



NO. 17  
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# Cheviot Hills

*The greatest neighborhood in the world*



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# A trip to memory lane

By BEN LEE

Have you ever attempted to go home again? To recapture those most idyllic childhood memories when you felt most alive, energized and happy? Most experts claim that it's not possible to achieve this, which is why they say, "you can't go home again." Maybe in some circumstances that's true, however, I am happy to say that not only was it possible for me to go on an emotional and nostalgic trip down memory lane, it was made richer by bringing my family along with me.

I grew up in Malibu and Santa Monica but (almost) every summer I journeyed up to Napa, California to visit my aunt and uncle on their vineyard and farm. For years I would regale my wife with tales of life on the farm: the animals, the freshly picked fruits and vegetables, the acres and acres of vineyards in which cousins

would race around, playing hide-and-go seek with green leaves and grapes as our protective shields. There were a few beat up and rusted Volkswagen 'Things' resting on the property and often my aunt and uncle would let the kids take turns driving. My cousins taught me how to drive, shoot firecrackers and catch lizards while my aunt would invite my brother and me into her studio.

My first of three boys was born ten years ago and ever since, I had wanted to take everyone up to Napa to experience it. I wanted the boys to see how different life was outside Cheviot Hills. I wanted them to take a break from the city and appreciate how fun farm life could be. I'm sure true farmers may balk at the term "fun." My aunt, now nearly 74 years old, is up every morning by 6 a.m. to tend to the animals and crops while their 1850's white, clapboard

farmhouse has well-water, no disposal or dishwasher, questionable heat and zero air conditioning. But that didn't matter to my three boys. From the moment they picked their first green beans and discovered freshly laid eggs in the hen house, they were hooked. From morning until way past their bedtimes, they tripped over themselves to keep up with my aunt, learning everything from caring for baby chicks to happily trudging through boggy marshes looking for frogs, to learning about composting and taking turns riding shotgun in the 'Thing' while zooming up and down the aisles of grapevines. There were big family meals every night, trips to the feed store, water balloon fights, tetherball tournaments and even a wild animal or two. While my aunt is a true powerhouse, my uncle, nearly 80, was fairly content to sit on the porch,

sipping his homemade wine, watching the whirlwind of excitement swirl all around him. With no grandsons to call his own, I think he got a kick out of spending time with my boys, (his great-nephews), especially my youngest who looks just like him.

This was an ideal trip that I have a feeling my boys will recall with fondness for years to come. Memories they'll hopefully share with their future wives and children. And maybe, if they're truly lucky, they'll be able to return one day to play with their future families amongst the beautiful grape vines. But if by then the house and land cease to exist for their enjoyment, I hope that they can go back to whatever childhood tradition they may recall with fondness. Because just when you think it's impossible to go home again, it's nice to discover that sometimes you can.



# My featured listings

## BEN LEE - ESTATES SALES

### West Hollywood – NEW LISTING!



#### 7168 Willoughby Ave. – Offered at \$749,000

Lovely 2 BR/1 BA home with spacious & bright living room with custom paint & newer hardwood floors throughout. Updated kitchen has granite counters & stainless steel appliances. French doors open to a wrap around deck. Both BRs are very comfortable & boast ample closet space including a walk in located in the 2nd BR. Additional multi-functional bonus room has storage cabinetry. Other upgrades include a remodeled BA, central AC/Heat plus new sewer line. Prime opportunity to own in West Hollywood!

### Cheviot Hills – ACTIVE!



#### 10289 Bannockburn Dr. – Offered at \$1,699,000

Spanish Mediterranean with city views in great location of Cheviot Hills! Private bamboo fence with lush gardens surround the home completely. The yard also boasts a Koi pond, gas fire pit and outdoor shower! Covered deck with granite outdoor bar makes this home perfect for entertaining. With 6 bedrooms and 4 full baths this home boasts wood floors, large formal dining, formal living, maids quarters, office, large kitchen with center island, 3 refrigerators, outdoor laundry room, gas burning fireplace, breakfast area and plenty of storage space throughout.

### Cheviot Hills – ACTIVE!



#### 10550 Rountree Rd. – Offered at \$3,249,000

5 BD, 4.5BA newer construction. Crowned moldings, rich wood floors, soothing paint colors. Open floor plan showcases FDR, living rm & great rm. 2 downstairs fips. State-of-the-art kitchen feats oversized Carrera island, ss Subzero refrigerator, Viking 6-burner range, lg walk-in pantry & wine refrigerator. Upstairs laundry facilities w/ storage, lg BDs & BAs & master suite: his/hers walk-in closets, a balcony overlooking grassy backyard, a tiled BA & an adj sitting area. Overland School District.

### Brentwood – REDUCED!



#### 11824 Darlington Ave. #103 – Offered at \$899,000

Spacious 3 bedroom, 2 1/2 bathroom townhouse style condominium on a beautiful tree lined street in Brentwood. Granite kitchen with beautiful cabinetry and breakfast bar. Hardwood floors throughout the main level and an open floor plan connecting the living and dining areas. Upstairs are two spacious bedrooms and a large master suite with his & hers walk-in closets and luxurious bathroom with dual sinks and spa tub. Quiet, controlled-access building built in 1999 with exercise room and secured garage with two covered parking spaces for this unit. Close to upscale shopping and restaurants.

### Cheviot Hills – COMING SOON!



#### 3015 Earlmor Dr. –

Custom built home!

### Beverlywood – IN ESCROW!



#### 9031 David Ave. – Offered at \$1,199,000

A 3 BR / 2.5 BA traditional home in Beverlywood with crowned moldings & hardwood floors. The den opens to the formal dining room with original fixtures. Modern improvements including new kitchen appliances, exquisitely tiled bathrooms as well as the spacious master bedroom suite enhance the home without compromising its original charm. There is a side patio perfect for a morning coffee, as well as a large entertaining space. Located in the award winning Castle Heights school district.



# Cheviot Hills' happenings

## REAL SIMPLE

By BEN LEE

Here's some exciting news, our family and home were selected to appear in the September issue of Real Simple magazine! The article was promoted as a home with unexpected features. What an experience that was! A crew was flown out from New York and it took about a week to get the house styled in advance of the photographs. The day of the shoot, we were treated to hair/make up before the

daunting task of keeping three boys clean while waiting for all of our close-ups! We have no idea what pictures will make the final cut. For all we know, the only member of our family who might get their 15 minutes of fame will be our dog, Yoda, who was the most often requested model of the day! Regardless, it was a fun experience and we were excited for our house to represent Cheviot Hills on the national stage (or at least to the readers of Real Simple)!



Yoda

## Back to School

By BEN LEE

There is something still so unnatural about associating August with Back-to-School! But, like it or not, for the majority of Los Angeles residents, most schools are back in session August 12. Castle Heights (the wonderful public elementary school on the border of Beverlywood and Cheviot Hills) will be offering a dedicated Transitional Kindergarten class

(qualifying children must turn 5 between September 2, 2014 - December 2, 2014). The class will be taught by a credentialed (and fabulous) Castle Heights kindergarten teacher and will have its own curriculum. There will be a welcome party for all incoming kindergarteners (transitional as well as traditional) on August 7. This is a casual get together on the kindergarten yard for families to meet their child's teacher and

other students. Castle Heights will also be accepting permits so if you know someone who would like to attend who may not live in our area, please spread the word. For more information, contact my wife Lilli and she'll give you all the information: [lillijlee@yahoo.com](mailto:lillijlee@yahoo.com)

New school years often stir up emotions, equal parts excitement and anxiety (for both parents and students!). Good luck and I hope this school year is a successful one for you and your family.

## Estate Tax 101

By MICHAEL HARRIS, ESQ.

With personal residences increasing in value, it may be appropriate to visit the estate tax implications of one's total assets. If an individual has a total estate of \$45,340.00 or more, his or her heirs are likely to be responsible for the payment of

an estate tax. Married couples with community estates between \$5,340,000 and \$10,680,000 with the proper use of a trust arrangement will be able to avoid an estate tax. Furthermore, married persons may gift \$28,000 per year to children, their spouses, grandchildren and

others whether related or not tax-free. For example, if a married couple has three married children and five grandchildren that couple could give away tax free \$308,000 per year without tax consequences in an effort to reduce their gross assets below the estate tax threshold.



### Palms-Rancho Park Library

2920 Overland Ave.  
Los Angeles, Calif., 90064  
[www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org)

**July 30**  
**Toddler Storytime**  
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
Program includes stories, songs, movement and a craft.

**July 31**  
**Summer Reading Club - Children**  
4 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
For the final "Paws to Read" program, your stuffed animals are invited to spend the night at the Palms-Rancho Park Branch Library.

**Money Matters**  
6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Peter A. Collins, Certified Financial Planner will discuss financial planning basics.

**August 2**  
**Quilting Class**  
2:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Travel through the art form of quilting. From the beginner to the advanced, all are welcome.

**August 4**  
**English Conversation Class**  
6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
This weekly class includes instruction on reading, grammar and pronunciation.

**August 9**  
**Great Ideas of Philosophy**

3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
This videotaped lecture series by Prof. Daniel N. Robinson of Oxford University and The Teaching Company introduces the main currents and issues in philosophical thought from ancient Greece to the contemporary world. Each session will also include time for questions and discussion. Previous knowledge of philosophy is not necessary.

**August 12**  
**Friends of the Library**

6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Location:  
The Friends of the Library are active community members who raise funds and sponsor programs to enhance library services. New members are always welcome.

**August 14**  
**Great Books Discussion Group**  
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
All are welcome to attend. Please call the library at (310) 840-2142 for the title to be discussed at this meeting.