

Glowing Endorsements From Delighted Sellers!



Handcrafted Real Estate Service

Ira & Carol Serkes

Ira & Carol Serkes, Pacific Union
Christie's International Real Estate
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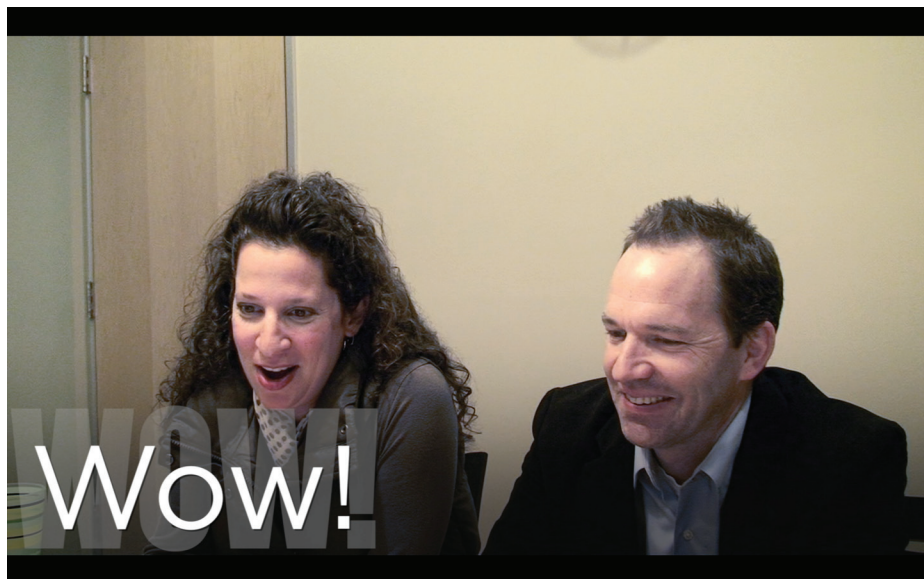
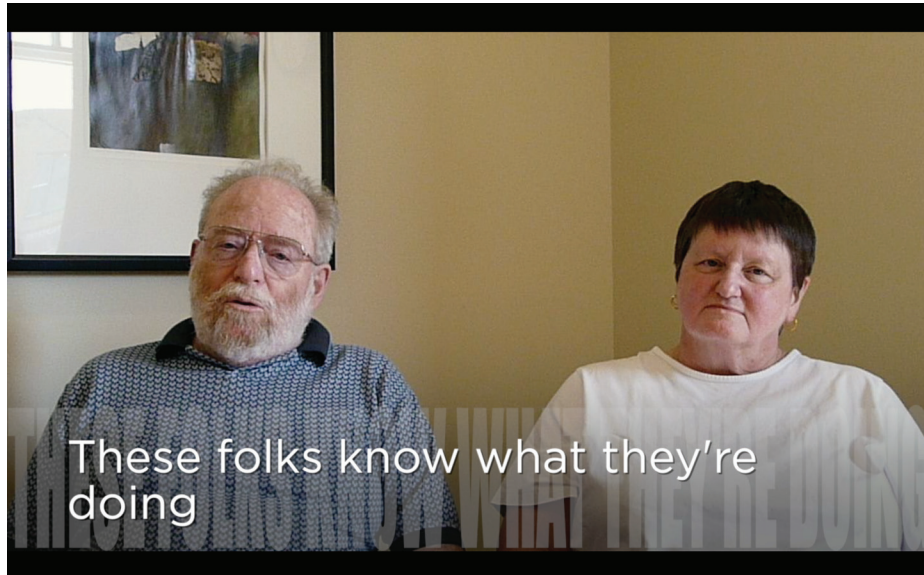
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2564 Buena Vista Way, Berkeley

David Braun, MD – Buyer and Seller



David Braun, MD
2404 2nd St.
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Dear Carol and Ira,

I wanted to take a moment to tell you how good it is to have you as my real estate agents with the hope you will share this with others. Having bought a house with your help a few years ago, and now, selling a house in the depth of the real estate recession, I have had a chance to work with you in many different settings and feel I can comment on a relatively full range of your roles.

Back when I bought my house it was the peak of the housing price bubble and it was complicated further by the fact I was living out of town and had little time to come to Berkeley to house shop. But you were able to get a perfect sense of the sort of house, price and location I wanted, sent me by email wonderful information--pictures and other details so that I was able to find the house I wanted in one not-so-long day of visiting houses with you. You made all the purchase negotiations understandable and clarified problems, solutions, priorities concerning a very cute, but vintage (70 year old), house north of campus. You streamlined the paperwork flow in spite of my distance from town via fax/Fedex, etc. After we bought the house you helped us for months with advice on movers, local resources for odds and ends concerning the house, and a myriad other details that made the process of moving in comfortable and reassuring. You even helped answer questions about real estate purchases in LA and provided referrals for an outstanding agent in that city.

When I decided we were going to move in 2009, in the heat of the economic fires of the time, you were truly empathetic to my concerns as I struggled to decide how to proceed. You provided information to compare renting versus selling. When I decided to sell, you again made the process so efficient and successful. You identified key things to do to make the house most appealing for the sale, again quantifying things to compare those costs against the possible gains. You arranged all those preparations that we agreed upon so that I only needed to write a few checks. You kept me posted on every step of the preparations of the house, the development of a wonderful website that made the house look spectacular. On the first week of open houses, in the midst of this economic crisis,

we not only had several serious offers but they were above our asking price and nearly at our purchase price at the peak of the market a few years before!

The process of negotiations again required essentially nothing from me that I didn't want to involve myself. In the midst of the negotiations with the buyer you handled some surprise issues with the neighbors that came up around the property lines as well as assuaged the buyers through the process. When the stream of paperwork started, things were even easier than last time. You now use a state of the art electronic signing process that allows all the paperwork to occur by email me to see the documents if I wish and allows me to sign all the pages just by pushing a few buttons. What used to involve faxes and searching for signature lines is now a thing of the past. The signing of the documents was even a bit fun!

Through all of this your good humor, range of knowledge of real estate in general and the Berkeley area in particular, makes me wonder why one would want to use anybody but you for buying or selling a house.

Thanks again: it's really a privilege to work with you.

Sincerely,

David Braun, MD

690 Colusa Avenue, Berkeley

Janice Spampinato



Dear Carol and Ira,

It is the eve of the closing of the sale of my house and I am reflecting back on the past 5 months – the length of time it took me to prepare both myself and this beautiful, unique structure for the transition. I had, as you will surely remember, a great deal of hesitation about selling the first and only house I will ever own, and went through a lengthy period of uncertainty before finally deciding that it was, for many reasons, the right thing to do.

As my neighbors and as a pervasive presence in the real estate market in Berkeley and Thousand Oaks, I turned to you for guidance and assurance in my decision. Your depth of knowledge and innate sense of market position and conditions were invaluable to someone who has never been through the process of selling a place they love and needs trusted resources to explain and smooth the way. In you, Ira, I found a marketing wizard with a profound understanding of, and enlightened approach to, technology and how it can be best-used in the presentation of property. On the opposite side, I found your thorough understanding of the morass of paperwork, city ordinances, and all things official, Carol, to be truly comforting, and the time you spent reviewing and expanding on documents and their purpose enormously helpful. But most of all, I valued working with you both because you are consummate professionals who go out of your way to make sure the sometimes-onerous business of selling is as calm and straightforward as possible. And you do it all with realism and unfailing good cheer. You obviously enjoy doing what you do, and your enthusiasm shows in every interaction with clients and colleagues alike.

As I write this, on this last night before relinquishing ownership, you are in the house putting up a fire alarm to fulfill a last-minute request from the buyer. I cannot thank you enough for making my life as easy as it could have been made during a period of high stress and doubt. I made the right decision to sell and hired the right people to help me.

Grazie Mille!

Janice Spampinato

Business Development Director, CACE Technologies, Inc.

And soon-to-be former owner of 690 Colusa Avenue, Berkeley, CA

1733 Capistrano Avenue, Berkeley

Bill & Jean Lesher



Dear Ira and Carol,

A week ago we received in our bank account the equity our home on Capistrano had earned in the past 12 years and thanks to you both, we not only met our price but went a little over it.

There is no question in our minds, especially when seeing the prices comparative homes are selling for now, that we were fortunate in having you two represent our interests in the sale. Your advice about selling in the spring, about using Gary's services for renovations and staging, hiring an excellent and reasonably-priced moving company (Moovers) and advertising our house worldwide as well as nationwide (great photos) made the sale as beneficial and quick as it was.

We also enjoyed getting to know you – Ira with his strategizing and Carol with her uncanny attention to detail – as people as well as very talented professionals. You made our parting from that much-loved place even enjoyable with the wine and cheese evening for our neighbors and us before the first Open House. And we're sure Ira will not soon forget going door-to-door in our neighborhood with invitations to that event.

We are and will be happy to recommend you and your services to all who ask.

Warmest good wishes to you both for "good fortune" in your work to come.

Sincerely,

Bill and Jean Lesher

P.S. Ira, your friend Tony at the Apple store greets you.

cc: Gary Faber, Naturesource Designs

4463 Moraga Avenue, Oakland

Aviva Rosenstein & Noah Friedman - Buyer and Seller

Ira and Carol Serkes represented us when we bought our first home in Oakland about four years ago. They took the time to explain things to us patiently and thoroughly and gave us great advice at every step of the process. With their help, we were able to write a winning purchase offer in a seller's market.

When we decided to move to another town outside of Ira and Carol's area, they referred us to another great realtor familiar with that community. And when we found our new place and needed to sell our first home quickly, we trusted the Serkes to be up to the challenge. They managed to exceed even our highest expectations. Ira and Carol listed our Oakland house during the last week of January, which is a typically slow time of the year for real estate transactions. They made some great suggestions for staging the house for sale and gave it prime placement on Realtor.com, and they did it all in an aggressive timeframe that met our needs. And our house sold right away. By the first week of February, we had five offers! Bam-- if you blinked, you missed it-- from listing to purchase contract, in a little over a week. Every suggestion Ira & Carol made turned out to be exactly right.

What was especially great for us is that the Serkes understand how to leverage technology for marketing properties as well as for communicating with their clients. Potential buyers really appreciated the great digital images of our house and the neighborhood that the Serkes' included with the listing on their web site. Plus, their ability to communicate with us through multiple channels (via email, fax and cell phone as well as in person) made the process a lot easier for us overall.

If you ever want to buy or sell a house in Berkeley, North Oakland, Albany, El Cerrito, or anything near by, you won't regret working with Ira and Carol Serkes. They are very savvy, smart, and good at what they do and a pleasure to work with besides. We've now sold a house and bought a house with them and would work with them again in a heartbeat.

Sincerely,
Aviva Rosenstein & Noah Friedman

1217 Ordway, Berkeley

Ted & Debbie Kallman – Buyer and Seller



Over the course of two years, in a very difficult real estate market, Ira and Carol Serkes served as our agents in both the purchase and the sale of our home in Berkeley, CA. From my initial contact with Ira by telephone to our closing by telephone and e mail, Ira and Carol made what was a very stressful process into an efficient and rewarding experience.

In particular, Ira impressed me with his knowledge of the Berkeley real estate market in terms of both availability and pricing. Carol then proceeded to quickly find us a home in a location that met all of our needs and desires. Ira wisely advised us regarding the purchase negotiations for a property that had significant interest.

Two years later, we rehired Ira and Carol to sell our home. In a much more difficult market, Ira gave us honest advice that, while not necessarily what we wanted to hear, was realistic given the times and certainly facilitated the sale. Carol's advice regarding preparing the home for sale was especially valuable. Furthermore, because we had to relocate, Ira and Carol took care of many things that a seller still living in the home would normally have done.

One thing that attracted me to Ira and Carol was that, from the beginning, I always felt that they were putting our interests above their own. They were as interested in making us happy as they were in making a sale. This has not always been our experience in other real estate transactions.

Ultimately, Ira and Carol went far beyond our expectations. We were relocating to Massachusetts, an area with which we were unfamiliar. Ira did not know any agents there, but he researched the real estate agents and introduced us to an agent whose service to us in Massachusetts was the equal of Ira's and Carol's in California.

Sincerely yours, Theodore Kallman, Ph. D.

Deborah Kallman, M.B.A, CPA

525 Neilson & 1933 Yosemite, Berkeley

David Kerr & Jay Stowsky, Buyers and Sellers



We loved working with Ira and Carol and you will too!

Dear soon-to-be-client of Ira and Carol Serkes,

We can't say enough great things about working with Ira and Carol.

Let's face it, buying and selling houses is stressful. There are a million details to deal with, and a million things to sign. But these two make the process so much more pleasant!

Over the last 5 years we've bought a home, sold that home, and bought another home with Ira and Carol.

Here's why:

They're honest and completely trustworthy.

They're on top of the details. All of them.

They've got good instincts for what makes sense and what can get done.

They know great resources for anything you might come up against.

They keep in touch and get right back to you.

They were able to work with each of our styles.

They're patient and not pushy.

They're up-to-date with technology. Docu-sign was a lifesaver!

They're great people, fun to work with.

If that's not enough, their pie and/or pizza extravaganzas should seal the deal. We'd work with them in a heartbeat (but we love the place they helped us buy, so don't plan on going anywhere!)

Good luck with your real estate journey!

David Kerr & Jay Stowsky

1933 Yosemite Road

Berkeley CA 94707

david@davidkerrdesign.com

or 510-647-8846

1614 Visalia, Berkeley

Frank & Kathy Francone



About a year prior to selling our home at 1614 Visalia Avenue in Berkeley, we made the rounds on Sundays at all the neighborhood open houses to observe the selling agents in action, how they interacted with the visitors, the quality of their answers and the information provided about the house and the neighborhood.

Our survey led us to pick Ira and Carol Serkes with Pacific Union to eventually handle the sale of our home when we were ready to do so.

Ira and Carol did an outstanding job overall. Of course, they prepared all the necessary materials before listing the property. These included making arrangements for the various inspections and interfacing with the service providers and the city of Berkeley (not an easy task for the latter). They also made arrangements and supervised the activity of a photographer to take pictures and a video of the house (which turned out to be outstanding) for the listing and for the sales flyers.

The best part of their efforts was they ability to elicit 5 offers for our home. We were very, very happy with the outcome.

We would highly recommend them to anyone in the process of buying or selling a house. You can contact us at effrancone@sbcglobal.net for further information.

Frank & Kathy Francone



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Ira & Carol Serkes - Pacific Union Int'l Real Estate / Christies

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1625 Shattuck Ave

Ste 101

(between Cedar St & Lincoln St)

Berkeley, CA 94709

Neighborhoods: Gourmet Ghetto, North Berkeley, UC Campus Area

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<http://www.berkeleyhomes.com/>

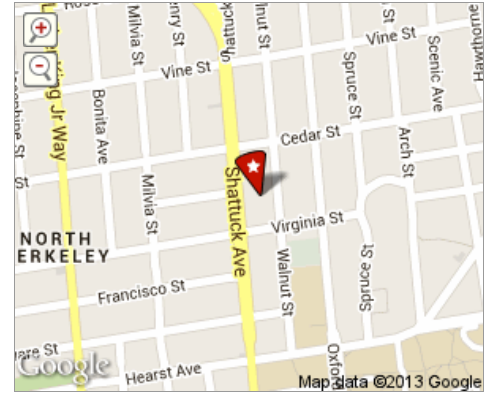
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D A.

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Suzy Reily - Climb Real Estate Group

Yelp Ad



10.6 Miles from Ira & Carol Serkes - Pacific Union Int'l Real Estate / Christies

I specialize in selling homes in San Francisco. I excel in helping people who are relocating to San Francisco and I love helping first time home buyers... [read more »](#)

Reviews (12)

About This Business

12 reviews for Ira & Carol Serkes - Pacific Union Int'l Real Estate / Christies

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12 reviews in English



0
★ 14

yasoja s.
San Mateo, CA

★★★★★ 6/26/2013

Years ago while searching for a place in Berkeley I walked into an open house held by Carol & Ira Serkes, although I didn't bid on that house I noticed months later that they sold it for a price way above asking. Back then I thought "gosh if I were selling in Berkeley I would hire them".

So this year since we needed to sell - that's exactly what I did. It also helped that a friend of mine knew them and introduced me to them.

Our place needed some repair work and cleanup since it had been a rental earlier. They handled it all for us. Carol found people for roof-repair/touch-ups/paint/cleanup and supervised all the work. Their recommendations on which issues to repair vs. which ones to sell as-is were spot on. They staged the place very nicely. Ira kept us informed and gave good advice through the process of looking at offers. House sold for well above asking and we felt they did a great job.

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136
★ 27

Linda D.
Albuquerque, NM

★★★★★ 1/3/2013

Four years ago I referred a seller to Ira and Carol....it was a lovely old house, but a complicated process.....four years ago!

Many times when I refer customers to others, I never hear back, no updates, no results.

Results! The sale closed!! It took years of getting the people ready, the home ready, and then the sale..and it happened. And, he kept me informed throughout the process!

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★★★★★ 4 reviews

Neighborhood: North Berkeley



Janet Kaplan - Red Oak Realty

★★★★★ 14 reviews

Neighborhood: East Solano Ave



Krista Miller

★★★★★ 11 reviews

Neighborhood: North Berkeley



Scott Ward

★★★★★ 27 reviews

Neighborhood: Rockridge



Grace Bishop - Red Oak Realty

★★★★★ 11 reviews

Neighborhood: East Solano Ave

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Ira and Carol are great caretakers of business!

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14

Jerry P.
Emeryville, CA

★★★★★ 3/20/2013

I'm new to the East Bay and met Ira and Carol shortly after I moved here from the East coast. I rented a place so I could get to know the area better, and then started my search about 5 months ago, just as the market took off. It has been a very tough market for buyers, but Ira and Carol have made things go as well as one could possibly hope for.

Ira has more data at his fingertips than anyone I've met in the business. And I am a data guy so it helped me to understand the dynamics of the market. Plus he's got great web/mapping/updates that come out on a weekly basis. Ira is always very prompt in getting back on questions and updates.

Carol is great at taking stock of the properties, offering candid advice, very thorough during inspections, and great to talk to. She negotiated some things into the deal for me that I missed or didn't think to ask for. And we got them. She also gently steered me away from a couple of properties that in hindsight I am glad I didn't pursue. Her diplomatic skills were excellent.

They make a GREAT team and I know they really put in a lot of time what with all the back and forth about properties, contracts, documents, negotiations and the like.

Oh - and did I mention the pizza party they hosted on Pi day?

Great folks and super professional give them a call. I will again for next transaction!

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23
7

Michael S.
San Francisco, CA

★★★★★ 10/2/2012

It's been many years since Ira and Carol sold our first home for us in Berkeley. They are amazing agents and great people. We've sold and bought many homes since that first time and no one compares!

Was this review ...? [Useful](#) [Funny](#) [Cool](#)

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2
23

michelle a.
Leander, TX

★★★★★ 8/10/2010

Ira and Carol Serkes of Pacific Union Real Estate did an exemplary job of selling our early-20th Century Berkeley bungalow. Our relationship with Ira started many years ago when I found him on the Internet and recommended that my father-in-law contact Ira about getting an evaluation of his house.

Ira patiently dealt with my elderly father-in-law and gave him information on the marketability of the house at that time. My father-in-law decided to stay put, but I kept Ira's info for future reference.

Years later, after my father-in-law died, we contacted Ira about putting the inherited house on the market. Ira came armed at our first appointment with graphs showing a market analysis. He took pictures of the house, noting some of the clean up work we had started, compared to the condition of the house when he first visited it with my father-in-law. He also weighed in on the remodeling projects we had planned, but was careful about leaving the decisions to us.

Ira showed us how the property would be marketed-- a dedicated website featuring the house, brochures, signage, open houses-- and we signed on with Carol and Ira. This team is well connected in the community and uses technology in a savvy way to promote your listing. Carol is the documents guru and makes the process of executing documents a much easier process.

By the third week of the listing we had about 14 offers and the house sold well (well, well!) over asking price. We could not have been happier with the outcome.

Carol and Ira are the consummate real estate professionals and I highly recommend them.

Was this review ...? [Useful](#) [Funny](#) [Cool](#)

56
19

Matthew T.
Berkeley, CA

★★★★★ 2/12/2012

Ira and Carol helped me buy a Berkeley house 8 years ago and it's been a fantastic investment. They were both total pros the whole way through, successfully negotiated a lower price from the seller, and handled all the paperwork and logistics. Ira and Carol know the Berkeley real estate market inside and out, and I loved Ira's book for Nolo Press about How to Buy a Home in California (that's how I found them). Give them a call today!

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4

Ellen M.
Antioch, CA

★★★★★ 9/29/2012

Ira worked with us as our buyer's agent. He is intelligent, creative and enjoyable to talk with-- while educating us about the Berkeley market as well as about the homes themselves. He was frank about his opinions of the properties we saw, as well the timing of the market. Generous with his time, he was as active and responsive as we wanted him to be. As he once told us, he lives by the principle of wanting to know that when he goes to sleep at night, he has no regrets for what he's done. You can rely on his integrity-- and that's no small thing in sales!

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14

David K.
Berkeley, CA

★★★★★ 4/13/2011

Carol and Ira are awesome. They're honest, cheerful, responsive, hardworking. We can't say enough about what wonderful realtors they are.

The Berkeley market can be tough. They helped us look and look and look and look until we found exactly the house we hoped to find. Two thumbs way up for them!

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12

Kristin B.
Albany, CA

★★★★★ 4/13/2011

I have had the opportunity to work with Ira Serkes. Ira goes above and beyond what the majority of Real Estate Agents do. I'm a tough sell too, as I grew up working with my grandmother in her Real Estate office. I have high standards, and Ira met them on every point. In the end, circumstances led to my house not being put on the market, but regardless, Ira did everything he could to answer my questions, guide me in figuring out current market values and determining what would need to be done to the house for sale. I would highly recommend Ira & Carol Serkes - Pacific Union Int'l Real Estate.

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2

Kim S.
Berkeley, CA

★★★★★ 9/26/2012

A yelp 5 star rating means it's as good as it gets. Ira and Carol are truly 5 star! As recent first time home buyers, we learned that a lot is required to be a top notch real estate in California. Ira and Carol are dedicated to the people they work with; they are knowledgeable, thorough and professional. As Canadians we didn't know much about how real estate sales are handled here and Ira and Carol walked us through every stage of the process with patience and care. Ira's love of technology allows for information to be easily shared and communication to be timely and creative. You have a feeling when working with them that you are in good hands and that they are willing to go the extra mile (or three thousand in our case as part of our transaction occurred while we were overseas). They have a built up an extensive network of individuals and companies and made recommendations to us for movers, etc. that we were satisfied with. Importantly, they have your best interest at heart and even though buying real estate can be stressful, Carol and Ira are capable of making the process positive and even fun. Would highly recommend them and will use them again in the future.

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0

6

Wendy A.
San Diego, CA

★★★★★

12/12/2011

I referred a family member to Ira & Carol for help with selling their home in Berkeley. They did a great job keeping me in the loop of communication & stayed on task until the job was done. Thanks for your help!

Was this review ...?

Useful

Funny


Cool

Bookmark

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0

2

D A.
Berkeley, CA

★★★★★

4/15/2010

First to Review

We recently moved to the East Bay from Brooklyn, NY and were fortunate enough to connect with Ira and Carol who represented us as buyers in our search for a home. They are both extremely knowledgeable about neighborhoods in the East Bay including Berkeley, North Berkeley, Rockridge, Piedmont, Albany and El Cerrito, and we really benefitted from their insights and experience. The home buying process can be stressful, but they were cool and patient even in the most stressful moments. One plus of working with them was their great set of contacts... at every turn they referred us to competent and professional service providers for all the additional services one needs when buying a home (contractors, foundation specialists, inspectors, and home insurance vendors). At the end of the day, it was a pure pleasure to work with this team, and they delivered by helping us find our dream home, so if you are looking for a home in Berkeley or Oakland, give them a call.

Was this review ...?

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Funny

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4 Filtered Reviews for Ira & Carol Serkes - Pacific Union Int'l Real Estate / Christies Note: The reviews below are not factored into the business's overall star rating.



Doug M.
Berkeley, CA

★★★★★ 9/29/2012

Ira is the genuine deal. A well-informed and capable Realtor who loves Berkeley and helping people explore and find their home. Ira helped us explore the home market 2 years ago, but we did not find that perfect small place. We stayed in touch, he provided ongoing counsel and provided outstanding insight into the specifics and trends of the market, neighborhood by neighborhood. His use of technology is a wonderful treat, and certainly helped me gain confidence in his knowledge of the market. He operates with the greatest integrity and is very clear on his approach, how he can help and through conversation, allowed us uncover our needs and desires.



Aaron P.
Orinda, CA

★★★★★ 3/2/2012

Carol and Ira Serkes were tremendous help to us in 2011-2012 in buying a home in Berkeley. As buyers' agents, they were exceptionally knowledgeable of the Berkeley market, diligent during each stage of the deal to look out for our interests and always responsive to our requests and queries. This was especially so when we had an offer accepted and then entered into inspection: thanks to the Serkes' attention to detail, our inspection uncovered significant items previously undisclosed and un-investigated. Ira and Carol also make innovative use of technology - from plotting sales data to displaying maps to showing angles of the sun at different times of day and year inside homes! With the Serkes, you get 2 super agents for 1. We highly recommend them - they embody the highest value you can expect from real estate professionals.



K P.
Berkeley, CA

★★★★★ 4/9/2011

Ira and Carol Serkes embody everything you would expect or want when buying or selling a home. They recently sold our home in Berkeley and their service was phenomenal every step of the way. Advertising can be tricky. As a seller you often have a strong love and appreciation for your home, and you want it to be projected in the best possible light. Ira and Carol nailed the advertising aspect, from day one. "Oohs and ahhs", & "what a gorgeous home" were common themes used by others to describe the advertising for our home. Even better, the offers came in quickly!

Once in escrow, they walked us through every step; including being there for each and every stressful moment. I can't remember a time that Ira wasn't able to make me laugh, and make me see the brightest side of things. Carol did an exceptional job handling the documents, in a timely manner so both sides felt comfortable that things were moving along. I can't recommend them highly enough! Their care and service throughout the process of selling our home, was well beyond my greatest expectations!! Many, many thanks Ira and Carol!



J D.
Albany, CA

★★★★★ 9/28/2010

Ira & Carol are professional, experienced, wonderful real estate agents. They are extremely organized, excellent negotiators and very technically savvy. We have used them four times to buy \ sell homes. Every single transaction we felt their advice & recommendations were exceptional and we felt informed so the whole process went smoothly. I highly recommend them to all of our friends (and you!)

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