

Cheviot Hills

The greatest neighborhood in the world

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Buon Giorno

By Ben Lee

Oh, Summer. I still cling to the memories of when I was in school, recalling that summer break was something to look forward to every year. I went to a great camp where I met a bunch of kids I'm still friends with today. I took trips with my family and I spent countless hours just hanging out at the beach or doing nothing substantial at all. There was something somewhat meaningful about being bored- this was of course decades before the panicked, activity overload and jam-packed scheduling of kids today. Back then we were bored to the point of almost/kind of looking forward to going back to school again. Maybe hindsight is 20/20 but it did feel like an idyllic snapshot of time that I should've appreciated more since once you grow up, it's a rude awakening to find most careers don't take a twelve week break when the weather warms.

I've always felt grateful that I have found truly phenomenal professionals to work with me. This allows me the freedom to leave town and know the work is being handled in my absence. So, thanks in large part to my invaluable team (Andrew, Joanna and Jordan) holding down the fort, I was able to take the family to Italy! I don't know why it seemed like the majority of Westsiders traveled to Italy this summer, but it felt as though everywhere you turned (or every Facebook posting you read) Italy was the undeniable hot spot. And 'hot' was an understatement. It was sweltering. And crowded! It was as if tourists from all corners of the globe descended all at once to reclaim what was denied during lockdown. It was an absolute renaissance in the birthplace of the actual Renaissance. The pasta tasted better. Michaelangelo's David stood taller; the gelato seemed sweeter.

We spent about two weeks roaming the country, starting in the north and making our way south and to the coastline. We rode bikes through the cobblestoned town of Lucca; watched the "Calcio Storico" in Florence (basically a centuries-old tradition that combines extreme wrestling with the pageantry of gladiators and a bit of lawless street fighting mixed in for good measure). We visited Carrara and learned how all that famous marble is carved from the mountains and shaped into statues or mined to



become countertops. We ate our way through Tuscany and sampled food and wine that were other-worldly. We toured the ruins of Pompeii in what possibly may have been the hottest day since Mt. Vesuvius erupted 2000 years ago. But it was so interesting, seeing how these ancient Romans lived: the opulence of some of the structures and intricacy of the mosaics that have stood the test of time.

I think it was just about this point of the tour when my eldest son started feeling not so great. We were all hot and exhausted so didn't really think too much about it when he said that he was, too. We were sore after a week's worth of walking, not to mention being cramped up in a car for the four hours from Cortona to Napoli. So, when Mason said his back was really hurting and he needed to lie down on a crumbling rock wall at Pompeii, I thought he was just tired like the rest of us. I felt compelled to explain to our tour guide that he wasn't the type of kid who complained but was probably just needing a break from the heat.

Back in the car for another hour ride to our next destination: Sorrento. One of the most beautiful spots along the famous Amalfi Coast. It was while we were rounding the bend on a windy portion of the journey that my phone rang: I got the news that my big, beautiful listing on Glenbarr closed! Two weeks on the market and sold for over asking, I was ecstatic. The wonderful family who purchased the house was so happy to make this

property their next home. I got to share the exciting news that the house was officially theirs as I was taking in the exquisite vista of the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. Truly a special and memorable experience.

But poor Mason was not feeling the joy and could barely garner the energy to take in the scenery. We got him up to the hotel room and gave him a Covid test. That thin second line appeared in an instant. Positive. Poor guy had symptoms and despite being vaxxed and boosted, he felt lousy. Aches, fatigue, sore throat, cold. It was impossible to isolate him- he'd have to share a room with his two brothers, one of whom had Covid in May but was the only member of our family to have had it until now. We had all been travelling with him maskless and in confined spaces- we figured it was just a matter of time before the 'vid made its way to the rest of us, too.

But until that happened, we tried to soak up as much of the country as we could. While Mason was stuck watching Netflix in his room, the rest of us made the best of an unfortunate turn of events. There was a pleasant boat ride in Capri; cooking class in Sorrento; shopping in Positano and then a few days before we were due to come home, I felt that achy soreness that I'd normally chalk up to a busy trip's jam-packed itinerary. But nope, not this time! Positive test result for me, too. Another one bites the dust.

Luckily, we were able to come home on schedule without having to

quarantine in Italy until a negative test result. I experienced a pretty decent fever and chills a few nights before we left but thankfully, once we boarded the flight in Rome to come home, I was double masked and fever-free. I stayed put and rested for a week until I was negative and other than an annoying cough, felt fine. By that point, of course, our youngest son and my wife both contracted it but those two were totally asymptomatic and never would've known they had it if not for their avid test taking.

Yet still, despite all the bumps in the road, our summer adventure was still so great! We really had a memorable, fun-filled time. Ate a lot, saw a lot and came home with some fabulous souvenirs (and one or two not-so-fabulous ones called Covid). I'm sorry that this has become the new normal and I look forward to a time when we don't have to worry about inadvertently picking up or spreading this relentless and insanely contagious disease. I certainly hope your summer plans do not have Covid on the itinerary but if you are one of the millions of us who can now say 'you've had it,' I hope your case has been as mild, fast and pain-free as possible.

And if you are one of the few who have yet to experience Covid for yourselves, go buy a lottery ticket or enter our raffle, stat. You're definitely one of a small number who've managed to avoid it. Congratulations on that feat and best of continued good health to you and yours!



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - NEW LISTING!



10538 Bradbury Rd \$2,395,000

3 Beds/2 Bath + ADU - 1,865 + 700 Sq. Ft., 6,250 Sq. Ft. Lot

An idyllic English countryside cottage, a classic home that gives Cheviot Hills its character and personality. Built in 1928 and lovingly maintained yet also updated to suit today's modern family. The home is basked in natural light and the bedrooms are large and cheerful with generous closets. There is an impressive two-story guest house that has its own bedroom, ½ bath and loft. Situated in the highly desirable Overland Elementary School district, this cherished home is an undeniable gem of the neighborhood.

Beverlywood - NEW LISTING!



9319 Cattaraugus Ave \$2,195,000

4 Beds/3.5 Bath + ADU - 2,034 + 400 Sq. Ft., 6,175 Sq. Ft. Lot

A stunning 3 bedroom/2 bath (with ADU) chic farmhouse house was fully remodeled only two years ago and is brimming with style and personality. Masterful craftsmanship and extraordinary attention to detail, this beautiful home provides every modern convenience without sacrificing its sweet character. Additional features of this lovely home include: air and water filtration systems, and a quick stroll to the award winning Castle Heights Elementary School. You will fall in love with this special and charming house!

Cheviot Hills - GREAT NEW PRICE!



2848 Motor Ave \$4,195,000

5 Beds/4.5 Bath 4,246 Sq. Ft., 7,485 Sq. Ft. Lot

An extraordinary property in Cheviot Hills: with the glamour and design of a palatial estate without sacrificing the warmth and charm of a beloved family home, this stately Mediterranean is a masterpiece of craftsmanship and detail. Additional amenities include: Sonos central smart panels to control tv, sound system, lighting located in the family room, impossibly high ceilings, sweeping views, multiple fireplaces, front balconies and generous storage space. A truly exquisite property that will make an impression.

Cheviot Hills - FOR SALE!



10326 Walavista Rd

6 Beds/6.5 Bath 4,525 Sq. Ft., 6,362 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - FOR SALE!



- LORENZO -

Best Location in the Neighborhood!

6 Beds/8 Bath 7,500 Sq. Ft., 8,500 Sq. Ft. Lot

Beverlywood - IN ESCROW!



1920 Bagley Ave \$3,299,000

5 Beds/4 Bath 3,358 Sq. Ft., 9,533 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - IN ESCROW!



3064 Motor Ave \$1,795,000

3 Beds/2 Bath 2,600 Sq. Ft., 6,504 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills - SOLD!



3211 Castle Heights Ave \$3,195,000

5 Beds/4 Bath 2,971 Sq. Ft., 8,750 Sq. Ft. Lot

Rancho Park - SOLD!



10629 Blythe Ave \$2,950,000

4 Beds/3.5 Bath 3,100 Sq. Ft., 6,126 Sq. Ft. Lot

Cheviot Hills happenings

Back to School

By Ben Lee



With so many schools starting in August, you only have a few more weeks to take your kids to see some of the sites around town that make Los Angeles famous. We all know that Disneyland, Knotts and Magic Mountain are too crowded in the summer to truly enjoy so instead of an amusement park, here are a few other places to check out that may be slightly off the radar but no less enjoyable!

Echo Park Lake- Rent a pedal boat while enjoying the beautiful views of Downtown LA. Following your boatride, enjoy a Langer's Pastrami Sandwich. The best in the city for generations.

Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area- If I didn't have to go for a track tournament, I never would've known this hidden gem exists right in our own backyard. Hiking trails, nature walks, incredible views of the city, kids and dogs (and adults) will love it.

Peterson Auto Museum- Even non-classic car enthusiasts can appreciate the beauty and style of these impeccable

automobiles. There are revolving exhibits (James Bond cars, for example) as well as permanent fixtures (the Batmobile!) that will please everyone in the family.

CicLAvia- Even if you or your children are not avid bike riders, there's something very exciting about big streets being shut down to cars and opened up only to pedestrians, skaters, strollers and two wheelers. The next one will be on August 21 and covering streets in Hollywood/West Hollywood- you definitely should check it out!

Zoomars Petting Zoo- This one is a bit of an excursion, but we did it a lot when our boys were young and it's so much fun. Hop on the Amtrak Train to San Juan Capistrano (sure, you could drive but the train is an added bonus). A short stroll through this small village of shops and restaurants will take you to Zoomars. Kids can play on the equipment, pan for gold and pet the goats. Older kids may enjoy a walk through the nearby Mission. A nice lunch at Trevor's at the Tracks (it's iconic) before a restful train ride back to LA makes for a really nice day trip.

Join Las Floristas

By Lilli Lee

Las Floristas is a nearly century-old philanthropic organization I became involved with about a year ago. Its mission has always been to raise funds for Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, specifically the special needs and services needed to help under-served children afflicted with spinal cord injuries. Las Floristas has donated millions of dollars over the years and their efforts have helped make it possible for children in wheelchairs participate in sports, drive cars, get scholarships to college, utilize state-of-the-art medical equipment and possibly most importantly, realize that their dreams don't have to die just because they now find themselves in what could be considered a dire, life-altering situation. Throughout the year the ladies of Las Floristas go to Rancho Los Amigos and work with the children on a variety of crafts and activities. There are also two fun parties a year: a

festive holiday banquet and auction in December as well as a more formal (but no less fun) gala in May. All proceeds from these events go toward funding the programs at Rancho. If you are interested in learning more about this remarkable organization, please visit the website: lasfloristas.org Las Floristas welcome new members and now would be a great time to get involved! Feel free to send me an email: lillijlee@yahoo.com and I can try to answer any question you may have.



RAFFLE NEWS

By Ben Lee

Congratulations to Diana and Jerry Klayman! They won last month's raffle and got four fabulous tickets to see the Dodgers beat the Giants! This month we offered a gift card to Westwood's new favorite vegan Mexican restaurant: Hijo de su Madre. Felicidades to Susan Avolio! You are the lucky winner this month. We hope you have all the authentic, delicious (and healthy) Mexican food this local gem has to offer. To all those who entered to win but didn't, don't worry. There is always another raffle around the bend. This month we are raffling off \$50 to everyone's favorite neighborhood market: Trader Joe's! Famous for their fun, international cuisine; fresh flowers, fruits/vegetables and all those great snacks and treats- sold by nice people with a festive island flair, everyone has their favorite specialties only to be



found at TJ's. To enter, simply send me an email: Ben@benleeproperties.com and write TRADER JOE'S in the subject. That's it! We'll draw a winner at the end of the month. Good luck!