

HOUSECALLS



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“Housemade” Not in Dictionary, But on Menu

No one is sure who first used “housemade” on a menu, but the new word du jour is now found on updated menus in fine restaurants.

As reported in Newsweek, it is used to describe such menu choices as “housemade morel gnocchi with morel ragout,” and “housemade pecan sticky bun.”

What chefs at fine establishments want to suggest is that their foods are unique to their

own restaurants. Further, they say homemade sounds amateurish, while housemade indicates quality.

David Kamp, author of *The Food Snob's Dictionary*, says these restaurants are not only preparing the food, they are preparing the ingredients that go into it, and that's a good thing.

He would be pleased if housemade fare becomes the rule rather than the second choice.

Fact: Home Prices Rise Over Time

Marvel of the 30-year Mortgage

Real estate prices have always had their ups and downs, and in the last year or two, they have certainly been in a down cycle. Over time, however, the median price of a home in the United States has consistently risen.

In the 30 years from 1968 to 1998, the median home price rose from \$20,100 to \$128,400, ac-

cording to the National Association of Realtors. Anyone who stayed with their 30-year mortgage during this period was a big winner.

After only five years, the price of the \$20,100 median home rose, on average, to \$28,900.

The median price in 1978 was \$48,700, and by 1988, it was \$89,300, which means very significant gains were made within 10 and 20 years.

The NAR study shows that the

average annual price increase in the 36-year study, from 1968 to 2004, was 6.4 percent.

What Does All This Mean Now?

This is such an exciting time for home buyers!

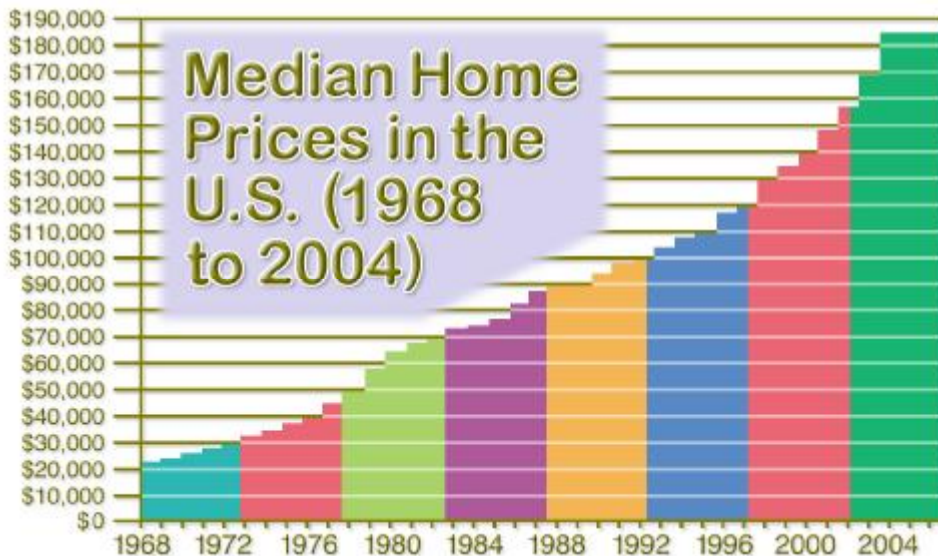
First, while prices are no longer falling in most parts of the country, there are still many bargains available.

As prices recover more, buyers will find that the value of a home bought in 2010 will probably increase at a greater percentage than

the 6.4 percent average. That's because they bought their homes for less than they were actually worth.

While mortgage interest still hovers at 5 percent, buyers will be able to lock in this low rate for 30 years .

That interest rate won't be available much longer. If you are a buyer, don't take too long to make a decision.





Ask the Expert

We have enough money to make a down payment on a home right now, but we are wondering if it would be wise to rent for a few more years so our mortgage payments will be lower. What do you think?

On the surface, it sounds like a good idea, but there are several factors to consider.

First is what your mortgage interest rate will be a few years down the road. At 5 percent interest, rates are very low. A few years from now, you could reduce the amount of your mortgage by \$10,000 or even \$20,000 but the monthly house payment would be the same or more. That could happen because interest rates will undoubtedly rise over the next few years.

In the meantime, the housing situation (including foreclosures, which often produce lower-priced housing) will have

stabilized. At that point, a home with the same space and features as one you are considering now will cost more.

The same situation will affect the price you pay for renting a home or apartment. Rental prices will rise with each passing year.

The monthly payment on a home you buy this year, however, will remain the same, assuming you opted for a fixed-rate mortgage.

Aside from the financial aspects of buying a home, there is something else to consider. It's your life we're talking about here. How much happier would you be during those years if you were living in a place of your own?

The advantages of home ownership in-

clude the feeling of stability you have in your home and freedom to decorate or change it in any way you want.

If you have children, they will be able to attend the same schools during their growing up years instead of having the problems of making new friends and adjustments every time you move.

As a real estate agent, it's my job to advise people about home buying and help them find what they need. To me, however, it's more than that. I think of myself as an agent of happiness. I can visualize the joy you will have in that home.

MAY PUZZLE

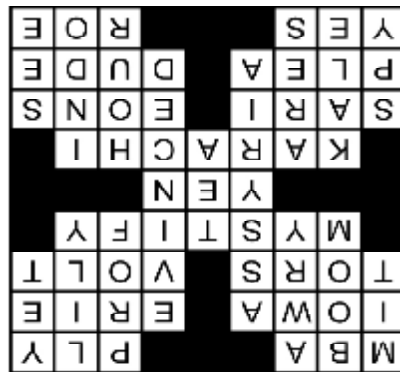
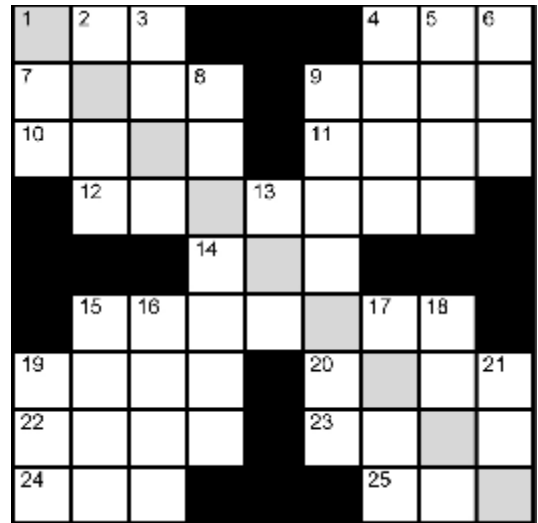
Across

1. C.E.O.'s degree
4. Thickness
7. "Field of Dreams" setting
9. Ashtabula's lake
10. Rocky peaks
11. Electric unit
12. Bewilder
14. Craving
15. Pakistani port
19. Delhi wrap
20. A long, long time
22. Entreaty
23. Dapper fellow
24. "Absolutely!"
25. ___ v. Wade

Down

1. Cambridge sch.
2. Thundering noise
3. Not straight
4. Fac. member
5. Easter flower
6. "Are we there ___?"
8. Present-day Iraq
9. Expressed
13. Oolong, for one

15. Cabbage-like vegetable
16. Mars, to the Greeks
17. Part of a day
18. Prefix with China
19. 007, for one
21. Bishop's jurisdiction



MAY 30TH 2010



How Much Garden Can You Handle?



in tools, fencing, raised gardens and the like by starting this way:

Dig up a 4-foot square in your lawn and sprinkle lettuce seeds on it.

No fertilizer is needed because lettuce will grow any place grass grows.

You won't have to pull weeds, because if you sprinkle enough seeds, weeds won't have a place to grow.

Your 4 x 4 garden will fill the family's salad bowl for about six weeks. The lettuce will be fresh and more nutritious than what you buy in the super-market.

In May, gardeners are eager to get started on the real thing. They want fresh air,

exercise and the cash savings that come from growing their own produce.

But how much can you save?

According to Burpee Seed company,

a pack of green bean seeds will produce a \$75 crop. The lowly potato will give back at least \$5 for every \$1 in seeds that you sow.

Six tomato plants can produce 12 to 15 tomatoes a day at their peak, enough for eating, cooking, and freezing for winter stews or spaghetti sauce. Six pepper plants will do almost the same thing.

If you have the space, a few rows of sweet corn will produce more than you can use, but it's good eatin' when you cut the corn from the cob, bring it to a boil and freeze it for the winter.

Amateurs are excited about getting started. They love to see their new sprouts and developing vegetables. Unfortunately, when the hot summer sun comes their way, the faint of heart and weak of muscle may forget the whole thing and head for their air conditioned sun rooms.

The moral of this story: Don't plant more garden than you can maintain.

Absolute beginners can take a tip from Cornell University's Department of Horticulture. New gardeners can skip the investment

My Current Listings



4BR 3.5BA 3,360SF .20acres **\$379,900**



3BR 2.5BA 2,000SF .20acres **\$255,900**



4BR 3.5BA 4,236SF .92acres **\$525,900**



4BR 2.5BA 2,071SF .50ac Pool **\$225,000**



4BR 3.5BA
3,340SF
2 Car Garage
Gourmet
Kitchen
In Historic
Oakwood
\$700,000



4BR 2.5BA 1,621SF .25acres **\$159,900**



May 2010



Tim McBrayer

Realtor/Broker/Buyer
Agent
The Jim Allen Group at
Coldwell Banker Howard
Perry And Walston
QSC, ASP, ABR, SRES,
EcoBroker, SFR, MBA

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 Teacher's Day	5 Cinco de Mayo 	6	7	8
9 Mother's Day 	10	11	12 Nurse's Day	13	14 New Moon ●	15
16	17	18	19 Shavou'ot	20	21	22
23	24 Victoria Day	25	26	27 Full Moon ○	28	29
30 	31 Memorial Day 					



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[The Birth of Memorial Day](#)

In the 19th century, "Decoration Day" was started to encourage citizens to decorate the graves of soldiers who died in the Civil War. After World War I, the observance expanded to include ceremonies honoring those who died in all of America's wars. The holiday became Memorial Day in 1967.

Now, Memorial Day is celebrated on the last Monday in May. Touching and beautiful ceremonies are held at cemeteries across the country, and if you haven't ever attended one, I encourage you to go this year. I guarantee you'll come away with a new appreciation for the extraordinary efforts of our veterans, and the ultimate sacrifice of those who gave their lives for our country.

General George S. Patton offered his own perspective: "It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather we should thank God that such men lived."

Over 400,000 American soldiers and sailors died in World War II. Around 1,000 World War II veterans are dying each day. These are the unsung heroes who saw action in Europe, Asia and Africa, and then came home and got down to business. We know them as the "Greatest Generation" -- the men and women who took on big challenges and gave selflessly. Can we meet those standards?