



HOME SELLER'S  
GUIDE

CHRISTIE'S  
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE  
SERENO



OUR  
STORY

# EVERY HOME HAS A STORY

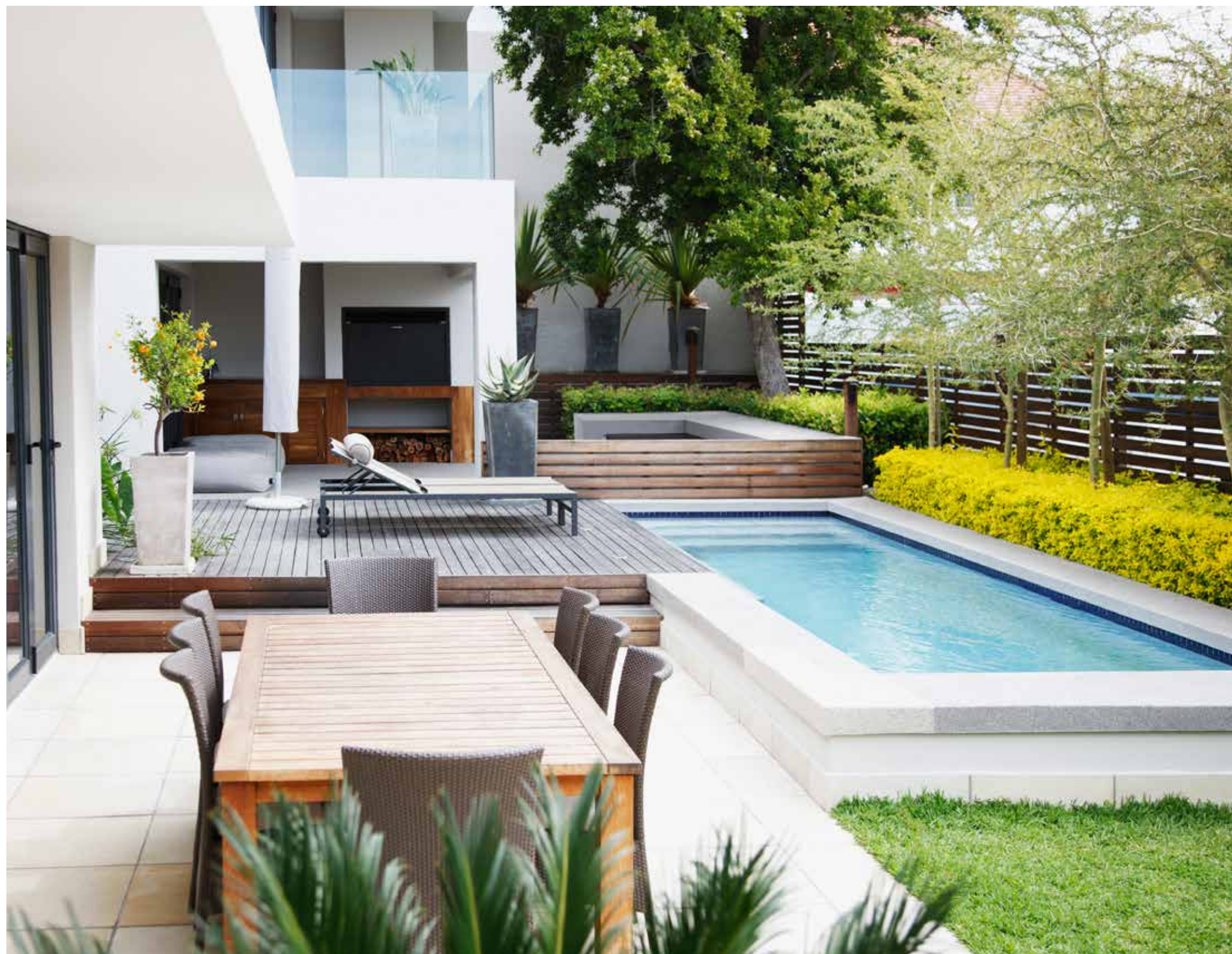
*and we'd love to share yours*

No two individuals or homes are alike. We work to understand your unique needs so that our top priority is what you value most.

Regardless of the price point or location, we are committed to delivering the highest level of services to every client through each step of the process.

Our highly-qualified agents and support staff all share a common goal: listen to your needs, meet your objectives, and provide you with the attentive service and attention you deserve.

We look forward to sharing our story with you and hope that this guide will serve to empower you through the home selling process.



# WE WERE BORN OUT OF A DESIRE

*for something more meaningful*



Christie's International Real Estate Sereno is proud to be the largest, locally-owned and operated independent real estate company in Northern California.

*We've achieved this by having a clear vision from the start.*

Our founders embraced a real estate model that inspired agents and provided them with unparalleled support so they could care for their clients in the best way possible.

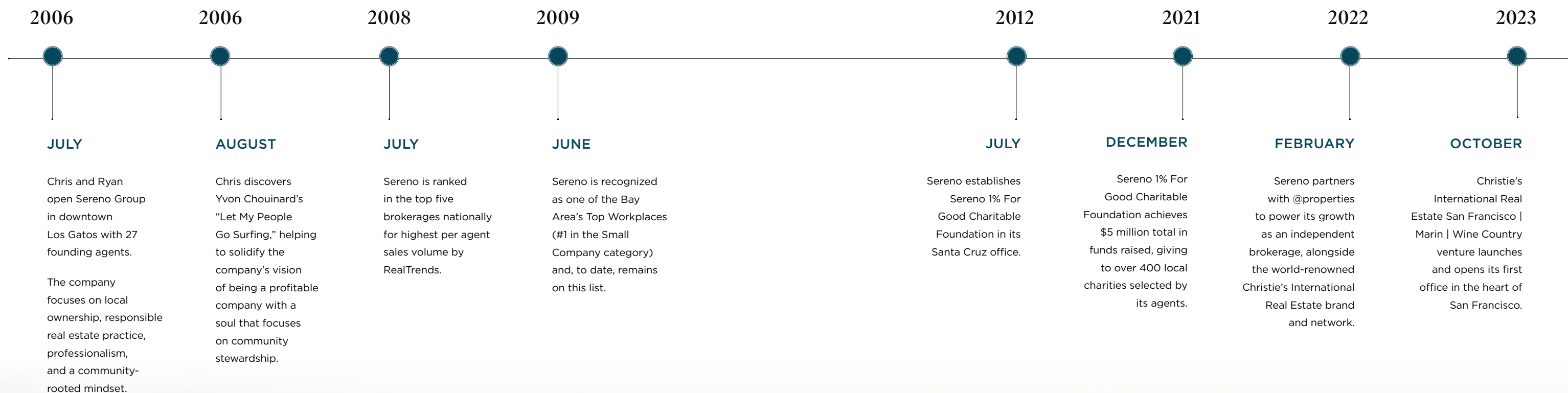
We placed a hyperlocal focus on the communities where we serve, live, work, and contribute, creating a unique level of expertise and a competitive advantage that we use to benefit each and every one of our clients.

In the hands of a Christie's International Real Estate Sereno agent, you have a trusted guide to advise you at every step of the way. Our focus is on helping you navigate the intricacies of selling your home, while negotiating a deal that best serves your ultimate goal.

# OUR TIMELINE

*a sequence of extraordinary events*

From our two founders' first meeting to where our organization is today, it's been an exceptional journey. And we know there is more good to come.



# OUR JOURNEY

*local roots, global reach*

Since 2006, we have grown to be the largest, locally-owned and operated independent brokerage in Northern California with over \$5.5 billion in annual sales volume and a strong presence throughout San Francisco, Peninsula, Silicon Valley, East Bay, Santa Cruz, Marin, Wine Country, Tahoe, Sierra Foothills, and the Central Coast.

We grow, not for the sole sake of getting bigger, but to extend our reach in making the most positive impact possible for our clients and communities.



**18**

OFFICES

throughout  
Northern California

**17**

YEARS

of profitable,  
sustainable growth

**50**

COUNTRIES

represented within the global network  
of Christie's International Real Estate

**14**

YEARS

voted as a Bay Area  
Top Workplace

# LOVE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

*a culture of giving back*

Homeownership is a decision to invest in a place you love. We believe a real estate company should do the same.

Since 2012, we have been giving back to the places where we live and love through our Sereno 1% For Good Charitable Foundation, allowing us to invest in our local nonprofit partners who work to create positive change in our communities.

Giving back is in our DNA. Our culture was built on social and community responsibility, and we are proud of both our financial donations and grassroots volunteerism.

By working with us, the sale of your home becomes part of this continuous circle of giving.

sereno  
**1% For Good**  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

**11** YEARS  
of giving back

**\$5.9** MILLION  
given back since 2012

**5** FUNDS  
Community Impact,  
Ecosystem, Education,  
Equity and Access,  
Disaster Relief

**487** NONPROFIT  
partners

**11** COUNTIES  
supported



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and denim overalls, is walking away from the camera on a green lawn. She is holding the hand of a young boy in a blue long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. They are walking towards a modern house with a mix of wood, grey concrete, and dark panels. The house has a large window and a balcony. There are some tall grasses and plants in the foreground and background.

PREPARING  
TO SELL



# YOU'VE DECIDED TO SELL

*guidance throughout every step*

You can rely on your agent to be your trusted advisor from your first interaction until long after your home sells. They will work diligently to protect your best interests, resolve any challenges, and ensure a well-organized experience.

## What to expect from your REALTOR®

We have high standards for exceeding your expectations, and we take your trust very seriously.

*You will see this illustrated throughout our relationship in the following ways:*

- Real-time, informative communication and support
- Industry knowledge, analytical insight, and local market knowledge expertise
- Detailed marketing plan for maximum sales exposure
- Management of contacts, home showings, and transactional details
- Presentation, evaluation, and guidance on all incoming offers
- Management of title and escrow throughout the transaction
- Coordination of closing
- Help finding you a new home



## LISTING TIMELINE

### PRE-MARKET PREPARATION

#### Listing Meeting and Discovery

- Market Analysis
- Pricing Strategy

#### House Preparation

- Repairs
- Home Upgrades and Renovations
- Staging
- Inspections
- Disclosures

#### Marketing

- Professional Photography
- Floor Plan Drawings
- Targeted Print Ads and Postcards
- Email Campaigns
- Home Brochures

### ON MARKET

#### Live on MLS

- Broker Tour
- Open House Dates
- Review Agent and Buyer Feedback
- Market Update

#### Receive Offers

- Negotiations
- Acceptance

### IN CONTRACT

#### Sale Pending

- Escrow Opens
- Deposit to Title
- Property Appraisal
- Buyer Inspections
- Negotiations, if any

#### Contingency Removals

- Walk Through Property
- Sign-Off

### CLOSE OF ESCROW

# PRICING YOUR HOME

*the art and science*

Technology, coupled with your agent's hyperlocal expertise and industry knowledge, will ensure that your home is priced for the most lucrative and time-efficient sale.

In addition to an in-depth Comparative Market Analysis (CMA), your agent also has the added benefit of company-wide collaboration and unparalleled local expertise.

*The following factors may also affect the pricing strategy:*

- Supply and demand
- Market activity and time of year
- Interest rates and availability of credit
- Price and status changes of similar properties
- Economic factors
- Room count and square footage
- Condition of property
- Lot size, usability, and privacy
- Location, neighborhood, and views
- Desirability of unique features



# BEFORE YOUR HOME IS SHOWN

*positioning it in the best light*

Here is a list of common preparations to make before showing your home, ensuring it appeals to the largest group of qualified buyers as possible and creates an exceptional first impression.

- ✓ Clean, declutter, and organize
- ✓ Complete any needed repairs
- ✓ Make the exterior visually attractive
- ✓ Paint interior with a neutral color



One of the key ways to obtain the highest sales price possible in the least amount of time is to position your home as one of the most desirable properties on the market. By doing this, your home sets itself apart from the competition and draws buyers in quickly.

- — Brighten up the space by opening window coverings and allowing all views to be visible
- — Keep personal items and photographs to a minimum so the prospective buyer can envision the home as their own
- — Remove oversized furniture in spaces that may already feel overcrowded
- — Keep the decor neutral so as not to detract from the desirability of the home itself
- — Focus on staging the living room, primary bedroom, and kitchen
- — Enhance curb and yard appeal with landscaping, potted plants, and outdoor furniture

# DISCLOSURES AND INSPECTIONS

*what they mean and why they matter*



Both the seller and the listing agent are required to disclose all known defects, repairs, and alterations made to the home so that the buyer has an opportunity to review everything in detail before writing an offer.

The home inspection is a visual examination conducted by a licensed professional to examine all interior and exterior components of the home.

*Examples of items that need to be disclosed:*

- Age, warranties, and manuals for roof, furnace, air conditioning, hot water heater, and appliances
- Dates of home improvement projects, remodels, and repairs
- Permits or Certifications of Compliance that apply
- Written and verbal estimates of work to be completed
- Title report showing clear title and loan balances
- Anything that affects the value or desirability of the property

## GENERAL DISCLOSURES

### Real Estate Transfer Disclosure Statement (TDS) and Supplemental Property Questionnaire (SPQ)

Completed by the seller with details about the property

### Preliminary Title Report

Provided by the title company to show ownership of parcel and any liens or encumbrances not covered under a subsequent insurance policy

### Property Inspection Report

Examines the overall functionality and condition of the home, including appliances, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems

### Pest Inspection Report

Examines structural damage due to wood-boring beetles, termites, and dry rot

### Agent's Visual Inspection Disclosure (AVID)

Both the listing and selling agent are required to complete a visual inspection of the property

### Natural Hazard Zone Disclosure (Property ID or JCP Report)

Details on how the property may be affected by natural hazards like earthquakes, wildfires, or floods based on its location

## HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION (HOA) PROPERTIES

Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions (CC&Rs)

HOA Meeting Minutes for Last 12 Months

HOA Budget and Budget Reserve Study

Condominium Certification Form

House Rules and Miscellaneous Communication



MARKETING  
YOUR HOME

# BRINGING YOUR HOME TO LIFE

*to gain maximum exposure*

Regardless of the price point or location, exposure is everything.

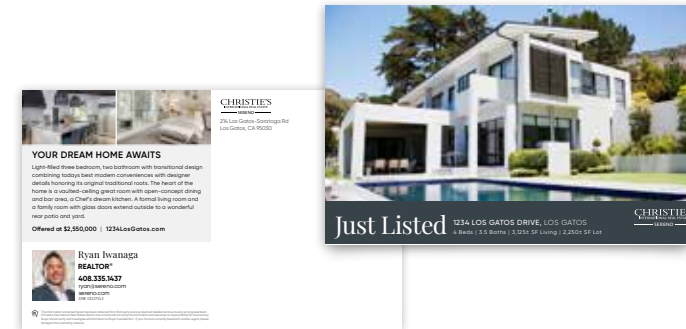
Your agent will work diligently to identify the correct marketing avenues and strategies to create a cohesive marketing plan that introduces your home well to qualified buyers and that ensures it stands out in a crowded marketplace and sells quickly at the highest price point possible.

Placing your home in the best light possible:

- Professional photography
- Professional videography
- Professional home staging

Your home will be available for viewing on the top real estate websites:

- Sereno.com
- Zillow.com
- Trulia.com
- Realtor.com
- Multiple Listing Service (MLS)



## Direct Mail Opportunities

Creating professionally designed Coming Soon and Just Listed mailers delivered to prospective buyers to showcase your property



## Print Advertising Opportunities

Connecting your property on a hyperlocal level in publications that potential buyers read

## Brochures and Presentations

Combining stunning imagery and engaging content in brochures that highlight your home's value and key features

## Email Marketing

Introducing your home to interested buyers through professionally designed emails that are sent to a targeted audience

## Social Media

Showcasing your property and creating additional exposure via social media channels where prospective buyers spend time



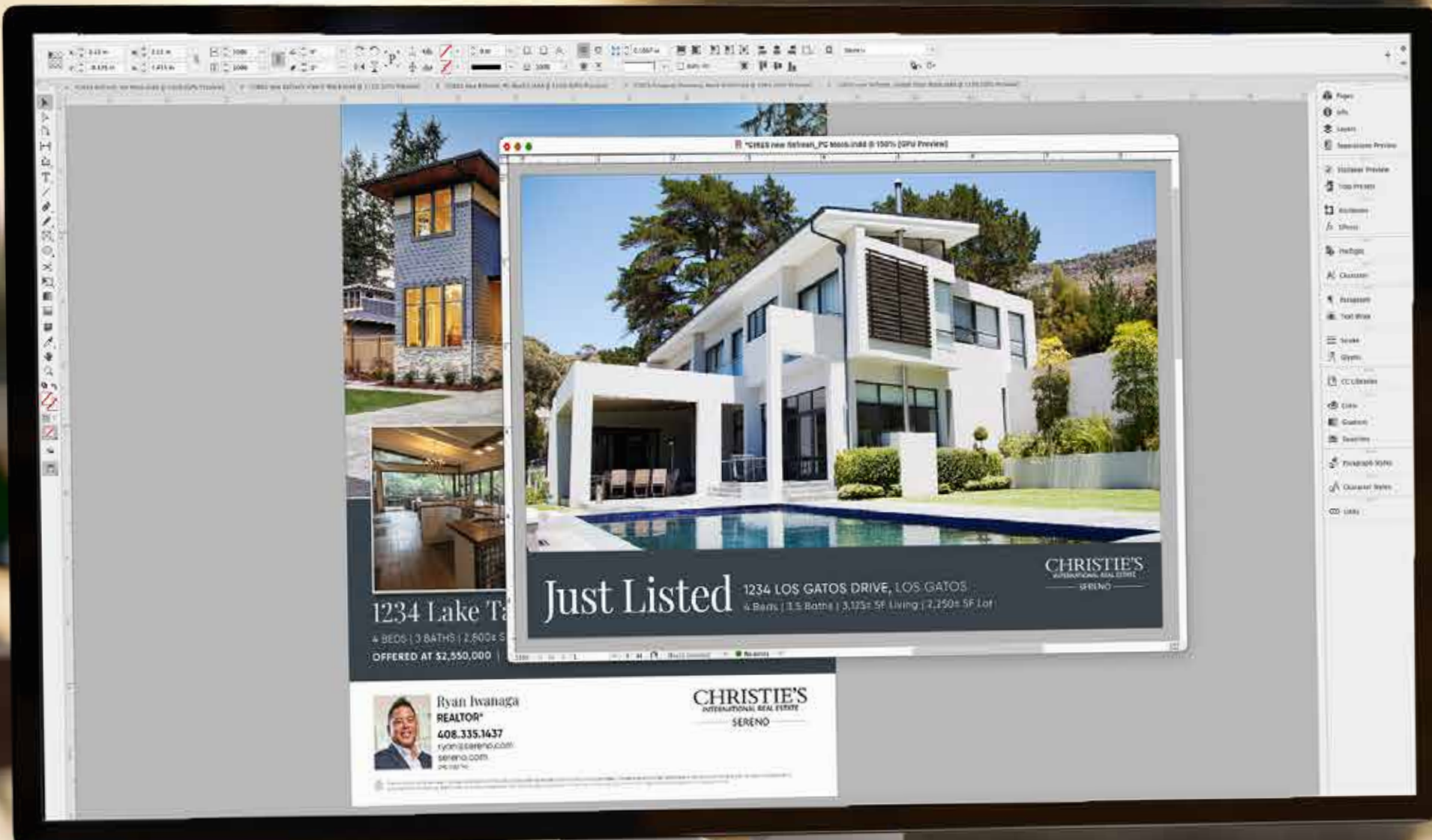
# THE STUDIO

*an in-house marketing agency*

Christie's International Real Estate Sereno has recruited an accomplished team of marketing and design professionals who possess extensive experience and expertise within the world of real estate marketing.

From engaging postcards to captivating copywriting and attention-grabbing ads, our in-house Studio will tell your home's story in a powerful and effective way that connects with prospective buyers.

This is just one of the many invaluable resources that will come into play to support the execution of your home's marketing plan.



# THE VALUE OF RELATIONSHIPS

*when marketing your home*

From day one, our company culture has been rooted in building and nurturing relationships.

And, while we are firm believers that technology, marketing, and advertising provide immense value in the home sale process, we also know that solid relationships can provide an additional competitive advantage.

Through various channels, we will share the value of your property with individuals with whom we have established an existing, upstanding relationship, ultimately expanding your home's reach to qualified, prospective buyers.

- Company-wide agent collaboration
- Buyer's agents and past clients
- Sphere of influence - friends, family, community involvement
- Local, national, and international networking
- Property tours

We know that the trust and reputation we've worked hard to build in our industry and communities are impactful and that these relationships will provide exceptional value to you and the sale of your home.





A photograph of the Christie's building facade at night. The building is dark, and the name 'CHRISTIE'S' is prominently displayed in large, illuminated, serif capital letters. The letters are mounted on a dark metal frame. Above the letters, there is a balcony with a decorative metal railing. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the building and the glow of the sign.

CHRISTIE'S

REDEFINING  
LUXURY

# A Curated Network of Real Estate Specialists

CORPORATE OFFICES IN LOS ANGELES, CHICAGO, PALM BEACH, NEW YORK, LONDON, AND HONG KONG

13K

LUXURY PROPERTIES WORLDWIDE

\$60B

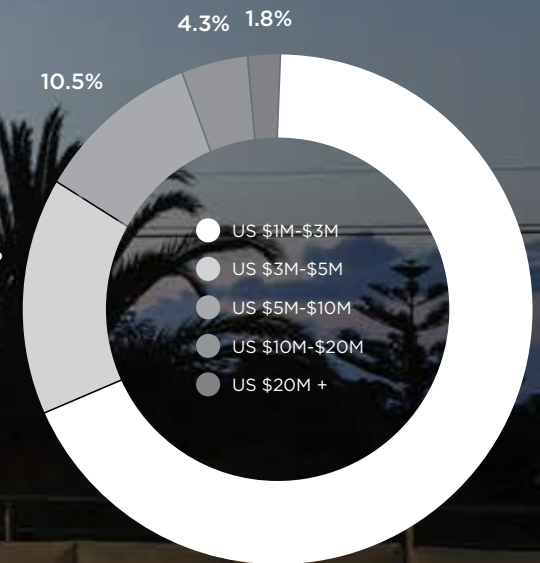
TOTAL LUXURY PROPERTY VALUE

\$5.5B

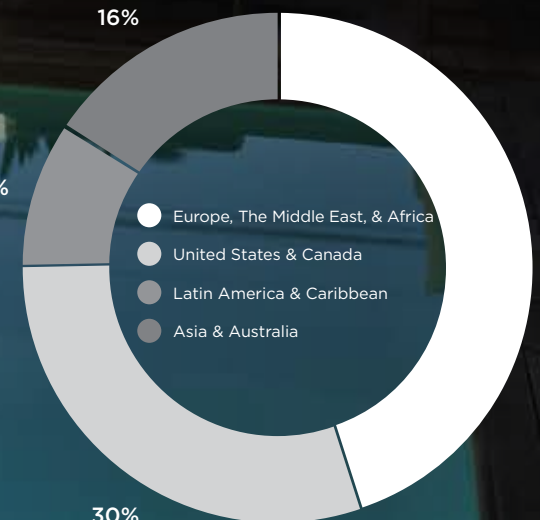
REAL ESTATE SALES IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

In addition to our local roots and commitment to serving, connecting, growing, and protecting the communities we operate in, we are proud to be partnered with Christie's International Real Estate - the global authority in luxury real estate. This exclusive, invitation-only network includes the world's premier, independent luxury real estate brokerages and professionals and allows us to extend our mission and values globally.

This network of independent brokerages spans across 50 countries and territories on six continents. Through a shared focus on luxury real estate, strong local ownership and knowledge, and a dynamic affiliate network, we are able to provide personalized, exclusive marketing opportunities and tailored services to our clients to reach exceptional results.



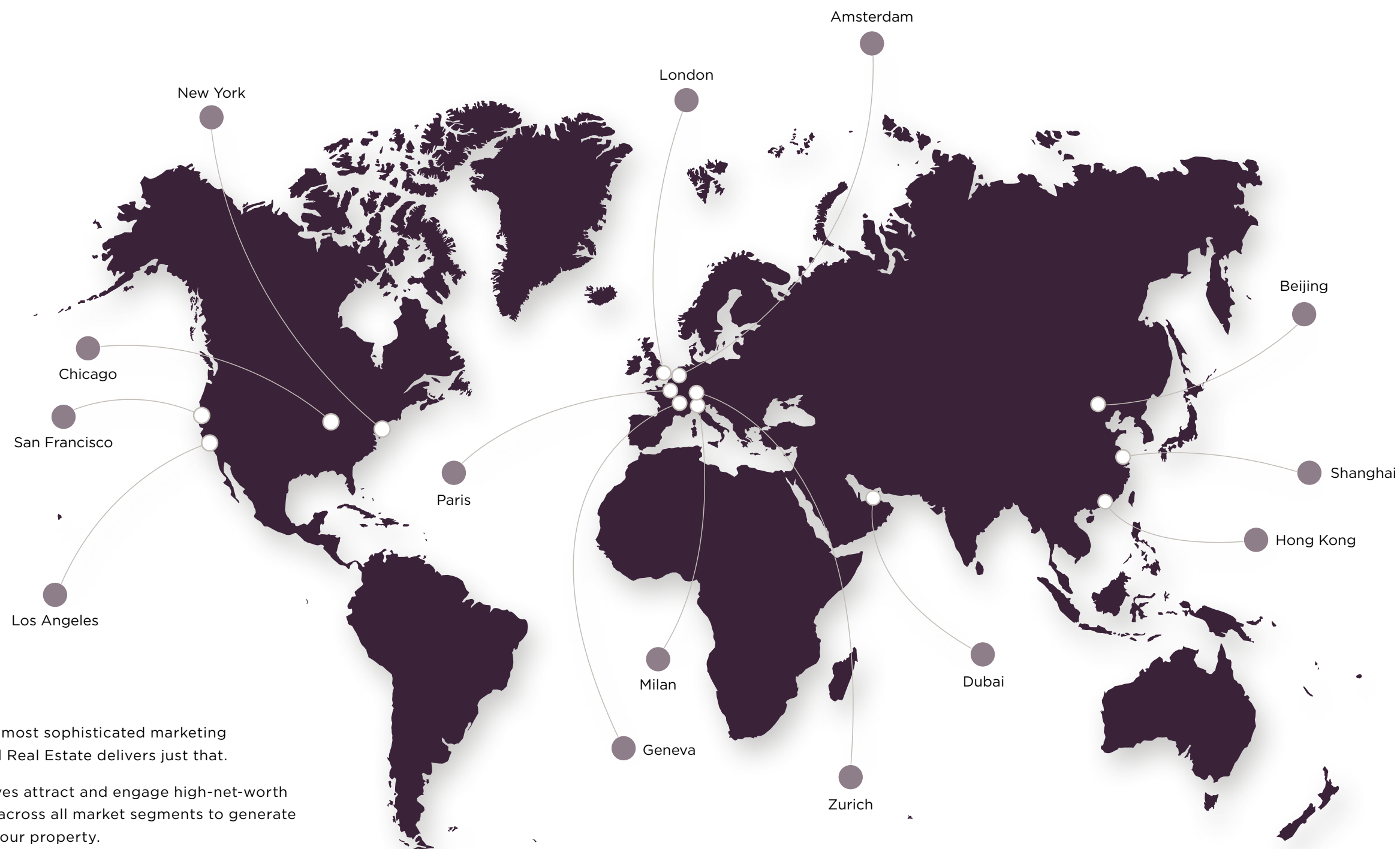
PROPERTIES BY PRICE



PROPERTIES BY REGION

# GLOBAL VISIBILITY

*to discerning buyers*



Luxury homes deserve the industry's most sophisticated marketing programs, and Christie's International Real Estate delivers just that.

Our tailored global marketing initiatives attract and engage high-net-worth individuals and their representatives across all market segments to generate maximum interest and exposure for your property.

## Visibility Across a Worldwide Network

Christie's International Real Estate connects your property to an exclusive list of Christie's Auction House clients digitally, in print, and in person through a myriad of touchpoints and opportunities throughout the year.

Monthly e-newsletters reach approximately 200,000 Christie's and Christie's International Real Estate clients, our affiliate network, and opted-in subscribers of the website and luxury lifestyle blog.

*As The World Keeps Changing,  
Christie's Will Keep Connecting You*

Christie's global presence spans 50 countries, with significant operations in the primary luxury markets of Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, London, Paris, Geneva, Amsterdam, Milan, Zurich, Dubai, Beijing, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

# INTERNATIONAL PRINT ADVERTISING

*strategic placement in world-leading publications*

Christie's International Real Estate has access to strategic placement in affluent publications, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Robb Report*, and *Financial Times*.



## Christie's International Real Estate Magazine

With editorial content, alongside a collection of the world's finest properties, this industry-leading publication highlights the world of luxury.

The magazine is distributed to clients of Christie's and Christie's International Real Estate, creating more visibility to your property among readers who are purchasers of luxury goods, collectors of fine art, and investors in multi-million dollar properties.

## Digital Advertising

Christie's International Real Estate leverages digital and ad platforms to target high-net-worth individuals and luxury lifestyle connoisseurs through leading real estate, business, and luxury media channels, along with the Google Display Network.

## Social Media

Christie's International Real Estate engages with over one million users per month in 150 different countries on its social media channels.

## Luxury Defined Blog

Notable listings from our global luxury network are regularly featured on the Luxury Defined blog, with content delivered via email to more than 37,000 subscribers.

## Public Relations

A global PR strategy results in high-end editorial coverage for Christie's International Real Estate properties. Homes have been featured in over 150 digital and print outlets, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, *Architectural Digest*, and *Mansion Global*.

## The Website

ChristiesRealEstate.com, alongside our affiliate brokerage websites, gives clients' properties global digital exposure, with the added benefit of syndication to major publications, including *Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Mansion Global*.

Property descriptions are also translated into 19 languages and reach an audience of one million users through sophisticated search engine marketing and inbound campaigns. High-definition videos and captivating content greet qualified visitors from across the globe.



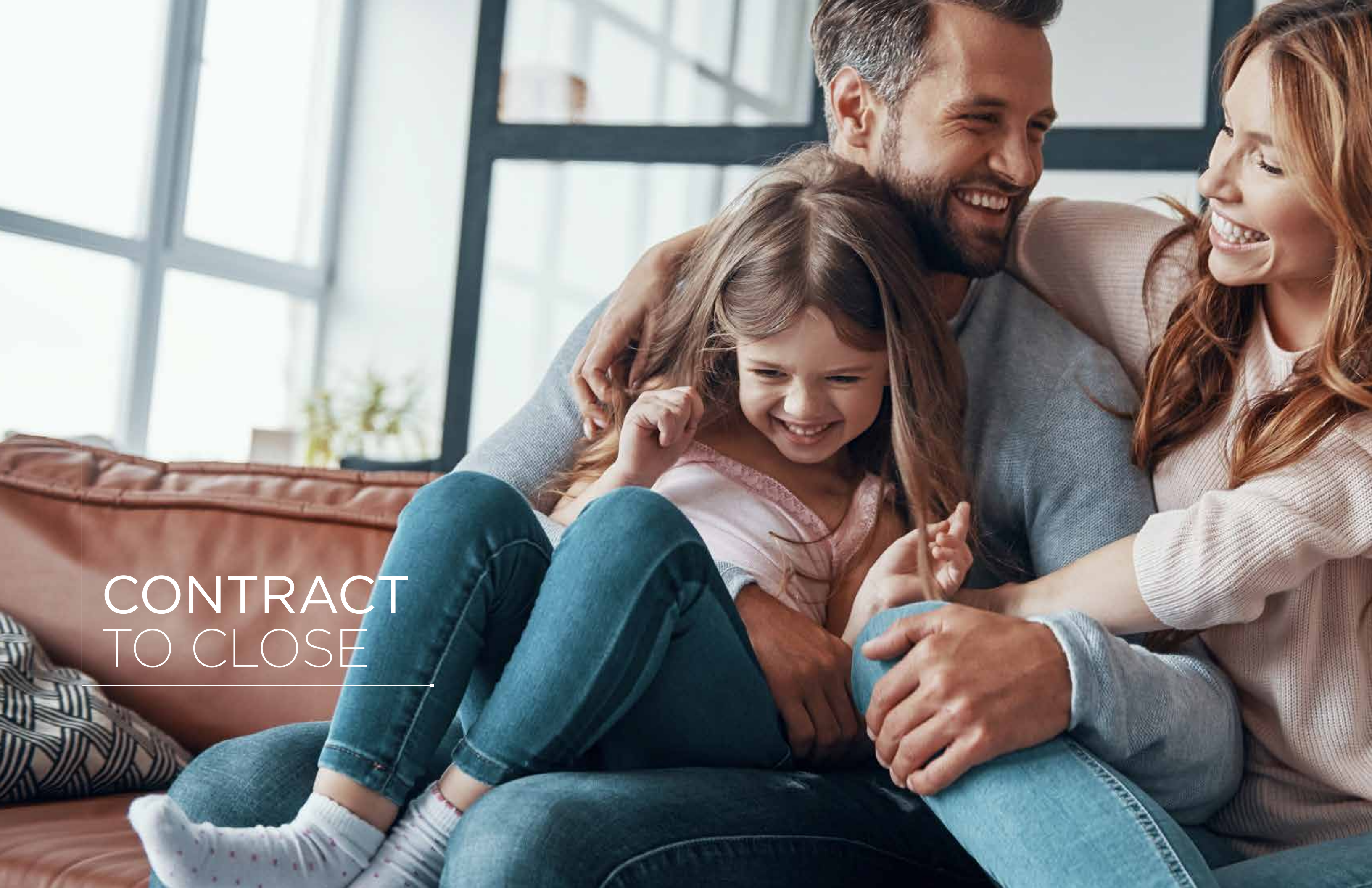
## BEYOND REAL ESTATE

*— connecting home, art, and culture*

Since 1766, Christie's world renowned auctions and private sales have captivated a global audience of luxury collectors and aficionados. Today, the institution has a physical presence in 50 countries and continues to achieve world record prices for a single collection sale, a work by a living artist, and an NFT sale.

Christie's International Real Estate maintains a close partnership with Christie's, creating unique marketing opportunities and synergies between the world of luxury goods and high-end real estate.

White glove service is offered to clients to facilitate referrals between our global property network and the auction house. A dedicated liaison will also assist real estate clients who wish to sell art and luxury goods.



CONTRACT  
TO CLOSE

# EVALUATING AND CHOOSING

*the best offer*

As your trusted advisor, your agent will share their expertise in local market conditions, recent comparable sales, and a number of other factors that will allow you to make an informed decision.

**Upon your agent reviewing each offer, you will have four choices when responding to purchase offers:**

- Accept as Written** If accepted as written, you are in contract to sell your home.
- Reject the Offer** You are stating that you are not interested in the offer.
- Counteroffer** An offer with a revised purchase price, length of escrow, or other terms. Once you receive the counter back from a buyer, you can then accept, reject, or counter the counter. This can continue until both parties come to an agreement.
- Offer a Back-up** This is a position behind an accepted offer.

*The highest offer isn't always the best offer. Not all offers are equal. Factors such as all cash, a request to rent back, home warranty, date of closing, and pre-approval letter all affect the value. Your agent will serve as your guide to ensure you understand the process of evaluating offers.*

## Contingent Offers

A contingency is a clause in a formal real estate contract that defines certain conditions that must be met by either the buyer or the seller in order to continue to the next step in the contract. There are many types of contingencies and almost every contract contains them. They serve to protect the buyer and the seller. If contingencies are not met, the transaction could fail to close.

### Financing Contingency

If a buyer enters into the contract contingent upon obtaining written lender commitments for the loan amount and the lender commitment cannot be obtained, the buyer has the right to cancel the contract.

### Appraisal Contingency

This applies if the purchase contract is contingent upon the buyer obtaining an appraisal of the property at or above the purchase price, whether or not they are seeking a loan or receiving a lender's written commitment to finance the purchase. In exercising this contingency, the buyer shall rely upon an appraisal from an independent licensed or certified appraiser.

### Inspection/Investigation Contingency

The contract is contingent upon the buyer's approval of all conditions, disclosures, and circumstances relating to the property and any other matter, on or off-site, that materially affects the value and/or desirability of the property, including but not limited to all matters contained in written disclosures or advisories.

The scope of the Property Condition Contingency includes the buyer's approval of Property Disclosure Documents, Compliance Statements, and the cost and/or availability of Homeowner's Insurance Coverage.

### A Note on Inspections

As the seller, you are obligated to make the property reasonably available for all buyer inspections and investigations. Inspections are advised, and the buyer's failure to fully conduct them is against the advice of their real estate agent.

During the time between acceptance and close of escrow, the seller is obligated to maintain the property, including landscaping and all items included in the contract, so they are in the same general condition as at the time of acceptance.

# NEGOTIATING STRATEGIES

*everything is negotiable, especially in real estate*

Our agents possess vast expertise in the art of negotiation, from doing the necessary research to unearthing the best strategy, and exploring common objectives. Deals can often fall apart over the smallest and seemingly inconsequential details, so having the negotiation intelligence of an experienced agent can be an essential element in preventing a deal from falling apart.

It is important to allow all communication regarding the transaction to occur between the seller's agent and buyer's agent. This ensures that any personal information and/or emotional circumstances that may affect the deal are handled in the most professional manner.

## Your agent will take many elements into account as part of the negotiation strategy:

- What personalities are involved?
- Who is the decision maker?
- What are the non-negotiable points?
- In what areas might concessions be possible?
- What would be a win-win situation for both sides?
- What has happened so far that we can use to our advantage?



# CANCELING A CONTRACT

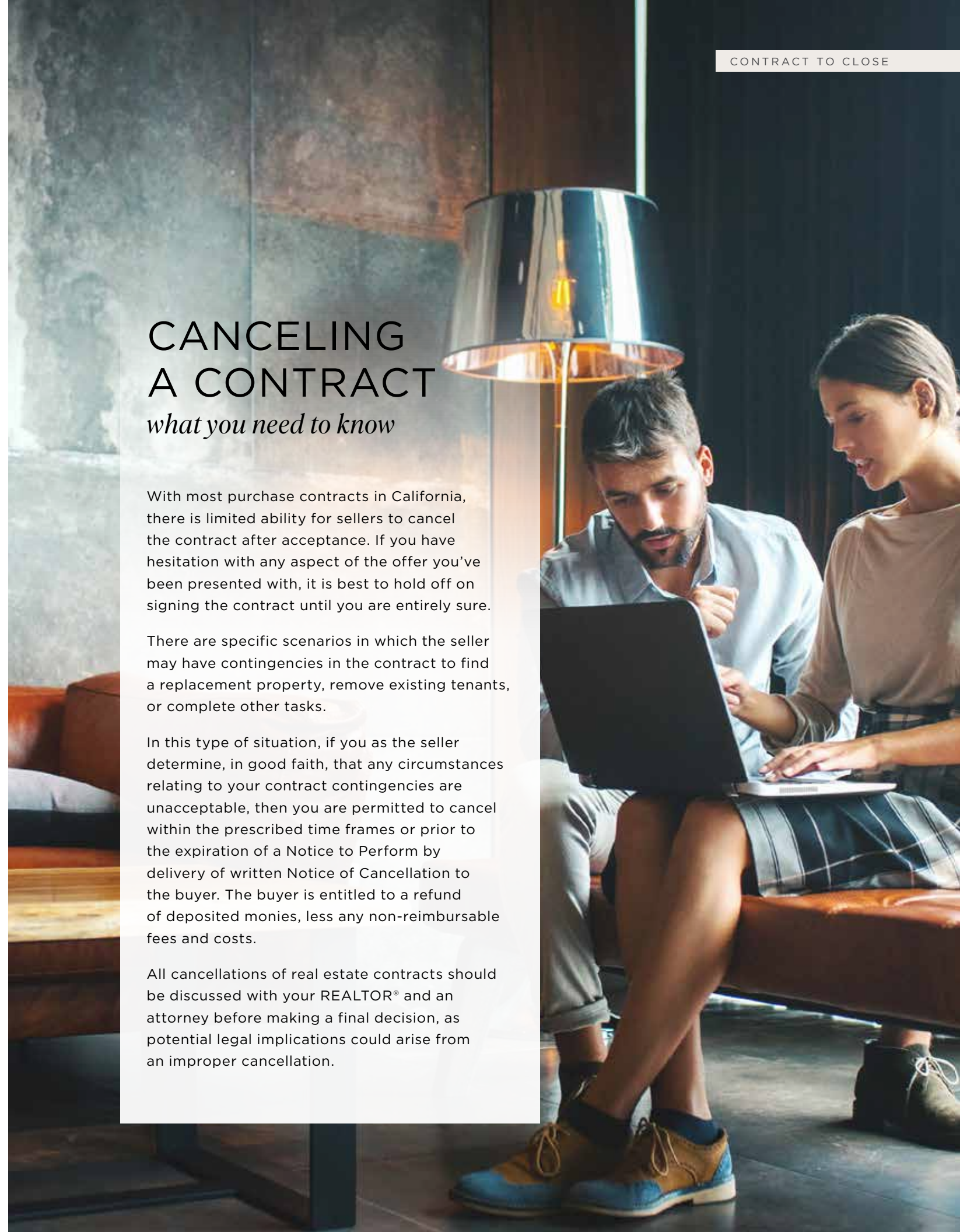
*what you need to know*

With most purchase contracts in California, there is limited ability for sellers to cancel the contract after acceptance. If you have hesitation with any aspect of the offer you've been presented with, it is best to hold off on signing the contract until you are entirely sure.

There are specific scenarios in which the seller may have contingencies in the contract to find a replacement property, remove existing tenants, or complete other tasks.

In this type of situation, if you as the seller determine, in good faith, that any circumstances relating to your contract contingencies are unacceptable, then you are permitted to cancel within the prescribed time frames or prior to the expiration of a Notice to Perform by delivery of written Notice of Cancellation to the buyer. The buyer is entitled to a refund of deposited monies, less any non-reimbursable fees and costs.

All cancellations of real estate contracts should be discussed with your REALTOR® and an attorney before making a final decision, as potential legal implications could arise from an improper cancellation.





# ESCROW'S ROLE

*and why it's important*

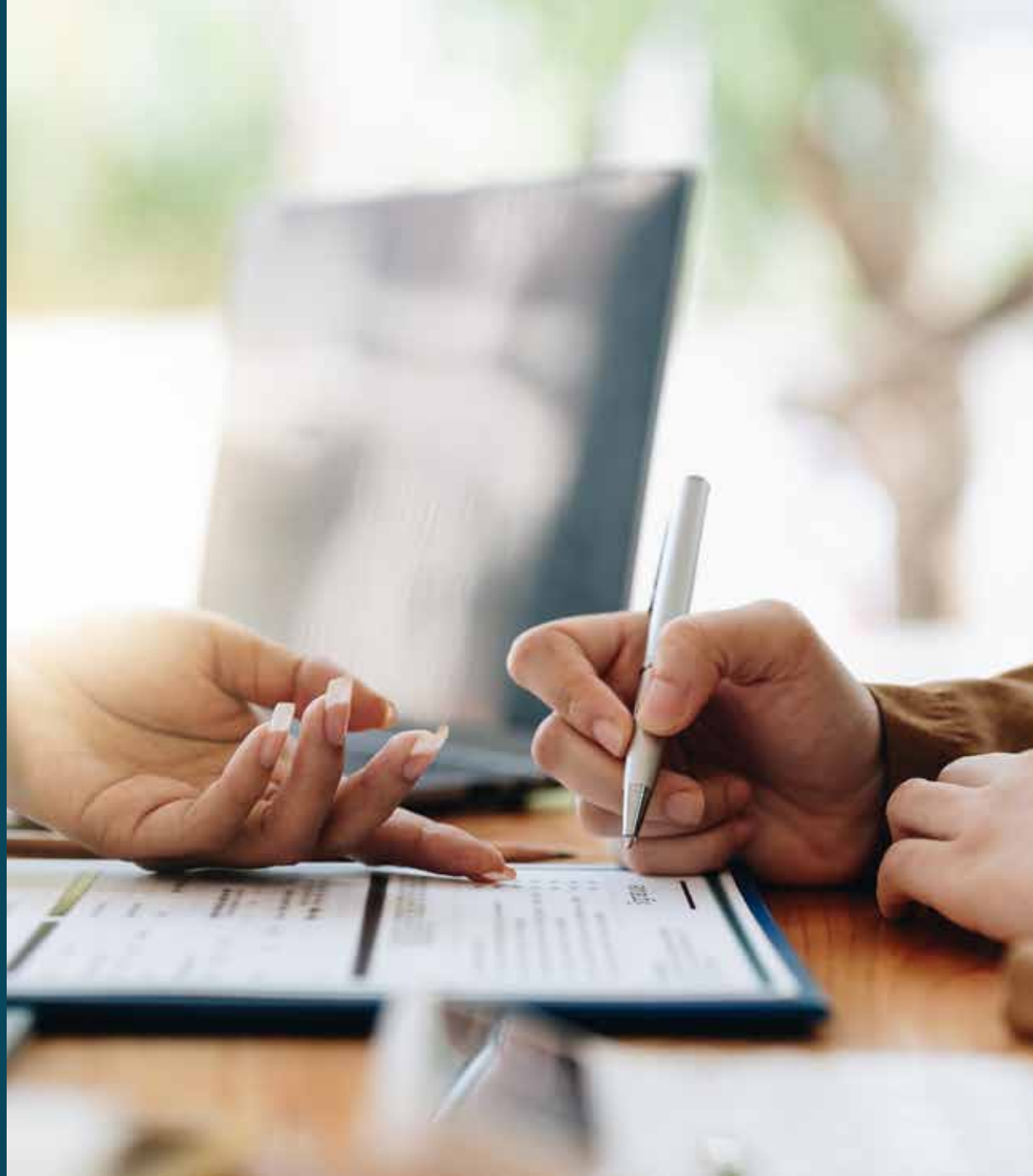
Escrow and title are often used interchangeably in Northern California because they are often handled by the same company.

Escrow is the time period between an offer being accepted and close of escrow. Escrow amounts to a deposit of funds, deed, or another instrument by one party for delivery to another party upon completion of a particular condition or event.

## How Escrow Works







Escrow instructions are created, signed, and delivered to the escrow officer when the principals to a transaction - the buyer, the seller, the lender, and agents - open escrow. The escrow officer is charged with processing the escrow in accordance with the instructions, transferring funds, and ensuring all necessary documents are completed and signed.

Once this is achieved, the escrow will be closed. An escrow officer cannot follow instructions from only one party in the transaction. All parties must be in agreement.



## The Escrow Flowchart

While all transactions are unique, the following items typically need to be accomplished during the escrow process:

-  Review and sign disclosures - some may be provided by the buyer's agent
-  A refundable deposit - usually 3% of the purchase price - is placed and held by the escrow company
-  Buyer's lender prepares loan documents and collects necessary information for approval
-  Any inspections mandated in the offer are performed
-  Property appraisal completed by the lender
-  Title documents are signed and seller provides pay off information
-  Contingencies removed to meet deadlines
-  Final walk through to make certain that the property is in the same condition as it was when the buyer signed the contract
-  Escrow closes and the property transfers when all conditions have been satisfied

## Typical escrow duties include:

- Ensuring mutually agreed upon instructions laid out by the principals and parties to the transaction are executed in a timely manner
- Paying any bills specified in the instructions
- Responding to requests from parties to the transaction
- Handling any funds or documents as directed in the instructions
- Closing escrow only when all the terms have been satisfied
- Providing final accounting details with the Closing or Settlement Statement

*The escrow officer is a third and entirely neutral party and does not represent the interests of anyone in the transaction.*

# YOUR NEXT CHAPTER

*after the sale*

Our support does not end when escrow closes. Regardless of where your next chapter leads you, your agent is there to offer resources and assistance to facilitate anything that is happening in conjunction with your move, including helping you find your next home.

*Additional areas your agent can be of assistance:*

- Relocation
- Refinancing
- Consultancy on purchasing investment properties
- Assisting family members to purchase or sell properties, even outside the area





[SERENO.COM](https://sereno.com)

SAN FRANCISCO • PENINSULA • SILICON VALLEY • EAST BAY • SANTA CRUZ  
MARIN • WINE COUNTRY • TAHOE • SIERRA FOOTHILLS • CENTRAL COAST

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