



**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@cbnorcal.com

SuzannePelkey.com

## Budget Friendly Upgrades You're Going to Love

by *homewarranty.com*

Updating your home doesn't have to bust your budget. A little upgrade here and there can make your home sell faster and for a higher price. If you're not in the market to sell, these budget-friendly upgrades will work wonders to brighten your surroundings and make your day a little less complicated.

### FRESH PAINT WORKS WONDERS

Nothing transforms the look of your home for less money than a fresh coat of paint. According to a 2021 ZillowGroup.com survey, the following are colors most likely to make your home sell faster. Even if you're staying put, new paint is a quick way to bring big changes to a room.

- **Bathroom** - Light blue bathrooms had homebuyers admitting they would pay a 1.6% increase in the offer price.
- **Kitchen** - Potential home buyers found *white* to be the most appealing color for a kitchen.
- **Living Room** - The survey found your best bet for living room walls was gray and that this color resulted in the highest intentions to view and purchase a home.
- **Bedroom** - Surprisingly, the majority of those surveyed found bold colors ideal for the bedroom, in particular dark blue.

### INSTALL A SMART THERMOSTAT

A smart thermostat adjusts the heating and cooling temp setting of your home by using WiFi, which enables you to manage it remotely from your smartphone.

Your smart thermostat will provide a brand app that you download onto your mobile device. The app allows you to

check your thermostat anywhere you have WiFi. You can change the temp setting on your thermostat while at the office, running errands, or even on vacation.

With your smart thermostat app, you can also set up app-based heating and cooling schedules for seasonal preferences.

### REPLACE TIRED HARDWARE

Switch things up with a quick cosmetic fix. Replace cabinet handles, door knobs, pulls, and rods in each room for a fresh new look. This is an inexpensive improvement that requires minimal effort. Hardware is often overlooked, but small details like new cabinet handles and door knobs can make a large impact on a room.

### UPGRADE YOUR BATHROOM LIGHTING

Are your current bathroom light fixtures not working properly? Are they rusty? Outdated? Ugly? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, now is a great time to update your lighting. This is another low-cost, high-impact update to add a little "wow" to your bathroom. Choose a fixture that complements the space; whether you're aiming for industrial or whimsical, there is no shortage of beautiful bathroom light fixtures from which to choose.

### GIVE YOUR FRONT YARD A FACE LIFT

Adding a little appeal to the front of your home can be done on a tiny budget.

- Plant colorful flowers to add color
- Replace your aging mailbox
- Add pathway lighting
- Paint your front door

According to Fixr.com, the hottest front door colors for 2023 are Black, Blue (all shades), Sage Green, Gray, and assorted bold colors like Red and Yellow.

## February Calendar

**February 2** - Groundhog Day

**February 14** - Valentine's Day

**February 20** - Presidents Day

**February is Cherry Month**

## Homeowner Tips



### Make Your Own Cleaning Spray

If you prefer a more natural cleaning product, you may be surprised to find how simple and effective a homemade product can be. For a spray that will clean just about anything—countertops, the sink, light fixtures, and more—mix 13 ounces of hot water, ½ cup of white vinegar, 15 drops of grapefruit essential oil, 10 drops of lavender essential oil, and seven drops of lemon essential oil in a spray bottle, says Kimberly Button, a certified green living expert.

## Show the Love on Valentine's Day by Giving Your Time to Others

"Would you be my...Volunteer?" Celebrate this day of love by giving to those in need. **Volunteermatch.org** is a great resource that can help you find ways to create positive change for those in your area. Just use your zip code to easily locate volunteer positions available within your community.

Instead of hitting the fancy restaurants this year, try serving a meal to neighbors in need through a local food bank, church, or homeless shelter.

Many of those in our community are unable to spend time with loved ones. Organizations like the **United Service**

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**Organizations (USO.org)** need help sending cards and packages to deployed military members.

You can also find patients in local hospitals or hospices who may not have loved ones near. Receiving a card or care package can be an uplifting gesture.

Considering volunteering for those going through a crisis with organizations like **Crisis Text Line**.

**CrisisTextLine.org** can put you in touch with those in your community in desperate need to reach out and talk with others during a personal crisis.



## It's Love at First Bite with Mini Cherry Cheesecakes

Just like a full-size cheesecake, these bite-sized treats are packed with creamy flavor and are a perfect way to treat your Valentine to a special dessert!

### INGREDIENTS

*For the crust:*

- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 1¼ cup graham cracker crumbs (about 9 full-size crackers)
- ¼ cup granulated sugar

*For the cheesecake:*

- 2 large eggs
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 21 ounce can of cherry pie filling

### INSTRUCTIONS

Make graham cracker crust by melting butter and using a fork to mix in the graham crumbs and ¼ cup sugar. Set aside.

Beat 1 cup sugar, eggs, cream cheese, and vanilla until well blended. Press 1-2 tsp crust in a paper-lined mini muffin pan. Fill ⅔ full with cream cheese filling.

Bake in a 350-degree oven for about 17-20 minutes. Makes about 4 dozen mini cherry cheesecakes. Store tightly covered in the refrigerator.

To serve, top each cheesecake with a tablespoon of cherry pie filling (try to get one cherry on each pie). Enjoy cold!



Photo & recipe courtesy of: [shugarysweets.com/](http://shugarysweets.com/)