



Suzanne Pelkey
REALTOR, CRS
01512847

Coldwell Banker Realty
8305 Prunedale North Road, #117
SALINAS, CA 93907
Phone: 831-206-3359
Fax: 831-626-2220
suzanne.pelkey@cbnocal.com

The Best ROI Home Improvements You Can Make

by *homewarranty.com*

For many homeowners, spring brings with it a desire to make a few changes around the house and yard, even jump into a renovation project. This year, consider upgrades that will increase your home's return on investment, even if you don't have plans to sell right now.

The Kitchen

It's no surprise that a kitchen remodel remains the top home improvement that provides the highest return on your investment. Experts estimate that although kitchen remodels are pricey, they will usually return anywhere between 50-75%. Potential home buyers will view an upgraded, modern kitchen as a more valuable, not to mention convenient investment.

The Floors

Refinishing hardwood floors is another great home improvement project that can bring you a high return on your investment. Experts suggest that covering a hardwood floor with carpeting rather than refinishing it, will only lose you money in the long run.

The Interior Walls

Paint, paint, paint. Most agents will recommend a fresh coat of paint before a house goes to market. Painting is not only an inexpensive improvement, it also makes a substantial impact. This is no time to experiment with unusual colors. Go for light colors like whites, creams, and light grays. Painting main living areas can create the illusion of larger more open space.

The Floorplan

A National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) survey shows that 85% of home buyers are looking for an open floor plan between the dining room and the kitchen. 85% is nothing to sneeze at, but many homes may not have the ability to easily change their interior space. Experts urge homeowners to consult with a professional before tearing down interior walls.

The Yard

At times the outdoors gets ignored as we tend to concentrate on improving our living areas. The truth is your outdoor space offers incredible potential for a return on your investment. Upgrades to your landscape can be done without investing a load of money. Projects may include fresh mulch, a tidy, trimmed driveway, some low-maintenance plants, and a basic upkeep of your lawn.

The Garage Door

Take a look at your existing garage door. Is it faded, dingy, or noisy? Perhaps it has an outdated look. A new garage door can add punch to your home's curb appeal. An average garage door costs about \$1,200 but adds an average of nearly \$2,800 in resale value.

The Mailbox

Talk about simple fix. Upgrade a tired, scratched or dented mailbox for under \$100. While you're at it, take a look at your house numbers. If they look worn, replace them for less than \$20.

The Little Things

Details that add a touch of luxury and style can go a long way. Think doorknobs, kitchen cabinet knobs, and drawer pulls. Choose finishes that complement your interior colors and styles.

May Calendar

May 5 - Cinco De Mayo

May 8 - Mother's Day

May 21 - Armed Forces Day

May 30 - Memorial Day

Homeowner Tip



Optimal Temp for Your Fridge

We all know our refrigerator temp should not fall below 32 degrees to prevent our food from freezing, but how warm should your temps go? According to the FDA, your fridge temp should be kept at or below 40 degrees - with our freezers set to 0 degrees Fahrenheit. The FDA also recommends you check your temps periodically. Newer model refrigerators come with electronic temp readings, but an old-fashioned appliance thermometer will do the trick.

Friday the 13th: No Worries, It's Not All Bad News

This month brings with it a Friday the 13th. Instead of focusing on the superstitious aspect of this much-maligned day, let's take a look at some positive happenings that occurred on Friday the 13th.

1. A big date for Ben Franklin lovers, and tax haters. It's said Franklin wrote "In this world, nothing is certain but death and taxes" on a Friday the 13th in November 1789.
2. There is water on the Moon, NASA scientists declared on Friday, Nov. 13, 2009.
3. Super Mario Brothers was released on a Friday the 13th in 1985.

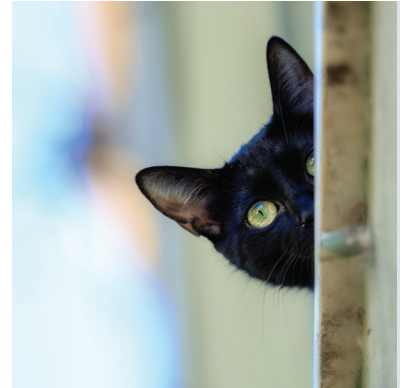
4. Into heavy metal? Black Sabbath's namesake album release on a Friday the 13th in 1970 has been deemed the "birth of heavy metal."

5. The accordion was patented on a Friday the 13th in January 1854 in Philadelphia.

6. On a Friday the 13th in 1935, Hughes H-1 Racer set a world airspeed record and a transcontinental speed record across the United States. It was the last aircraft built by a private individual to do so.

7. On a Friday the 13th in July 1923, the landmark HOLLYWOOD sign was inaugurated in Los Angeles.

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May is National BBQ Month - Celebrate with a Great Sauce

May is National BBQ month so grab your favorite meats or veggies, heat up your grill and celebrate.

Here's a quick and easy homemade BBQ sauce to pull together in about 15 minutes. This recipe makes about 2 cups.

it's a great sauce for chicken, ribs, and pork, but it also takes the flavor up a notch on a burger in place of ketchup, or as a sauce for a BBQ chicken pizza.

Ingredients

- 2 cups ketchup
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar

- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Stone House Seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon hot sauce optional

Instructions

Whisk together all ingredients in a medium saucepan situated over medium heat. Allow to come to a bubble and then reduce the heat to low. Allow to simmer until thickened, about 10 minutes.

Serve immediately or allow to cool slightly and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.



Photo & recipe courtesy of: addapinch.com - Homemade BBQ Sauce