

## Bubble? Or Investment Appreciation?

Seems not everyone likes good news. As positive headlines of the recovery continue, there are "bubble theorists" who point to the "huge" year-over-year percentage increases as clouds on the housing market horizon.

The cooling and then last year's recovery is today making for dramatic comparisons. Because we're now past last year's lowest points, we'll no longer see the dramatic percentage jumps. Come the summer when we see smaller percentage increases, it won't mean that things are necessarily getting worse, it will simply mean that growth is once again following expectations.

There are also those who predict that home owners who are now taking advantage of low rates will be hurt when rates rise. Given our current economy, there's no reason to think rates will balloon overnight or even in the near future. The Bank of Canada's inflation expectations remain contained and as mentioned last month, Lenders already seem to have built rising BOC rates into their posted mortgage rates.


Taking advantage of low rates now and locking in when it looks like rates are going up, means you make the most of the opportunity in the market.

### RRSP - Mortgage Advantage For Your Retirement

March 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline to make your 2009 RRSP contribution. Contributing to your RRSP is a win-win if you direct the refund toward your mortgage. Even small top-ups or pre-payments add a supercharged benefit by decreasing your mortgage amortization, which in the long run saves you thousands of dollars in interest.

# Realty *in*sights

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## Don't Be Shocked! Test Your GFCIs

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets are designed to help prevent electric shock, especially in "wet" areas like your kitchen and bathroom.

To properly test GFCI receptacles in your home:

- Push the "Reset" button to assure normal GFCI operation.
- Plug a nightlight (with an "ON/OFF" switch) or lamp into the GFCI receptacle and turn it "ON."
- Push the "Test" button located on the GFCI receptacle. The light should go "OFF."
- Push the "Reset" button. The light should go "ON" again.

If the light remains "ON" when the "Test" button is pushed, the GFCI is not working properly or has been incorrectly installed. Call a qualified electrician to assess the outlet, and if necessary, rewire or replace the GFCI plug unit.

## Upgrades For Up-Sales

For buyers, today's hot buttons include "green" upgrades. According to the Appraisal Institute of Canada, energy efficient upgrades delivered an average payback of 61%. And bathrooms and kitchens continue to attract buyer attention, delivering 75% to even 100% payback on renovation dollars.

Popular upgrades and potential payback:

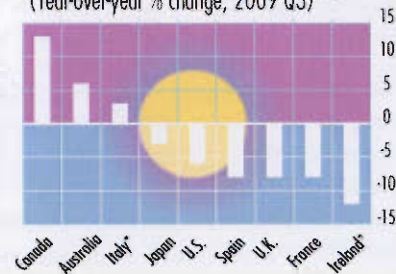
- Adding a cooking island in kitchen - 65%.
- Installing a Jacuzzi or whirlpool separate from the shower stall - 64%.
- Installing a spa-style shower system - 36%.

While even the most popular renovations may not give 100% of the dollars back, a renovation adds enjoyment to the home.

## Canada Leads Global Housing Recovery

Other than a brief pre-spring slump, Canada's housing market had a solid finish for 2009. Many forecasters thought Canada would do better than other nations – avoiding a steep decline in the housing market and getting to the recovery faster. Even with this optimistic outlook, they were nonetheless predicting a 10-15% decline in sales volumes and an approximately 10% decline in average prices early last year.

House Prices - A Global Perspective  
(Year-over-year % change, 2009 Q3)\*\*

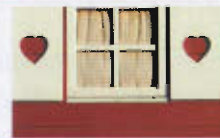


2009 turned out to be a tremendous year for real estate sales in Canada. What helped our real estate market? Low borrowing rates, government purchase incentives, and improving confidence in the economic recovery played key roles. Statistics confirm that first-time buyers are out in full force, however many potential 'move-up sellers' remain on the sidelines, contributing to a shortage of listings.

January sales figures confirm that the upward trend continues.

\*\*Q2 \*\* Source: Scotia Capital, Global Real Estate Trends, January 11, 2010

Your heart set on a move?



No matter what type of home you desire, call us and let us share our passion for real estate.  
Doug & Roz

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Our Knowledge, Experience & Advice Works for You.

## Dear Doug and Roz,

As we pause to watch the world's best athletes, this year is off to an interesting start. We certainly haven't seen a typical winter, but we continue to see opportunity in the real estate market. We're looking forward to another active market this spring.

If you are thinking about a move, let's take advantage of this time of year to get to know different market segments. Even what's available around the corner and across town. We can start by offering an overview of how your home compares to others in the neighbourhood.

We would also be pleased to assist your colleagues, friends and family. If you know anyone who would like to discuss the current real estate market or who has questions about buying and selling, let us be the experts. We welcome the call and always enjoy sharing our market insights.

Best regards,

*Doug & Roz*

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*Value = Knowledge + Experience = Advice*

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## Doug & Roz – Your Real Estate Connection



There is more to this home than a handy location to schools... It also offers a fully developed Walkout and a Bonus Room Upstairs!



**For Sale**

### Tuscany

AS a Former Cedar Glen Show Home, with over 2000 sq feet above Grade... this Home was built in 2003. A great Mountain view from the Master Bedroom!



Some of the additional upgrades are 2 Fireplaces, Air-Conditioning, 9 foot main level ceilings, Gas Stove, extensive Audio System wiring and Cat wired. Oversize Garage. High End window coverings.



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