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Client: Arena Stone  
Size: Full  
Location: Standard

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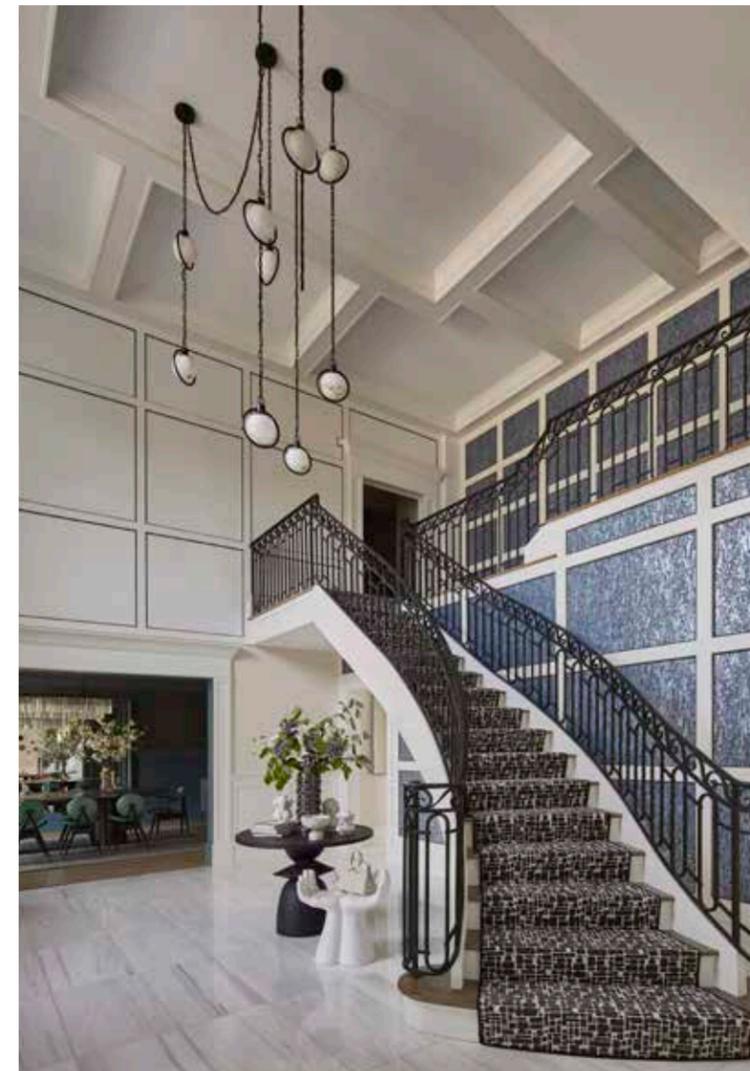


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# Bold Contemporary in Alpine, NJ

*Designed by Studio Jai Home*



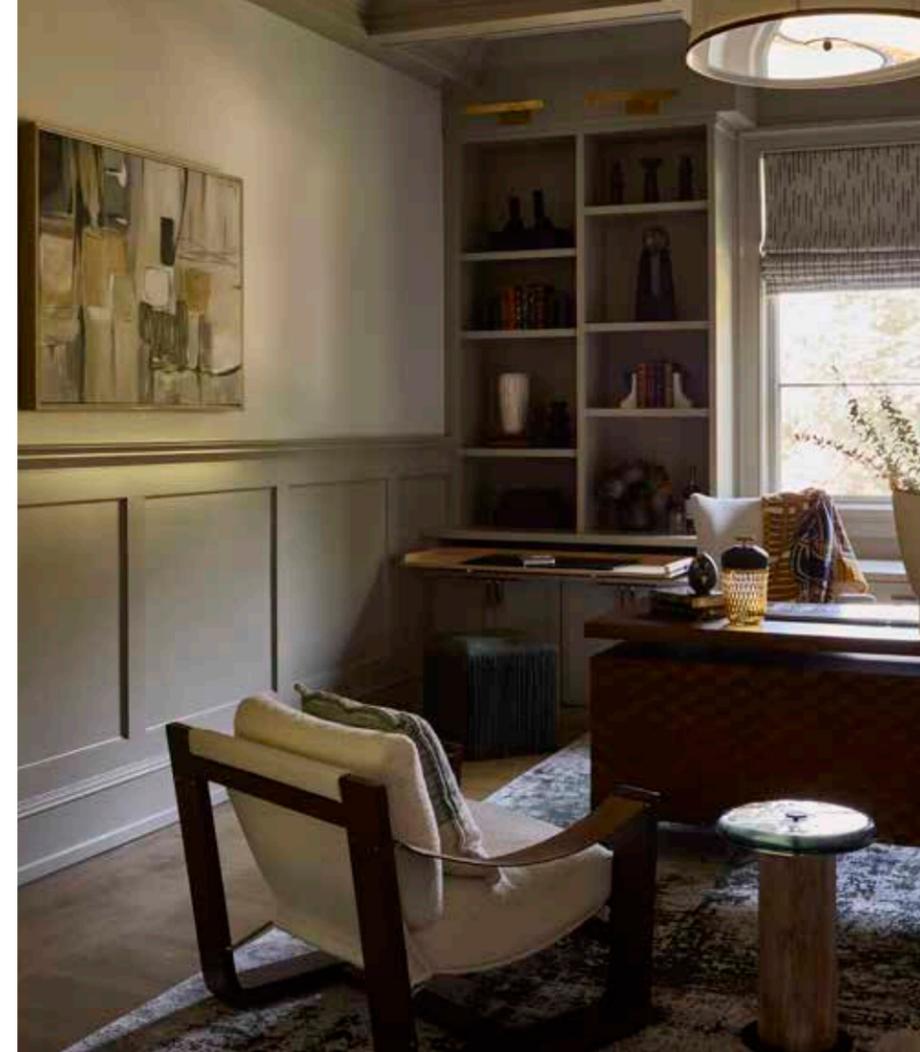


In the living room, bold black built-ins and abstract wallpaper introduce rhythm and movement.

This 13,000-square-foot home in Alpine, New Jersey is a bold, contemporary expression of form, color, and personality. Designed for a young couple with a love of vibrant detail and playful design, the interiors push boundaries while remaining highly curated and livable.

Custom touches begin in the foyer, where sculptural furnishings and handcrafted pieces, including a carved alabaster chandelier and a statement table by Joel Escalona, immediately establish the home's artistic energy. Throughout, unexpected color stories and striking silhouettes define the spaces, transforming prebuilt white rooms into dynamic, personalized environments.

In the living room, bold black built-ins and abstract wallpaper introduce rhythm and movement. The dining room makes a confident statement with a fully saturated teal envelope, echoed in sculptural Overgaard



& Dyrman chairs and softened by expressive artwork.

Playful yet elevated, the formal lounge continues the exploration of shape and material with layered textures and fluid forms, grounded by a bold custom wall installation. The adjacent sitting lounge adds a layer of wit with an AI-integrated digital portrait that interacts with its viewers and blurs the line between art and technology.

A vibrant playroom brings the same expressive spirit, centered around a whimsical two-story playhouse, monkey bars, cozy nooks, an art area, and a pint-sized stage that infuses the space with creativity, movement, and hidden functionality.

Each room embraces innovation and intimacy, culminating in a home that is layered, sculptural, and unapologetically expressive.

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# SADDLE UP ALPINE!

## Dr. Tobi Petrocelli's 42nd Birthday Rodeo Rides High



**T**his past month on July 12th, Alpine, NJ traded its quiet sophistication for some country-fried fun as the town threw down cowboy-style to celebrate **Dr. Tobi Petrocelli's 42nd birthday** in unforgettable fashion. Set against the idyllic backdrop of the Petrocelli estate, the property was transformed into a rustic retreat fit for Nashville royalty—complete with ponies trotting along the lawn, a caviar bar cheekily declaring **"Cowboys Do Caviar Better"**, and a rolling feast of all-American, boot-stomp-worthy fun.

Country music crooner **Conor Dharvid** kicked up the party dust shortly after guests arrived, delivering a boot-slapping concert featuring hits from **Morgan Wallen**, **Luke Bryan**, **Toby Keith**, and modern country's crown jewels. His set had boots on the dance floor within seconds, lassoing the crowd into a toe-tapping fever that lasted well into the night.



**“GUESTS—ABOUT \*\*200 STRONG\*\*—CAME DRESSED TO IMPRESS IN \*\*“COUNTRY COUTURE”\*\*: fringe, boots, bolo ties, and designer cowboy hats rivaled only by rhinestone-studded belt buckles and flowing prairie dresses.”**





Guests—about **200 strong**—came dressed to impress in **“country couture”**: fringe, boots, bolo ties, and designer cowboy hats rivaled only by rhinestone-studded belt buckles and flowing prairie dresses. There wasn’t a quiet moment as laughter rang out from every corner of the property—whether it was someone trying their hand at **“horseshoes”**, **“shooting on the basketball court”**, or **“putting under starlit skies”**. Kids raced around the playground, stopping now and then to marvel at the **“exotic chickens strutting in the stylish chicken coop”**, each one seemingly more glamorous than the last.

Food was no afterthought. A **“succulent paella station”** stewed in savory spices, while **“food trucks”** lined one end of the lawn, dishing up everything from ribs and brisket to vegan street tacos. Between bites, guests strolled to the **“Cigar Bar”**, puffing in patio chairs and swapping stories in true frontier fashion.

The celebration was as family-centered as it was fabulous. Tobi’s wife, **“Rose DeJesus”**, and their son **“Sebastien Petrocelli”**, beamed with pride as the birthday cowboy accepted bear hugs and cheer from Alpine’s nearest and dearest. Longtime locals **“Robert and Jo-Ann Petrocelli”** welcomed guests with their signature warmth, as friends from every chapter of Tobi’s life rolled in—including Alpine School alums Melanie Horn and Mark Shadek, Kirsten Hansen, and Jennifer Bonhomme proving that small-town bonds age like fine bourbon.

The vibes were electric but easygoing, effortlessly blending upscale fun with a handmade-from-the-heart feel. Love was in the air, laughter bounced from tree to tree, and everyone agreed—the combination of caviar and cowboy hats might just be the new black tie.

As the sun dipped below the Alpine skyline, twinkling lights flickered across the lawn and fire pits glowed under acoustic guitar strums. There were no dusty trails here, just a beautiful blur of music, memories, and all the makings of the perfect summer Saturday.

**“Happy Birthday, Dr. Tobi Petrocelli—you sure know how to ride into a new year in style.” Yeehaw!**

“

**“Happy Birthday, Dr. Tobi Petrocelli—you sure know how to ride into a new year in style.” YEEHAW!**



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# Heal Your Gut, Boost Your Metabolism:

*The secret to sustainable  
weight loss*

NIDA ARAIN

## What If the Secret to Weight Loss Starts in Your Gut?

Many people are surprised to hear that our Gut is the key to a faster metabolism and easier weight management. It might sound surprising, but your gut is home to trillions of tiny organisms that are working around the clock to affect your digestion, cravings, energy levels, mood, and even how your body burns calories.

## What Is the Gut Microbiome?

Imagine a bustling city inside your digestive tract, filled with bacteria, fungi, and even viruses (most of them are friendly). This ecosystem is called your gut microbiome.

These microscopic residents help break down food, absorb nutrients, produce vitamins, regulate inflammation, and even influence your hormones. A healthy microbiome is like a well-run city which is clean, balanced, and full of energy. But when it's out of balance with too many "bad" bacteria and not enough "good" ones it can slow down your metabolism, causes cravings, lead to bloating, and even trigger weight gain.

**Good bacteria love fiber. Load up on foods like oats, apples, lentils, broccoli, chia seeds, and leafy greens.**

## How Does Gut Health Affect Metabolism?

Your gut bacteria help to regulate how many calories your body absorbs, how efficiently you burn fat, and whether you feel full or hungry. Many people with a diverse and balanced gut microbiome tend to have a faster metabolism and are less likely to gain weight even when eating the same number of calories as someone with an imbalanced gut.

Think of your gut like a personal trainer for your metabolism.

## Signs Your Gut May Be Holding You Back

- Constant bloating or gas
- Unexplained fatigue
- Cravings for sugar and carbs
- Trouble losing weight despite "doing everything right"
- Frequent indigestion or irregular bowel movements
- Skin breakouts or brain fog

If this sounds familiar, don't worry. There are simple ways to start healing your gut and speeding up your metabolism. A strong, balanced microbiome can re-ignite your metabolism, balance hormones, reduce inflammation, and help you lose weight more naturally and sustainably.

By improving gut health, you improve nutrient absorption, lower inflammation and decrease cravings. Some other possible benefits to improving gut health are:

- Increase in energy
- Help the body burn fuel more efficiently
- Support adrenal function (critical for metabolism)
- Lower inflammation
- Improve insulin sensitivity
- Help your body use stored fat for energy
- Decrease sugar and carb cravings

## Easy Ways to Support Your Microbiome

### 1. Eat More Fiber-Rich Foods

Good bacteria love fiber. Load up on foods like oats, apples, lentils, broccoli, chia seeds, and leafy greens. These act as "prebiotics" which are essentially food for your good gut bugs. Try adding in a good quality pre-biotic or fiber supplement for additional support.

### 2. Add Fermented Foods

Think yogurt, kefir, sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, and miso. These are full of probiotics, or live beneficial bacteria, that help populate your gut with the right microbes.

### 3. Cut Back on Sugar and Processed Foods

Sugar feeds the "bad" bacteria. When they take over, it can throw your gut out of balance. Try swapping candy and soda for fruit, herbal teas, or dark chocolate.

### 4. Consider Quality Probiotics and Digestive Enzymes

If you've had antibiotics, digestive issues, or a poor diet, adding a high-quality probiotic can help reintroduce healthy bacteria into your gut. A good quality Digestive Enzyme can help your body break down and absorb nutrients more effectively.

### 5. De-Stress, sleep well and Lower your Cortisol

Believe it or not, your gut bacteria are sensitive to your stress levels and sleep quality. Try winding down with a walk, journaling, or deep breathing before bed. Try an adaptogenic supplement to naturally lower cortisol levels.

When your gut is happy and balanced, your body digests food better, your cravings settle down, your metabolism works more efficiently and yes, that stubborn weight becomes much easier to manage.

"This content is for informational purposes only and does not constitute for medical advice"

Holistic Nutritionist; Owner of Healthway Natural Foods in Tenafly

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"If anxiety centers around specific situations (like school or social interactions), use gradual exposure. Break the feared activity into smaller steps and celebrate small successes to build confidence."

# HOW TO CALM ANXIETY IN CHILDREN

NATALIE PEREZ

Anxiety is a natural response to stress or fear and it is common in children at different stages of development. However, when anxiety becomes overwhelming or persistent, it can interfere with a child's daily life. Parents, caregivers and educators can take several effective steps to help children manage and reduce anxiety.

## 1. Recognize the Signs

Anxiety in children may appear as excessive worry, avoidance of activities, trouble sleeping, physical complaints (like stomachaches or headaches), irritability or difficulty concentrating. Recognizing these signs early allows for timely support.

## 2. Validate Their Feelings

Let the child know it is okay to feel anxious. Avoid dismissing their fears, even if they seem irrational. Instead, say things like, "I see that you're feeling nervous and that's okay. I am here to help you through it."

## 3. Encourage Open Communication

Create a safe space for the child to talk about their worries. Ask open-ended questions and listen without judgment. Normalize talking about emotions as part of everyday conversation.

## 4. Teach Calming Techniques

Simple strategies such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualization (imagining a safe or happy place) and mindfulness can help children calm their bodies and minds. Practice these techniques regularly so they become familiar tools.

## 5. Establish Routines and Predictability

Consistent daily routines provide a sense of security. Knowing what to expect can

reduce anxiety, especially in younger children. Use visual schedules if helpful.

## 6. Model Calm Behavior

Children often look to adults for cues on how to react. Model calmness and use coping strategies yourself. Show them that challenges can be managed without panic.

## 7. Limit Anxiety Triggers

Monitor exposure to stressful news, social media or overstimulating environments. Help children develop healthy sleep, exercise and eating habits, which can improve emotional regulation.

## 8. Gradual Exposure

If anxiety centers around specific situations (like school or social interactions), use gradual exposure. Break the feared activity into smaller steps and celebrate small successes to build confidence.

## 9. Praise Effort and Resilience

Encourage and reinforce brave behavior, even in small doses. Focus on effort rather than perfection. Highlight past successes when they have handled anxiety well.

## 10. Seek Professional Support When Needed

If anxiety severely interferes with daily life or doesn't improve with support, a child may benefit from counseling or therapy. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is particularly effective for childhood anxiety.

With patience, empathy, and consistent support, children can learn to understand and manage their anxiety effectively.



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. Certified Montessori educator in Manhattan with 10 years of experience.



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in Paramus, the average home price appreciation increased from about 2.7% per year over the previous decade to roughly 5.1% annually between 2022 and 2025, representing an 89% acceleration in equity growth. Many of our other towns, like Demarest and Cresskill, saw similar surges, with growth rates rising by 85% or more during the same period.

For our county, the average federal capital gains tax bill on the sale of a long-held home can now exceed well over \$100,000, especially for luxury properties, where price gains can easily reach 100% or more over the last decade.

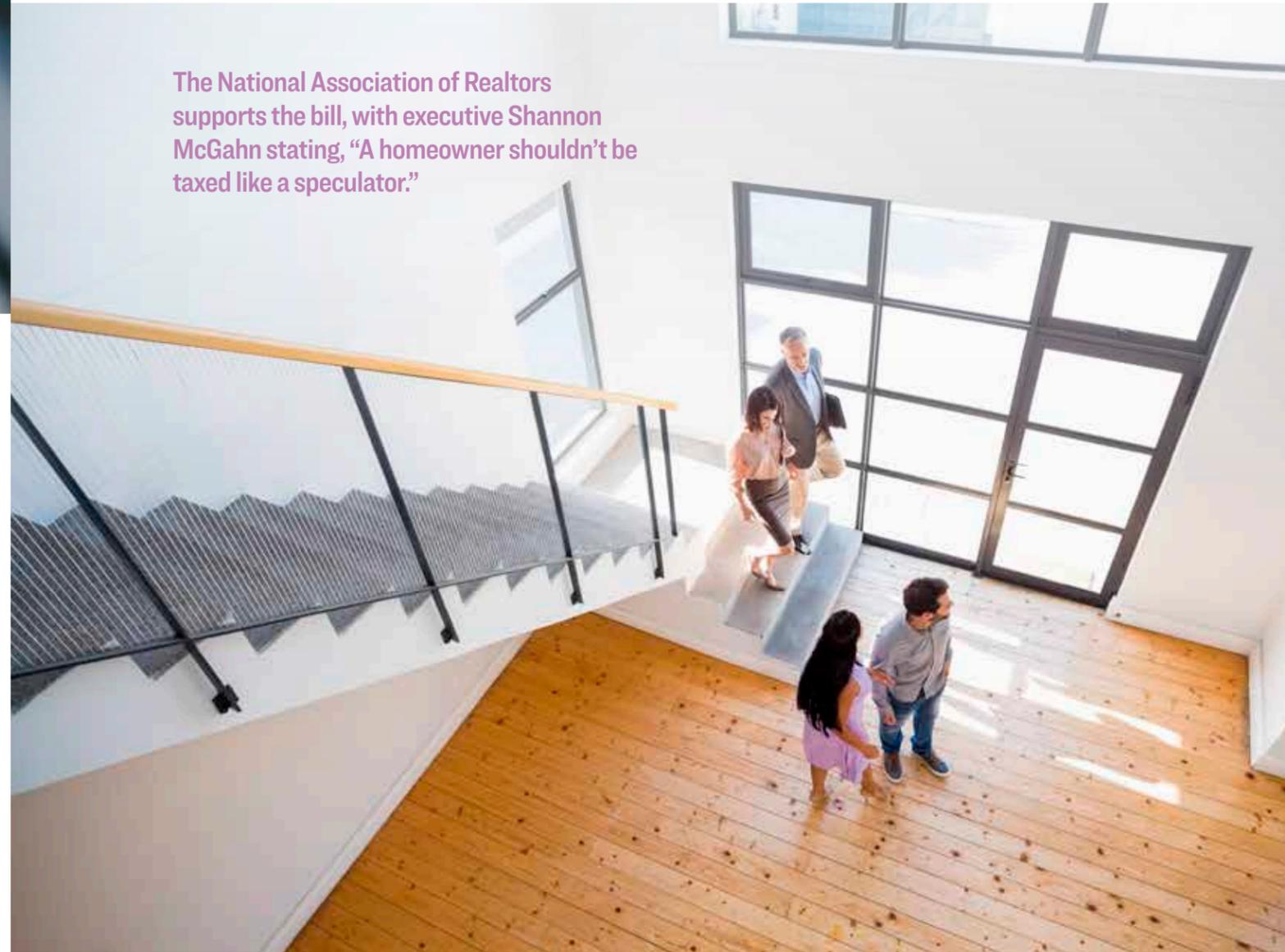
Congresswoman Greene and many in the industry believe these tax burdens discourage move-up sellers and downsizers from listing their homes, contributing to our inventory shortage. Local developers, including Bergen County's own Dalex Builders, see how this

restrains redevelopment and new construction opportunities, further straining the local market, as the tax burden discourages sellers and disrupts the pipeline for renovations and new builds.

The National Association of Realtors supports the bill, with executive Shannon McGahn stating, "A homeowner shouldn't be taxed like a speculator." While the No Tax on Home Sales Act faces an uncertain path in Congress, it's already fostering an important conversation. If passed, it could free up inventory and allow everyday Americans, especially in Bergen County, to unlock their hard-earned wealth without a punitive tax bill.

I'm Sandra Garcia, as always, I'm ready to navigate these changes for buyers, sellers, and investors. My commitment is to guide you through every market shift, ensuring you can build and realize the wealth you've earned in Bergen County real estate.

The National Association of Realtors supports the bill, with executive Shannon McGahn stating, "A homeowner shouldn't be taxed like a speculator."



# A GAME CHANGER

## The No Tax on Home Sales Act Bill

*Tips from a local real estate expert*

SANDRA GARCIA, REALTOR® AT CORCORAN INFINITY PROPERTIES IN ALPINE NJ.



A groundbreaking bill out of Capitol Hill could transform homeownership across the country, especially in Bergen County. I'm Sandra Garcia, an Alpine resident and Realtor® at Corcoran

Infinity Properties in Alpine NJ.

In a recent interview with realtor.com, Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene introduced her No Tax on Home Sales Act, a proposal to eliminate the federal capital gains tax on the sale of a primary residence. She describes it as a "gift to the American people," particularly aimed at helping retirees and

empty nesters, as many face high taxes when selling homes whose equity has increased over time.

The logic is clear: since 1997, the maximum capital gains exclusion has remained at \$250,000 for singles and \$500,000 for couples. Above that limit, homeowners could pay up to 20% in federal taxes on their equity. These limits now impact average families significantly, not just high-end investors.

In New Jersey, the average home equity gain this past year is among the highest in the nation. In Bergen County, home prices have more than doubled since the early 2000s across all price points. For instance,

# Buying Real Estate Abroad

ELLIOTT MALONE



**THERE ARE USUALLY NO RESTRICTIONS** preventing US citizens from purchasing real estate in most countries.

There are many great reasons to buy property abroad as an American. Anyone who travels has likely had the experience of falling in love with the culture, food and lifestyle in another country. While some people just dream of someday owning property internationally, others take steps to invest in a second home abroad, or do it to retire in a beautiful place where the US dollar stretches further, or just relocating to another country.

Buying property overseas can be exciting, but there are a few things to consider if you want to make a successful real estate investment such as tax implications, financing options, safety, healthcare, climate, and local infrastructure.

Some countries even give properties for free, as long as you agree to rehab/maintain it and pay taxes. Several countries offer visas, residencies, and even paths to citizenship for foreign real estate buyers.

For example, Spain, Greece, and Montenegro have Golden Visa programs that grant residency to property buyers.

This makes it much easier to relocate or visit your vacation home.

In turn, other countries require pre-existing residency to make real estate investments. For example, foreign nationals need a residency permit to buy real estate in Austria.

In New Zealand, foreigners may be able to purchase commercial real estate but typically need a permit to own residential property.

In countries such as Mexico, foreigners aren't allowed to own property within a certain distance of the coast, but it's possible to do a long-term ground lease or to set up a domestic LLC to hold the property. U.S. trusts can only manage assets in the 50 states, but there are vehicles in other countries that can provide some asset protection.

One of the biggest benefits of buying property abroad as an American is the lower cost of living. It allows you to stretch your budget further and enjoy a higher quality of life.

Countries like Mexico and the Dominican Republic have affordable groceries, utilities, and transportation.

If you're relocating with your family, you should also consider the quality and cost of education. When moving to South America or the Caribbean, expat children typically go to private international schools, which can be costly. In turn, Western Europe often has good public schools.

U.S. citizens must be aware of the tax implications that come with owning a foreign property. The U.S. tax system follows a citizenship-based taxation model, which means you have to report your worldwide income and certain foreign assets, even if you live abroad full-time.

Understanding how the IRS treats foreign property is important if you want to avoid unexpected tax liabilities or penalties.

If you purchase property overseas, you don't need to report the purchase to the IRS. The IRS does not consider property ownership itself to be a taxable event. However, your financial arrangements, such as how you finance the purchase or whether you rent out the property, could affect your U.S. tax situation.

US buyers are heading across the pond and scooping up discounted London mansions at an increasing clip. New tax policies in the UK capital drove away international buyers last year, the Wall Street Journal reported, but its transatlantic neighbors came out in force.

Americans made up London's largest cohort of buyers from abroad last year, making up 25% of high-end home purchases,

according to the luxury real estate agency Beauchamp Estates. The pronounced increase, up from 18% in 2023, is supporting the City through a market dip. Under the so-called "non-dom" rule, ultra-rich foreigners only paid taxes on domestic earnings.

London agents told the Journal they are receiving an unprecedented number of inquiries from US-based clients. Americans, used to large property taxes, still find that their money goes far in the historic city.

Americans on the house hunt in London tend to gravitate towards posh, idyllic neighborhoods beloved by Hollywood — think Kensington, Chelsea and Notting Hill. Luxury homes in historic buildings also attract an outsized number of Americans.

**Here are some recent sales in the area during June 2025 (from NJMLS):**

**ALPINE: 1 Sale**

- 497 Hillside Avenue \$3,450,000

**CLOSTER: 9 Sales ranging from \$740,000 to \$1,960,000**

- 351 Durie Avenue \$740,000
- 123 Demarest Avenue \$1,470,000
- 534 Closter Dock Road \$1,960,000

**CRESSKILL: 9 Sales ranging from \$545,000 to \$3,100,000**

- 21 Milton Street \$545,000
- 158 12th Street \$950,000
- 9 Loman Court \$3,100,000

**DEMAREST: 6 Sales ranging from \$1,200,000 to \$2,125,000**

- 29 John Street \$1,200,000
- 22 Stelfox Street \$1,800,000
- 8 Country Club Way \$2,125,000

**ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS: 13 Sales ranging from \$1,549,000 to \$4,300,000**

- 44 Birch Street \$1,549,000
- 397 Castle Drive \$2,250,000
- 30 Priscilla Lane \$4,300,000

**TENAFLY: 17 Sales ranging from \$550,000 to \$3,350,000**

- 65 Grove Street \$550,000
- 92 Woodland Park Drive \$1,600,000
- 49 Joyce Road \$3,350,000

**UPPER SADDLE RIVER: 8 Sales ranging from \$950,000 to \$2,310,000**

- 32 Lilline Lane \$950,000
- 9 Fieldstone Court \$1,640,000
- 75 Ripplewood Drive \$2,310,000



Alpha Global Realty, LLC  
Elliott Malone is a licensed real estate agent

# Retail Returns and Refunds Laws

ELLIOTT MALONE, ESQ.

**“In New York, a store is legally required to post its refund policy. If the store doesn’t post any return policy, the law requires the store to accept returns within 30 days of purchase.”**



Almost every consumer has returned a retail item for a refund, exchange, or store credit. Sometimes, the product doesn’t match the advertisement. Or, you might have simply changed your mind.

Merchants are required to accept returns in certain situations. Some states have laws governing the disclosure of refund and return policies. But these laws don’t guarantee that getting a refund is possible in all cases.

In the U.S., there are no federal laws determining whether stores must accept consumer returns. Returns and refund laws vary from state to state, so it’s important you understand how to comply with these various rules if you’re selling across the United States.

In New Jersey, shoppers must be informed of refund policies before making a purchase – not just on the receipt. Refund policies that are 20-days or less must be conspicuously displayed by merchants on signs clearly visible to the buyer from the cash register, posted by the store’s entrance, attached to the item or affixed to the cash register. The policy must contain certain specific information such as whether

refunds will be given for items without a proof of purchase, products returned after a particular period of time, and products sold “as is” or on sale. It must make it clear how refunds will be issued (cash, store credit, etc.)

In New York, a store is legally required to post its refund policy. If the store doesn’t post any return policy, the law requires the store to accept returns within 30 days of purchase.

In Connecticut, each retailer may set its own refund policy, which they must disclose at the time of sale. If the retailer doesn’t disclose or have a refund policy, a buyer may return purchased goods for a refund.

Some stores have fairly strict rules about returns. Keep all your receipts and store tags on purchased items. For online purchases, save all your email correspondence with the seller. If the item is purchased online, see if you have to pay for return shipping and handling. There can be other conditions placed on returns and refunds as well, ask about policies before you buy and before you seek to return an item. On larger purchases you should snap a photo of the

receipt and email it to yourself with the date, store, amount and item/s purchased in the subject of the email.

Know the store’s policy for items placed on layaway. Some stores have additional charges for layaway, beyond the cost of the item purchased. Some stores may charge penalties for late payments. Others may also have rules about whether you can get reimbursed if you make some payments and then decide not to purchase the merchandise.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Cooling-Off Rule, formally known as the “Trade Regulation Rule Concerning Cooling-Off Period for Sales Made at Homes or at Certain Other Locations,” was established in 1972 to protect consumers from high-pressure sales tactics used in door-to-door sales, impulse purchases, and situations where they might not have had adequate time to consider the purchase carefully. The rule originated from concerns about deceptive sales practices and was influenced by similar laws in other countries and some US states.

As explained by FTC, the federal cooling-off rules gives the consumer three days to cancel certain sales for a full refund. The seller is required by law to inform the buyer at the time of the sale about their right to cancel and to provide the buyer with a copy of the sales contract and two copies of the cancellation form. The right to cancel lasts until the midnight of the third business day after the sale.

The FTC’s cooling off rule applies to sale, lease, or rental of consumer goods and services having a value of at least

\$25, made anywhere other than the seller’s normal place of business. This rule includes sales made at trade shows, conventions and applies even when a salesperson makes a presentation in your home.

However, this does not apply to sales that are made entirely online, via mail, or telephone. Additionally, this rule does not apply to insurance, securities, art/crafts sold at fairs, and automobiles sold directly at temporary locations such as auto shows.

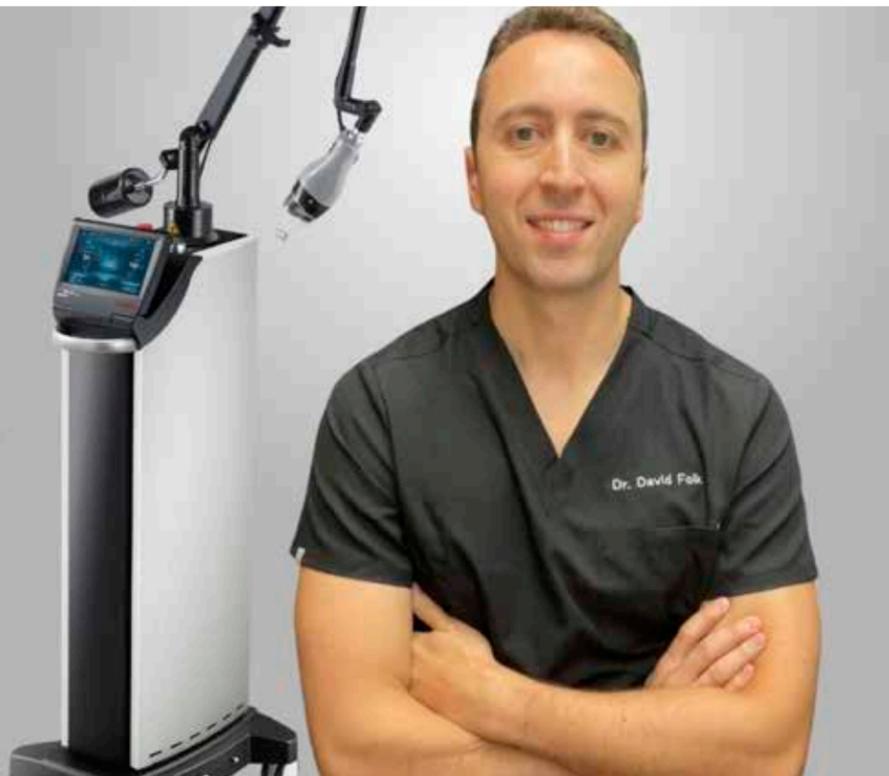
Similarly, many states have laws regarding cooling-off rules. The laws in most states resemble the federal rules mentioned above, while some states have broader rules. For example, Ohio allows cooling-off periods for sales of business opportunity plans and hearing aids in addition to the consumer goods and services covered under the federal cooling-off rule.

If a business fails to respect your rights as a consumer, you have multiple courses of action available. You could file a complaint with the FTC, the state attorney general, or the relevant consumer protection agency.



**Law Offices of Elliott Malone, Esq. LLC**

Elliott Malone has a legal practice in Cresskill



# Laser Season is Here

BY DAVID FOLK, MD

As the summer months start to dwindle, we prepare for back to school, cooler temperatures, and—of course—laser season! In my office, that is synonymous with preparing our most reliable, safe, workhorse laser known as the CO<sub>2</sub> laser.

The CO<sub>2</sub> laser (carbon dioxide laser) has become a cornerstone in aesthetic surgery due to its precision and effectiveness in skin resurfacing and rejuvenation. Emitting infrared light at a wavelength of 10,600 nm the CO<sub>2</sub> laser is highly absorbed by water in the skin, allowing it to vaporize tissue with remarkable accuracy.

The CO<sub>2</sub> laser offers numerous benefits in aesthetic treatments, making it a popular choice for skin rejuvenation. It effectively treats fine lines, wrinkles, acne scars, sun damage, skin laxity, and uneven skin tone by precisely removing damaged skin layers and stimulating collagen

production. Fractional CO<sub>2</sub> laser technology allows for faster healing and reduced downtime by targeting only portions of the skin while leaving surrounding areas intact. This technique creates microscopic zones of thermal injury, stimulating collagen production while leaving surrounding tissue untouched for faster healing. The result is smoother, tighter, and more youthful-looking skin.

One of the key benefits of CO<sub>2</sub> laser treatment is its dual ability to exfoliate the outer layers of damaged skin while promoting deep dermal remodeling. Patients often see significant improvement in skin texture and tone after just one session, though optimal results may require multiple treatments. The procedure is usually performed under topical or local anesthesia, and recovery time can range from a few days to two weeks,

depending on the depth and extent of the treatment.

Despite its benefits, CO<sub>2</sub> laser treatment does carry risks, including redness, swelling, and changes in skin pigmentation. Therefore, proper patient selection and counseling, as well as post-treatment care are critical for successful outcomes.

Overall, the CO<sub>2</sub> laser remains one of the most powerful tools in aesthetic surgery. We often combine it with other procedures such as eyelid lift or facelift surgery. Its ability to precisely target damaged skin and stimulate new collagen production makes it a popular choice for individuals seeking long-lasting facial rejuvenation with minimally invasive techniques.

**If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out and follow @drdavidfolk or www.drdavidfolk.com!**

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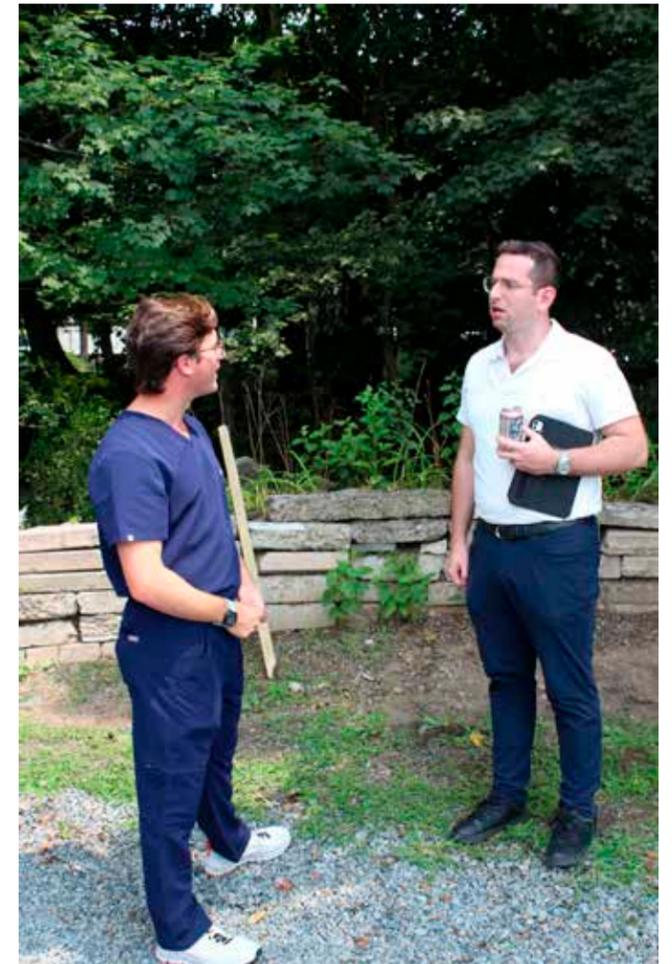
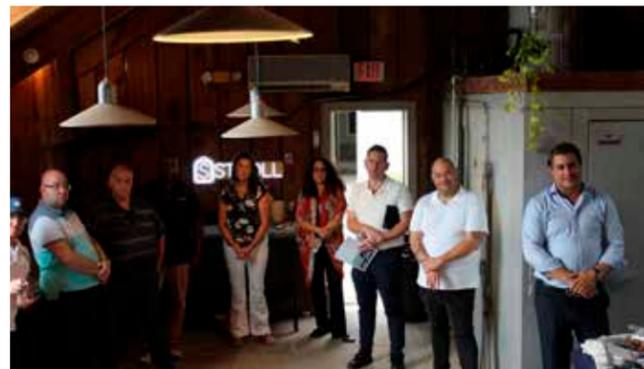
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# A Gathering at a Historic Aquatic Haven

Dozens of local business owners recently gathered for this month's **Business-2-Business networking event**, hosted by **Stroll magazine** and **BeLocal Bergen** at Fitz's Fish Ponds in Saddle River. This unique venue—which stands on the grounds of the historic Waterford Gardens—offered the perfect blend of heritage and elegance for community networking.



## Rediscovering a Legacy: Waterford Gardens Reimagined

Fitz's Fish Ponds acquired the iconic Waterford Gardens—America's first commercial water lily farm originally founded in 1895—late in 2024. The renovation beautifully balances that storied past with modern pond design, restoring Dutch-framed greenhouses and revitalizing historic ponds with state-of-the-art aquascapes, koi displays, and lush plant life.

## A Tour of Aquatic Splendor—and a Taste of Luxury

Attendees were treated to an immersive tour of the facility, discovering why Fitz's is regarded as the largest U.S. importer of Japanese koi. The highlight? Viewing majestic koi valued at over \$20,000, a testament to the caliber of Fitz's offerings.

To complement the aquatic extravaganza, lunch was graciously provided by **B'Teavon Events**, adding a delightful social touch to the day's professional networking.

To join our business networking events, email [StrollAlpine@gmail.com](mailto:StrollAlpine@gmail.com)

# Back-to-School Snack Ideas Kids Will Actually Eat



**BACK-TO-SCHOOL SEASON** means new schedules, packed lunches, and the endless search for snacks that are both healthy and kid-approved. The ideal snack fuels energy, supports concentration, and keeps tummies happy until the next meal—all without causing a sugar crash. Here are some fresh ideas that balance nutrition and fun.

### 1. Build-Your-Own Snack Boxes

Channel your inner bento artist! Divide a container into small compartments and fill with a mix of:

- Cheese cubes or string cheese
- Whole-grain crackers

- Apple slices or grapes
- Baby carrots or cucumber rounds

The variety keeps kids interested and lets them mix and match bites.

### 2. Energy Bites (No-Bake)

Perfect for grab-and-go mornings, these little power balls combine rolled oats, nut or seed butter, honey, and mix-ins like mini chocolate chips or dried fruit. They're easy to prep in big batches and freeze well—meaning you always have a quick snack ready.

### 3. Yogurt Parfaits

Layer Greek yogurt with fresh berries and a sprinkle of granola for a protein-packed treat. Use small, reusable jars so kids can shake it up themselves at lunchtime. Tip: Keep the granola separate until it's time to eat to maintain crunch.

### 4. DIY Trail Mix

Skip the store-bought blends (often loaded with candy) and let kids create their own mix at home. Offer nuts or seeds, whole-grain cereal, pretzels, dried fruit, and just a touch of dark chocolate for a treat.



Choosing snacks with whole ingredients over processed, sugary treats helps kids avoid energy spikes and crashes.

### 5. Fruit Kabobs

Everything tastes more fun on a stick! Alternate pieces of melon, pineapple, strawberries, and grapes on skewers. For extra protein, serve with a yogurt dip.

### 6. Mini Veggie Wraps

Spread hummus or cream cheese on a small tortilla, add thinly sliced veggies (bell peppers, spinach, shredded carrots), roll tightly, and slice into pinwheels. They're colorful, crunchy, and kid-sized.

### Snack Packing Tips for Parents:

- **Balance is key:** Include a mix of protein, fiber, and healthy fats to keep kids full and focused.
- **Prep ahead:** Chop fruits, portion snacks, and store in easy-grab containers to save weekday stress.
- **Make it fun:** Use colorful silicone muffin cups or fun-shaped cutters to make snacks feel special.
- **Get kids involved:** Let them choose from a selection of healthy options—ownership often means they'll actually eat it.



### Why Smart Snacking Matters

After-school and mid-morning snacks aren't just about quieting hunger—they can improve mood, support learning, and keep energy steady. Choosing snacks with whole ingredients over processed, sugary treats helps kids avoid energy spikes and crashes. Plus, creating snack time rituals can be a comforting part of the school day routine.

So, as backpacks get packed and the calendar fills up, remember: snacks don't have to be complicated to be delicious, healthy, and kid-approved. A little creativity (and some prep time) goes a long way toward keeping those after-school "hangry" moments at bay.



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