



# thesinghalreport

Results. Every SINGHAL time.

[www.thesinghalgroup.com](http://www.thesinghalgroup.com)



**Niraj Singhal**  
Hon. B. Comm., B. Admin.  
Real Estate Broker

Office: 613-749-5000  
Direct: 613-513-5658  
Fax: 613-728-0548

[niraj@thesinghalgroup.com](mailto:niraj@thesinghalgroup.com)  
[www.thesinghalgroup.com](http://www.thesinghalgroup.com)

Welcome to this month's issue of **The Singhal Report** – our monthly real estate newsletter courtesy of The Singhal Group. We bring you this newsletter in hopes that you find it informative and useful. If you're thinking of making a move or have a general real estate related question, please don't hesitate to contact us. We're here to help in any way we can and we would love to hear from you. Be sure to visit our website regularly for up-to-date information on our current listings and to download an electronic copy of this newsletter.

Best Regards,

**Niraj Singhal**



FIRST OTTAWA REALTY  
BROKERAGE  
Each office is independently owned and operated.



## AFFORDABILITY IN TODAY'S MARKET

**Can you afford to buy in today's real estate market? Can you afford *not* to?**

Despite changes in borrowing regulations that lower the amount some homebuyers may be qualified to borrow, the desire to own one's own home will never diminish. In fact, a recent survey by market researcher Leger found that the number of people who feel they could buy a home to suit their family's needs has actually risen, from 46 percent of respondents last year to 55 percent this year.

New federal guidelines that came into effect at the beginning of this year require all federally regulated financial institutions to vet borrowers' applications using a minimum qualifying rate equal to the greater of the Bank of Canada's five-year benchmark rate, or their contractual rate plus two percentage points. This new mortgage "stress test" means many borrowers can't borrow as much as they would previously have

qualified for. How are Canadians managing to work through this?

Today's buyer still wants a home to call their own, but may be shifting their expectations to less expensive housing options — perhaps a different location, size or style of home. Those not able or not willing to change their housing criteria may decide to wait a bit longer, while of course those buyers who pass the stress test will simply be able to carry on with their original plans.

Instead of second-guessing how the regulations might impact your moving plans, let's get together to review the latest housing prices and sales activity in your area of interest, and clarify your position in today's market.

**Please call for your no-obligation update today!**



## Terminology Tip

### LUMP SUM PREPAYMENT

An extra payment made to reduce the principal balance of the mortgage. Lump sum payments can help the borrower pay off their mortgage sooner and save on interest costs. Not all mortgages include a prepayment clause; borrowers need to check with their lender or mortgage broker to confirm the frequency and allowable amounts included in their prepayment privileges.





# GET TO KNOW YOUR HOME

Once you've narrowed down your decision to the house or condo you're interested in purchasing, you'll need to learn as much as you can about its condition. Some physical issues and imperfections may be visible to you; others are sometimes revealed only through the services of a professional home inspector.



It's important to understand that no home, even if it's newly constructed, is in perfect physical condition, so upon reviewing your home inspector's report, you will find yourself weighing what kind of impact each of the home inspector's observations will have on your budget and on your living conditions. For example, while home inspectors will check major things like foundation, roof, and electrical and plumbing systems, they will also note relatively smaller problems like appliances that don't work or faucets where hot and cold are reversed, which can be easily remedied and shouldn't frighten you away from a home that otherwise matches your criteria.

While buyers serious about a house are typically encouraged to have a home inspection conducted before they commit to their purchase, condo buyers may not automatically think about engaging a home inspector to check out their new unit, thinking it's not necessary. There are, however, some of the same concerns to watch out for when inspecting both single family homes and condo units, including:

- **Spotting on ceilings, floors and walls.** Any kind of spotting can often be traced back to water leaking above or behind the walls, which can lead to mold.
- **Sloping, warped or damaged floors.** These too can be a result of water damage.
- **Electrical systems.** While you will want to make sure that all outlets, lights and switches are working, a home

inspector or electrician will be looking for things like scorch marks around breakers and fuses, which can indicate dangerously loose and sparking wires. The HVAC system also needs to be checked out to ensure the heating and cooling systems work as they should.

- **Plumbing.** An essential component of any home, you need to know about any and all problems with water pressure, leaks and even the water heater. While doing the bathroom inspection, in addition to checking if water is flowing properly and if pipes are leaking, the home inspector will also make note of the smaller things, such as gaps in caulking around the tub and shower area, which can be easily remedied.

If you hire a home inspector, you may want to attend the inspection and shadow that person instead of just reading the report once the examination is finished. This way, the inspector can explain to you, in layman's term, the exact nature of any problems and how severe they are — or aren't.

A professional home inspection will help you gain awareness and valuable information about the house or condo you plan to make your home. The inspection will help determine whether or not this property meets all expectations, allow you to recognize what you may need to do or spend on it to bring it up to prime condition, and ideally lessen the risk of having to deal with unexpected defects in the home later on.

## HOUSEHOLD TIP: GO GREEN WITH ORANGES



Why toss orange peels in the trash when they can be recycled in the following "a-peeling" ways?

- **ABSORB BAD SMELLS IN THE FRIDGE:** Dehydrate orange peels in the oven by letting them dry out for a couple of hours in a 200°F oven. Place the dehydrated peels into a food processor and grind them to a powder. Mix the orange powder with baking soda, place in a dish and tuck into a back corner of your fridge.

- **CLEAN AND REFRESH YOUR MICROWAVE:** Place orange peels in a cup of water and microwave for one minute. The resulting steam will not only make dried-on food easier to wipe away, but the scent of the orange peels will also override any leftover food smells in the microwave.
- **MAKE YOUR STAINLESS STEEL SPARKLE:** Remove smudges and fingerprints from your stainless steel appliances by giving them a swipe with the orange side of an orange peel.
- **CREATE AN EFFECTIVE AND ECONOMICAL GREASE-CUTTING SPRAY:** Place orange peels in a jar, fill it with vinegar, and let them soak for a couple of weeks. When ready to use, strain the liquid into a spray bottle and spray on stovetops, windows, mirrors and other surfaces throughout your home, wiping spray off with newspaper or paper towels for a natural shine.

# SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES

**They're inexpensive, quick to install, easily maintained and can save your and your family's lives. They're smoke detectors, and every home needs them, on every level.**

Smoke alarms are the first line of defense against fire-related injury. In the event of fire, properly installed and maintained smoke detectors can help save lives by giving early warning and allowing sufficient time for occupants to reach safety. According to the National Fire Protection Association, two out of three fire deaths occur in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.

Put smoke detectors in the right places in your home, and test them regularly to ensure they work properly. The right places include:

- On every level of the home, including the basement.
- Outside of every bedroom or sleeping area.
- In the living room, den or family room.
- Near stairways leading to upper levels.
- Install smoke alarms 10 feet from cooking appliances, to minimize false alarms.
- Avoid installing alarms near windows, doors or ducts that could interfere with their operation.

Maintaining smoke alarms is easy.

- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Change smoke alarm batteries regularly. Some people use the spring and fall time changes as a prompt to change the batteries in their smoke detectors twice a year.
- Keep smoke alarms clean by vacuuming over and around them, as dust and debris can interfere with their operation. Never paint smoke alarms.

Finally, teach everyone in the household, children included, what the smoke alarm sounds like. Develop a home fire escape plan, and engage in practice fire drills to reinforce the plan.



## KEEP IT COOL

**There's nothing as welcoming on a sweltering summer day than to step into an air-conditioned room. But whether it's because your place doesn't have air conditioning, or you're looking to save money by cutting down on your air conditioning usage, or whether you're concerned about the significant effect of air conditioning on the environment, you'll want to practice the following habits to prevent excess heat from entering your home:**

- If you're not home during the day, or if you're not occupying certain rooms during the day, keep your curtains and blinds tightly closed to prevent sunshine from streaming in and heating up your space.
- Make sure your doors and window frames are sealed with caulking or weather-stripping to seal any gaps and keep cool air in and hot air out. According to ENERGY STAR®, improving the insulation and sealing in your home can save you up to 15 percent on your annual heating and cooling costs.
- Switch out your old incandescent light bulbs with CFL (compact fluorescent) or LED (light emitting diode) bulbs, energy-efficient options that don't produce the heat of the old-style bulbs. While CFL and LED bulbs cost more up-front, consider them an investment as they will not only save you money by using less electricity, you won't have to replace them again for a long time.
- On very hot days, avoid using the oven if you can, as it will heat up not only your kitchen but can also affect surrounding rooms. Instead, enjoy outdoor grilling if available, or utilize your microwave or slow cooker.

~ Monthly Musing ~

***"Be yourself.  
Everyone else  
is taken."***

~ Oscar Wilde

# Stuffed Zucchini Boats

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 large zucchini, sliced in half lengthwise
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped fine
- 3 large cloves garlic, minced
- 8 oz. mushrooms, chopped
- 1 lb. lean ground beef, turkey or chicken
- 1 tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. ground black pepper
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ c. marinara or spaghetti sauce
- 1 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese, divided
- 12 fresh basil leaves, chopped coarsely



## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet or baking dish with parchment paper.
2. Carefully scoop out the insides of each zucchini half, leaving about ¼" of zucchini along the sides and bottom. Chop up the scooped out filling and set aside. Arrange hollowed-out zucchini on prepared pan.
3. In a large skillet, heat the oil and add the chopped onion. Stir for a few minutes before adding garlic and mushrooms. Cook another minute until fragrant, then stir in reserved, chopped zucchini.
4. Mix in ground meat, salt, pepper and oregano and cook until meat is no longer pink, breaking apart ground meat as you stir. Drain if necessary.
5. Remove from heat and stir in marinara or spaghetti sauce, along with ½ a cup of shredded cheese.
6. Fill zucchini shells with mixture and bake in oven for 15 - 20 minutes, until zucchini shells are tender.
7. Remove from oven and sprinkle remaining cheese on top of each zucchini boat. Place back in oven for an additional 5 minutes.
8. Remove from oven and sprinkle with chopped basil before serving.

The information and opinions contained in this newsletter are obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but their accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The publishers assume no responsibility for errors and omissions or for any damages resulting from the use of the published information. This newsletter is provided with the understanding that it does not render legal, accounting, or other professional advice. Not intended to solicit properties or businesses listed for sale and agency agreements in place with other real estate brokers. Whole or partial reproduction of this newsletter is forbidden without the written permission of the publisher. © Market Connections Inc.® 2018, Phone: (800) 387-6058.

Results. Every SINGHAL time.

**430 KILMARNOCK  
WAY**



**SOLD!**

**3 SILVERTHORN  
COURT**



**GORGEOUS GOLF  
COURSE HOME!**

**105 KELSO  
WAY**



**SOLD!**

**1140 GABLEFIELD  
PRIVATE**



**PRISTINE 2 BED/2 BATH  
CONDO**

4

*Notes:*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---