over twenty years in the real estate investment industry, I've seen firsthand the transformative potential of strategic investments. Today, I want to highlight the exciting future of Bergen County and why now is the ideal time to invest in this vibrant region.

Bergen County, located in New Jersey, has long been a desirable area due to its proximity to New York City and its unique suburban appeal. However, emerging trends are set to reshape its real estate landscape, offering lucrative opportunities for investors.

Smart Homes and Sustainable Living

One of the most significant trends is the growing demand for smart homes and sustainable living. Buyers are increasingly seeking properties that integrate technology and minimize environmental impact. Homes equipped

with smart technology, energy-efficient appliances, and sustainable materials are in high demand. As an investor, focusing on these features can yield substantial returns.

Mixed-Use Developments

Mixed-use developments, which combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, are gaining popularity in Bergen County. These vibrant communities offer the convenience of amenities such as shops, restaurants, and parks within walking distance. Investing in mixed-use properties diversifies your portfolio and taps into the growing demand for integrated living spaces.

Transportation Infrastructure Expansion

Transportation infrastructure is crucial in real estate investment, and Bergen County is poised for significant

improvements. Planned expansions of highways and public transportation systems will enhance accessibility, attracting more residents and businesses. Investors should monitor areas slated for infrastructure development, as these locations often see increased demand and rising property values.

Suburban Workspaces

The shift towards remote work has redefined traditional office environments, and Bergen County is capitalizing on this trend. Suburban workspaces offering flexible office solutions closer to home are becoming popular. As businesses accommodate remote and hybrid work models, investing in commercial properties catering to this demand presents a lucrative opportunity.

Community and Lifestyle Focus

Today's buyers are investing in a lifestyle, not just a home. Bergen County's emphasis on community, quality of life, and recreational opportunities makes it an attractive destination. From picturesque parks and trails to a vibrant cultural scene, the county offers a rich tapestry of experiences. Investors prioritizing properties in areas with strong community engagement and lifestyle amenities will be at the forefront of this trend.

In conclusion, Bergen County is on the brink of a real estate renaissance. The convergence of smart technology, mixed-use developments, improved infrastructure, suburban workspaces, and lifestyle-focused living presents a wealth of opportunities for investors. As someone who has navigated the real estate landscape for over two decades, I can confidently say that the future of Bergen County is bright, and the time to invest is now.

Whether you're a seasoned investor or just beginning your real estate journey, Bergen County offers a promising horizon. Embrace these emerging trends to secure your financial future and contribute to the vibrant growth of this remarkable region. The future is here, and it's time to seize it.



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For the Love of Language: Benefits & Methods of Learning a Second Language for Children

¡HOLA! BONJOUR! GUTEN TAG! CIAO! There are endless ways of connecting with others sans words: music, photography, customs, art, dance and more. Words, however, can also present endless

possibilities of ideas and knowledge to blossom between peoples and cultures. For this edition of Nat's Nook, I will be focusing on the ways in which learning a second language can promote healthy development, along with social and cognitive benefits lasting a lifetime.



I was born in the United States, but my family's roots are in Colombia, South America. Being bilingual in both Spanish and English opened up my world as a child, as a student and as a professional educator. As a child, it helped me bond and form long-lasting memories of conversing with my Abuelita (Grandma) while making traditional, Colombian meals together. As a student, it broadened my horizons and encouraged me to study abroad in Spain. As an educator, it motivated me to begin tutoring in Spanish and to also start an Early Childhood language program ("My Spanish Studio") in NYC a few years ago, with early stages in NJ.

Now, let's explore reasons why learning a new language can put your child at a significant advantage and how you can help – whether or not you know another language.

BENEFITS

• Jump Start

Children who learn a new language prior to the age of five use the same part of the brain (left frontal lobe known as "Broca's Area") to acquire that second language that they use to learn their native tongue. Creating fun and exciting ways to learn using music, literature and crafts will enhance their love of the language.

• In it for the Long Run

The longer a child is exposed and dedicated to learning another language, the more opportunity towards a positive and direct effect on their cognitive development. This will allow for a deeper understanding of the culture, as well, providing a chance to bond and connect with all aspects of the language as they mature.

• Brain Fuel

Children who display proficiency in other languages have shown signs of enhanced creativity and mental flexibility.



Research shows that learning another language can promote problem-solving, critical-thinking and listening skills. A boost in memory, concentration and the ability to multi-task are also benefits.

• Ignite Curiosity, Tolerance, Empathy, and Cultural Sensitivity

Children who are exposed early to other languages tend to display more positive attitudes towards the cultures associated with those languages. The experience of learning a language introduces them to the world in ways they might otherwise have not experienced.

• Keep 'Em Coming

No need to stop at two languages! Young children naturally navigate multilingual environments. Acquiring a second language early in life preps the brain to learn multiple other languages, opening a world of opportunities for later on.

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN ANOTHER LANGUAGE

Whether you already speak another language or not, your support will make a huge impact on your child's success. Fluency in another language is *not necessary* in order to create an encouraging and interactive learning environment. Provide as many authentic experiences as you can and research tools and resources both online and locally on how to make learning language fun! Check out the article below for some guidelines:

NAT'S INTERNET INSIGHTS

• PBS Parents: Ways to Introduce Your Kids to a Foreign Language

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/readinglanguage/articles/introduce-kids-to-foreign-language.html>

• "With languages, you are at home anywhere." –EDMUND DE WAAL



Natalie Perez, an Alpine Resident, bilingual (English & Spanish) speaker. Holds a BA in Psychology and a certification as a Montessori Early Childhood Educator. Happily married with two, young children and loves traveling.

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