

MODERN LUXURY

Interiors

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TEXAS

WELCOME HOME

AN INSIDE LOOK
AT THE STATE'S HOT
REAL ESTATE MARKET

PLUS

DAZZLING DESIGN MAKEOVERS,
ELEGANT SUMMER ENTERTAINING
AND A TRIBUTE TO FRANK WELCH



PASSION PROJECTS

Quality trumps quantity at Zora Spevak and Holly Radom's Montecito Builders.

"I build for the love of it," says Zora Spevak, president and founder of Houston-based Montecito Builders (montecito.co). Spevak worked as a real estate agent for seven years before realizing her true calling in 1987, when she renovated a tumbledown property in Bunker Hill Village. Thirty years later, she has built houses in Houston's most prestigious neighborhoods and garnered clients such as pro athletes, TV personalities and CEOs of Fortune 100 companies. Joined by her daughter, Holly Radom, who serves as the company's vice president, Spevak specializes in spec homes, working on only one project at a time. Her most recent venture—a new-construction project in Tanglewood (pictured)—sits on a half-acre lot and features soaring 12-foot ceilings. Spevak and Radom worked on the house for two years, careful to perfect every last detail. Thankfully, the effort paid off: The seven-bedroom house hit the market in late April with a \$6,800,000 price tag—two weeks later, it had a buyer.



GOING COASTAL

Embrace the seaside life at Beachtown in Galveston, where ocean views and a charming town center await.

One look at the fetching collection of seaside villages known as Beachtown (beachtown.com) and it's easy to see the appeal of the coveted residential development on the east end of Galveston Island. Created by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (the developers behind Florida's Rosemary Beach, Alys Beach and Seaside), Beachtown is the only community in Texas designed and built to Fortified for Safer Living standards to withstand winds up to 150 mph. It's also situated along one of the rare spots on the Gulf Coast where, thanks to nature, the beaches are getting wider. Homesites start at \$75,000, with prime beachfront lots going for up to \$1 million.

DESIGNED TO SELL

Austin-based interior designer Annie Downing (anniedowning.com) shares her top home-staging tips.

1. ADD CURB APPEAL

People will drive by your house first to see if they want to see more of it, so give them a good reason to want to come back. Plant flowers or potted plants at the front of your home. If you have a porch that needs to be repainted, now is the time.

2. EDIT, EDIT, EDIT

First and foremost, you must clear away all clutter, even inside cabinets. Someone considering buying your home is definitely going to open up the cabinets to take a peek at the storage. If this means renting a storage unit, then do it. By removing clutter, you give the impression of spaciousness.

3. MOVE FURNITURE

Pull your furniture off the walls, and don't angle furniture if it's awkward. Get rid of any oversized furniture. Remove chairs in corners that make rooms look smaller, as well as any unnecessary side tables. If you have chairs in your dining room pulled away from the table, put those in storage. Make sure people have room to walk around and really step back to look at your home.

4. CREATE A LIFESTYLE

Style your shelves and coffee table. Put some great art books on the table and a nice object.

5. ADD FRESH FLOWERS

Now that you have cleaned out the home, bring in some things that make it look lived in, like fresh flowers. Use cut, colorful flowers in a beautiful vase on your bedside table, kitchen counter or dining table.

