

# Mario's

## REAL ESTATE **UPDATE**



**OUTDOOR**  
LIVING  
**IN STYLE**

IN THE  
**GARDENING**  
**ZONE**

GARDEN  
**DÉCOR**



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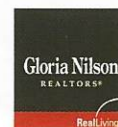
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#1 Agent in Monmouth  
County 2011-2012

Over \$75 million & 75 homes sold/  
marketed 2012

110 Avenue of Two Rivers  
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### **WHY USE A REALTOR®?**

I understand buying or selling a home is one of the largest investment decisions most people make in their lifetime. During my 21-year tenure in the industry, I've been dedicated to helping make all facets of the buying and selling process easy and successful for my clients. The most important goal for me is giving my clients a sense of confidence and security throughout the entire process.

If you are buying, I have access to many resources to assist you in your home search, even if a property is not actively advertised in the market. I can provide you with objective information about the property and the surrounding community, as well as help you negotiate price, and terms and conditions when you decide to make an offer.

If you are selling I can give you current information about the marketplace and help you set a reasonable asking price for your property, getting your home sold at the best price in a timely fashion. I advertise all my properties heavily on a wide variety of internet sites designed to drive traffic to specific listings. I will also help you evaluate incoming offers and write a win-win agreement to avoid any pitfalls.

As Monmouth County's top producing real estate agent in 2012, I sold over \$75 million, and marketed/sold 75 homes last year. I would be happy to assist you with your real estate needs. For an appointment, call me at 732-881-4306.



# OUTDOOR LIVING, in style



“...add a few colorful accents that echo your surroundings and bring the look together.”

A well-defined outdoor room with a clear sense of style is an extension of your living space and an addition to your home's value.

An outdoor room should show seamlessly from your house's architecture and style of decoration; for example, a country home can open onto a rustic patio with wicker furniture, terra-cotta pots and galvanized watering cans.

#### DESIGN FEATURES

A sheltered outdoor room will maximize your year-round use of space. Consider building a permanent overhang or roof, or installing a retractable awning for more versatility.

Stay warm on cooler days and evenings with patio heaters or portable outdoor space heaters, and if budget and bylaws permit, install an outdoor fireplace or chimney.

Candles are charming decorative accents, but if you intend to spend plenty of time outdoors in the evenings, installing wired outdoor lighting is a more practical option.

#### OUTDOOR FURNITURE

Most outdoor furniture lasts longer if sheltered during the winter. Consider lightweight furniture options like all-weather wicker, resin or metal frames with woven seats. Choose furniture with water-resistant cushions and fabric only if you have convenient storage at hand, or have a covered outdoor space.

Generally, position your outdoor furniture to take advantage of the best view. Pick a neutral scheme and simple designs for furniture, fabrics and accessories, and add a few colorful accents that echo your surroundings and bring the look together.

#### ACTIVITY ZONES

Create specific areas for relaxation, recreation and tasks. For reading, include a comfortable chair and a table for placing a book, drink or a snack. A simple two-seater bistro dining set can become an alfresco dining area for four by pulling up extra folding chairs; if you have the space, plan on a minimum 9 x 9 ft area for a 4 ft diameter table.

#### ALFRESCO KITCHEN

Go beyond the barbecue! Full service outdoor cooking centers are increasingly popular, and are practical if you do a lot of outdoor entertaining or live in a climate where you can spend a lot of time outdoors year-round. Purchase or build a barbecue island with storage, a sink and even a small fridge, depending on your budget and needs. ■



# IN THE GARDENING ZONE

You're ready to garden! Before you roll up those sleeves, it's a good idea to do some research on which plants are best for your zone.

## 5 TIPS FOR CHOOSING PLANTS

1. Choose plants that are suitable for your climate as they will be better able to fend for themselves, so that gardening will be less labor-intensive.
2. When deciding which plants will go where, select a mix of evergreens, perennials and annuals for year-round interest.
3. Plant small flowering trees, which are easy to integrate into your garden plan.
4. Choose ornamental grasses to give your garden landscaping height and an almost maintenance-free elegance.
5. Don't forget to factor in the light: how much sun does each part of the garden get? Plants for partial shade should receive no more than six hours of sun a day; plants for full sun should get at least six hours of sun a day.

## 3 STEPS TO PLANTING

Once you have drawn up a garden landscaping plan, it's time to get down and dirty.

1. Begin by preparing the soil for planting; starting with good quality soil is 90 percent of your gardening success. Determine what kind of soil is native to your area, and depending on how friendly that is to the

plants you have in mind, supplement your garden's natural soil with a universally accepted planting mixture from your garden store.

2. When placing plants in the ground, bear in mind that the crown of the plant—where stems meet the top of the pot it came in—should stand 2- to 3-in (5- to 8-cm) above soil level.
3. Then, mould the soil up to the crown; this helps guard against plant rot. When you water, any moisture that flows into the crown won't drain away and could rot the plant. Most plants need to dry out a bit between watering for their roots to breathe. Don't overwater! ■■

## TIP: MAKE A HERB GARDEN

Nothing beats fresh, fragrant herbs for your favourite recipes—just a few steps from your kitchen! So why not add a container herb garden to your outdoor space?

Choose a large planter (round or rectangular will work) and plant small herb plants like parsley, chives, mint, oregano, dill and basil. They will all work together in the same container as long as it is large enough.

With regular watering, herbs are very easy to maintain, and will last all season. When it becomes too cold, bring the container inside for the winter.

## GARDEN décor

Like any interior room, decorative accents give your garden the finishing touch. Quality lawn and garden décor pieces are the visual and aural grace notes that define your garden's style, reflecting the mood you want to create.

### Design a dynamic landscape

When deciding where to place garden accessories, be sure to take the height of the surrounding plants and landscaping into consideration. If you have a lush garden of tall grasses and flowering plants, consider accessories that are a foot tall or higher. If the item is to be a focal point, it can be somewhat larger or taller than the surrounding garden features. Smaller, lower accessories are charming when placed in garden beds and borders, or near low-growing plants.

### Create a tranquil hideaway

Install seating beneath a tree or arbor, such as a stone bench, a sturdy wooden swing or an outdoor hammock. Hang a wood and steel wind chime nearby to send pleasant notes into the air.

### Add water elements

A fountain, either on its own or as part of a pond system, adds a pleasant water element to your landscape. Install this feature near areas you frequent, such as a garden path or a seating area, to optimize your enjoyment of the sound and view of running water.

### Consider lighting

For outdoor gazebos or trees with strong, low limbs, an outdoor candle-bearing chandelier or tealight candle lanterns can be a breathtakingly beautiful accent, especially when lit during the evening. Asian-inspired lanterns with colored glass panels create an environment that feels both festive and romantic. ■■

## DID YOU KNOW?

Individual pieces can also help draw attention to attractive landscaping features, and away from any less attractive features; a pair of Grecian urns complements a handsome front entrance, and an arbor can screen an unsightly view beyond your garden.





## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT

# MARIO...

### Mike and Kim M.

*I give Mario my highest recommendation. He possesses all the attributes necessary to be an excellent broker and for that matter making a difference in choosing the town/home when laying down roots for a family. He knows the market extremely well; he is diligent, responsive, and yet very patient with his clients. It would be hard to envision someone doing a better job than Mario.*

### Laura D.

*Mario is a lifelong resident of Monmouth County and knows the in's and out's of every town. He is a dedicated expert and works to meet the needs of his customers. He is honest, efficient and responsive. With Mario as your realtor, you will learn about houses even before they are listed, and you will be one of the first buyers to look at a house. Mario regularly wins awards for being one of the top realtors in Monmouth County, and is well deserving of any recognition he receives.*

### Kristin and John P.

*Mario came highly recommended from an attorney I work closely with. I left a message at his office and he called me back within 24 hours. After our phone conversation, he sent me a list of homes that were exactly what we were looking for. The first house that he showed us is the first one that we bought. He helped us through every step of the process and did everything he could to ensure that we got the home we wanted. He went above and beyond for us.*