

# Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 10 Issue 5 Wednesday, May 4, 2016



*Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian  
...read on page D16*

## Lafayette Juniors Kitchen Tour Cooks Up Delicious Designs

By Catherine Kauder



*A stainless steel backsplash and industrial light fixtures mix modern and classic touches. Photo Ohlen Alexander*

Fans of beautiful kitchens, art, design and delicious food are in for a treat this year as the Lafayette Juniors host their 17th annual Kitchen Tour from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 14.

The tour will feature six beautifully constructed kitchens in homes around Lafayette with style influences as varied as farmhouse chic, mid-century ranch, timeless classic and traditional Cape Cod.

The Juniors are also highlighting local

women-owned businesses this year by serving appetizers prepared by Lafayette chef Aimee Ames and freshly-made cookies by local favorite, baked. Some homes on the tour will also feature works of art from Lafayette's Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery and unique tablescapes set by Effortless Hostess.

Among the kitchens on this year's tour is one often featured as the backdrop for television commercials and Pottery Barn catalogs. Homeowner Amy Peterson's light and airy kitchen mixes

modern and classic elements to create a tranquil yet stylish environment that is perfect for cooking and entertaining.

The kitchen has two honed Calacatta marble islands that provide a contrast to the industrial light fixtures and the stainless steel counter and backsplash behind the six-burner stove. Custom millwork built around the cooking area forms a mantle that holds a collection of green glass vases.

"I wanted something very clean and simple," says Peterson, who teaches at the Active Reading Center in Walnut Creek.

At one the end of the kitchen is an eating area with a banquette under a large picture window that looks out into a beautiful garden. The home's reclaimed white oak floors and soft palettes of grays, blues and yellows in the furniture add to the soothing environment. Modern touches, like Eames by Herman Miller wire chairs around a tile-top table, are contrasted with one-of-a-kind finds like a charming antique trolley bench in the hallway.

"I like mixing the modern with the traditional," says Peterson.

In the Reliez Valley section of Lafayette, homeowner Kelli Blocker designed her kitchen with the help of Lafayette's Premier Kitchens as part of a complete home renovation. Blocker transformed a tiny, 1950s kitchen into a large, inviting space that overlooks her family room and yard and is ideal for entertaining friends and family.

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# Lamorinda Home Sales recorded

City	Last reported:	LOWEST AMOUNT:	HIGHEST AMOUNT:
LAFAYETTE	6	\$735,000	\$1,840,500
MORAGA	8	\$375,000	\$1,515,000
ORINDA	6	\$290,000	\$2,700,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

## LAFAYETTE

- 18 Amanda Lane, \$1,425,000, 3 Bdrms, 1743 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 3-31-16;  
Previous Sale: \$880,000, 04-06-10
- 3287 Gloria Terrace, \$1,840,500, 4 Bdrms, 2100 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 3-30-16;  
Previous Sale: \$922,000, 09-01-15
- 1126 Hidalgo Court, \$1,335,000, 3 Bdrms, 2030 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 4-1-16
- 808 Las Trampas Road, \$735,000, 3 Bdrms, 1752 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 3-31-16;  
Previous Sale: \$46,000, 03-20-75
- 1015 Timothy Lane, \$1,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 2254 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 3-30-16;  
Previous Sale: \$90,000, 08-15-74
- 748 Upper Pond Court, \$988,000, 5 Bdrms, 2935 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 3-30-16

## MORAGA

- 1909 Ascot Drive, \$725,000, 2 Bdrms, 1455 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-30-16;  
Previous Sale: \$549,000, 10-08-09
- 14 Buckingham Drive, \$1,025,000, 3 Bdrms, 1560 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 3-25-16;  
Previous Sale: \$675,000, 04-29-09
- 416 Deerfield Drive, \$1,450,000, 4 Bdrms, 2399 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 3-31-16;  
Previous Sale: \$417,000, 04-26-96
- 2121 Donald Drive #5, \$375,000, 2 Bdrms, 1224 SqFt, 1963 YrBlt, 3-31-16;  
Previous Sale: \$122,000, 07-10-89
- 294 Fernwood Drive, \$1,450,000, 5 Bdrms, 2502 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 3-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$549,000, 02-06-98
- 484 Kingsford Drive, \$1,515,000, 4 Bdrms, 2483 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 3-31-16;  
Previous Sale: \$475,000, 04-13-93
- 651 Moraga Road #34, \$417,000, 2 Bdrms, 1144 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 3-25-16;  
Previous Sale: \$150,000, 02-05-99
- 1601 St. Andrews Drive, \$875,000, 3 Bdrms, 1644 SqFt, 1973 YrBlt, 3-25-16;  
Previous Sale: \$155,000, 12-01-78

## ORINDA

- 19 Briones View, \$1,475,000, 3 Bdrms, 2850 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 4-1-16
- 8 El Sereno, \$2,700,000, 3 Bdrms, 3501 SqFt, 1935 YrBlt, 3-25-16;  
Previous Sale: \$735,000, 05-14-98
- 314 La Espiral, \$1,175,000, 4 Bdrms, 2907 SqFt, 1935 YrBlt, 3-29-16
- 106 Las Vegas Road, \$1,225,000, 3 Bdrms, 1789 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 3-31-16;  
Previous Sale: \$1,025,000, 07-09-09
- 11 Mariposa Lane, \$290,000, 4 Bdrms, 1740 SqFt, 1938 YrBlt, 3-30-16
- 46 Moraga Via, \$1,850,000, 3 Bdrms, 2740 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 3-29-16;  
Previous Sale: \$379,000, 04-03-92



# Lafayette Juniors Kitchen Tour Cooks Up Delicious Designs

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The maple cabinets are painted a creamy Cottage Lace and are accented with bronze hardware. Dark gray Neolith countertops line the edge of the kitchen while the large center island has a Burmese teak top with a hazelnut finish. The backsplash and wall space above the counters feature cream-colored 2x4 subway tiles, which are smaller than traditional subway tiles and add a bit of texture to the space.

Contemporary touches like a stainless steel farmhouse sink and industrial-style metal barstools give the kitchen a modern edge while still maintaining its warm, rustic feel.

“We wanted something light and bright but cozy,” says Blocker, who said that the size and functionality were what she liked most about her kitchen.

These two kitchens will be featured on this year’s tour along with four other homes located in Happy Valley, Reliez Valley, Hidden Oaks and the Trail neighborhood of Lafayette.

Tickets for the tour are available for sale to the general public for \$40 (\$35 tax deductible). Tickets can be purchased online at [www.lafayettejuniors.org](http://www.lafayettejuniors.org) or at Premier Kitchens, 3373 Mt. Diablo Blvd., in Lafayette.

Proceeds from this year’s Kitchen Tour will go to support Lafayette Juniors’ four non-profit beneficiaries: Youth Homes, Diablo Ballet’s PEEK Outreach Program, the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, and Lamorinda Spirit Van. These organizations were selected for the exceptional support they provide to children, families and seniors in need throughout the East Bay.

Founded in 1953, Lafayette Juniors is a non-profit organization made up of local women dedicated to raising funds and supporting other non-profits that serve children, families, and seniors in need throughout Contra Costa and neighboring counties in the San Francisco area.



Above, the “Farmhouse Chic” look of the Blocker Kitchen. Below, the Peterson’s kitchen is Pottery Barn-ready.

Photos Ohlen Alexander



# Lafayette Juniors Kitchen Tour Cooks Up Delicious Designs

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*The Blocker kitchen, with the large stained-teak island at the center, is ideal for entertaining.  
At right, the Petersons' kitchen has two marble islands.*

*Photos Ohlen Alexander*



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## Looking to Buy or Sell?

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## Stylish Solutions

# New Trends Highlight Classic Luxury and Functionality

By Ann McDonald



Jean-Louis Deniot collection at Baker Furniture has some classic pieces. This chest is a favorite this spring. [www.bakerfurniture.com](http://www.bakerfurniture.com)

Welcome to May. I absolutely love this time of year, when the spring flowers are popping and the air is clear but still cool. It's the perfect time to start dreaming about fresh design options. This month I want to share highlights and relevant observations from my team's recent trip to High Point, N.C., so you, Stylish Suburbanite, are squarely in-the-know on the back-room world of interior design.

Every year, twice a year, designers and decorators descend upon High Point for one of the world's largest wholesale furniture markets. You must be an industry trade member to attend, and many showrooms require additional credentials for access — even after general registration. That's why recapping the trends we've seen is one of our most popular free webinar series. (The Spring Trend webinar has already passed and filled quickly. So you don't miss out next time, visit [www.coutu-rechateau.com](http://www.coutu-rechateau.com) and sign up for our email list.)

This season's top trends include fresh, clean lines and splashes of metal or color. They also include the classic quilting or channeling on upholstery, ala Chanel. These are both easy to live with. Clutter is put away, and frankly, they encourage "tidy," something my heart yearns for these days.

**Spring, 2016:** From traditional luxury showrooms like Baker Furniture to more accessible price points at Arteriors, the white-and-gold or white-and-brass looks were everywhere.

The new Jean-Louis Deniot collection at Baker showcased one of my favorite new pieces, the Heliodor Decorative Chest. From my designer's eye, it's a perfect piece because it works into a traditional home looking for a quick pop, and into a

completely modern space in all white.

At left is a photo of the white and brass chest. With subtle accents like doors cut as jewels, and practical inside drawers, this piece works from bedroom to office to entry hall. Top with traditional lamps, a blue and white pot of orchids or antique books to complete the look. Links are below, adjacent to photos.

My team saw the gold and brass trend in other places as well. I have always liked this look. Below is a press shot from Arteriors Home, trending their new collection of white and gold. I liked the picture because it gives some options from small ottomans to side tables and lamps.

When my husband and I remodeled our home in 2008 and everything was polished nickel, I put in brass. The looks from my suppliers was "eye roll, don't you know anything?" It was funny explaining to them, that brass would come around again, and that those of us in the know were actually buying and holding statement brass from the 1970s for savvy collecting clients. Needless to say, trust the designer who has been around a bit. I will keep to myself what we are buying and holding now but for a hint: take a look at this month's Veranda Magazine. See if you can spot a trend in the making.

The truth is, for many of us in the luxury market, brass and gold never went out; neither did hand-painted wallpaper. All you have to do is observe closely the design elements in major cities that hold their own, from Hong Kong to London to New York City. Good design never goes out of style.

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Bunny Williams Home classic lamp. This is not a new introduction, but it is one of my favorite lamps as it works in many styles.

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

## Stylish Solutions

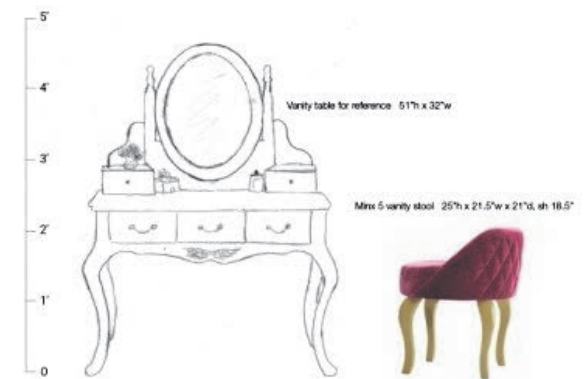
# Spring Trends Highlight Classic Luxury

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The key to using traditional standards in design? Be careful to avoid inexpensive, poorly executed versions. There is nothing as bad as a poor copy of something that can only be executed properly by a true artist. From metalwork to hand-painted finishes, inlay to fabric, true skill shows. I always counsel clients to purchase the best they can afford.

**The quilt and channel.** Arteriors has a channel-quilted line. The Christophe Sofa, at \$5,600, is a good price point for a mid-priced piece. Other brands showcased quilting as well. The Nathan Anthony vanity stool I find irresistible. Why? Because it can live at home with the most traditional Lamorinda designs as well as thrive in the contemporary hilltop estates nestled among us.

Enjoy these tips, Stylish Suburbanites. Until next month, live beautifully.



This piece works in several types of fabric from this classic velvet to a blue and white chintz or even quilted crewel. [www.nafurniture.com](http://www.nafurniture.com)



Orchids in a blue and white pot ready to display from Ethan Allen.

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



New Introduction Lamps by Christopher Spitzmiller would work in almost any décor style. [www.christopherspitzmiller.com](http://www.christopherspitzmiller.com)



Are you managing your own design project? Learn what you don't know that you don't know from someone who has been 25-plus years in the trenches of luxury design. Spend the day with Ann and learn how to manage your own luxury design project as lead designer, project manager or both. For more information on these power-packed days, email Ann at [ann@couturechateau.com](mailto:ann@couturechateau.com).

Ann McDonald, IIDA, NAPO, is the Founder/CEO of Couture Chateau, a luxury interior design firm in Orinda. For a complete blog post including other design ideas, visit [www.couturechateau.com/blog](http://www.couturechateau.com/blog).



*Digging Deep*

# Spring Forward with Fresh Gardening Ideas This May

*A beautiful shade oasis of camellias and azaleas.**Photos Cynthia Brian*

With all the rain we've enjoyed this season, spring has birthed the most spectacular garden displays experienced in years. The air is fragrant with the scent of jasmine, emerald green hills are decorated with golden poppies, and pretty peonies populate our plots. Songbirds chirp as they feather their nests, butterflies flit from blossom to bloom, lady beetles and bees are busy with their business. A lovely turkey feather poked out from under my fig bush by my living room window. When I went to grab it, I realized it was attached to a wild hen sitting on eggs. She wasn't even startled and I've continued to enjoy watching her daily.

Our natural world has found its equilibrium.

My Pearl's Premium lawn is finally looking lush and full. The secret was constant re-seeding, daily moisture and netting to keep the birds at bay. This summer will tell how drought resistant the grass is. One thing is for certain, it has definitely forced out weeds and dandelions. Whereas I used to pick at least a hundred dandelions a day to feed the quail, I am now down to half a dozen or even less. Thus far I am impressed with this grass seed and will keep you posted as the dry weather sets in. ([www.pearlspremium.com](http://www.pearlspremium.com))

I've been busy planting seeds one by one, a very tedious task, as I'm not one to start my seedlings indoors. Instead I use an egg carton and pour the various seeds I want to plant into the egg holders, then, I meticulously plunge each tiny seed into its own hole. Some seeds, like Echinacea, are smaller than a pinpoint. One has to have serious dedication to growing a variety of specimens when sowing. My preferred method is to scatter a big bucket of seeds mixed with sand and see what thrives. Cinda McKinnon of Orinda has used this method successfully on her wild Mediterranean hillside.

*A stunning palette of purple and orange highlights this Mediterranean-style garden of scattered poppy seeds, purple bearded iris, Santa Barbara daisy, California natives, and lavender in Cinda McKinnon's drought resistant garden in Orinda.*

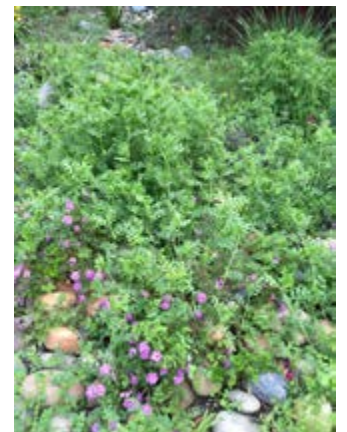
My March 23 article about cultivating a wildflower meadow (go to <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1002/Digging-Deep-How-to-Cultivate-a-Wildflower-Meadow.html>) sparked immense interest from across the country. One of my favorite descriptive notes arrived from Ron in Texas who wrote:

"What a wonderful article on growing wildflowers. I've always loved wildflowers, remembering the trillium that carpeted the Wisconsin forests in the spring and the daisies, black-eyed Susans, and other wildflowers that covered any open field all summer long. Later, finding wild azalea in the Georgian woods and now, in Texas, going to see the bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush, as well as finding every vacant lot here in Houston filled with 7 foot tall sunflowers. Thanks to Lady Bird Johnson, planes seed most Texas highways with beautiful wildflowers largely in the spring before the heat and drought of summer and their beauty. I always let my yard grow wild in spring so that many wildflowers there can bloom and reseed."

And that is the secret to spring wildflowers — allow them to bloom and reseed.

The simple pleasures of spring are for all of us to savor. Get moving and get into your garden.

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*Till your vetch into your garden soil to add nutrients.*





*A bowl of Beauty peony.*



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# Digging Deep ... continued from page D16

## CYNTHIA BRIAN'S FRESH IDEAS:

**REFRESH** your dirt with a few yards of new, enriched top soil and compost. Good soil is the foundation for a healthy, happy landscape.

**TILL** your cover crops of vetch, mustard, clover, or fava beans into your soil. If they have grown to large to till, pull them out, run them over with a lawnmower, then return them to the soil for all of the nutrients they will provide your produce.

**SEPARATE** seeds in an egg carton for ease in sowing.

**POKE** holes in the soil with a pencil or stick to plant a variety of small seeds including sunflowers, hollyhock, cathedral bells, purple hyacinth beans and perennial sweet peas.

**SOAK** morning glory seeds for eight hours before planting or nick with a fingernail clipper to assist in rooting.

**DISCOVER** spring by scattering wildflower seeds. Allow them to bloom and reseed themselves for another display next season.

**GATHER** a bouquet of peonies or even a single stem to create a stunning and long lasting floral arrangement.

**BUILD** simple raised beds to grow your bounty of vegetables. Even a small 3 x 3 foot redwood box will provide space for plenty.

**SHOP** for vegetables and herbs at your favorite nursery or garden center. Tomatoes, peppers, squash, eggplant, watermelon, pumpkin, zucchini, beans and cucumbers are available in four-inch pots and six packs at reasonable prices.

**PULL** weeds on a continuous basis. Weeds zap the moisture from the plants we want. Don't let them form seed heads.



*Peonies make fabulous cut flowers.*

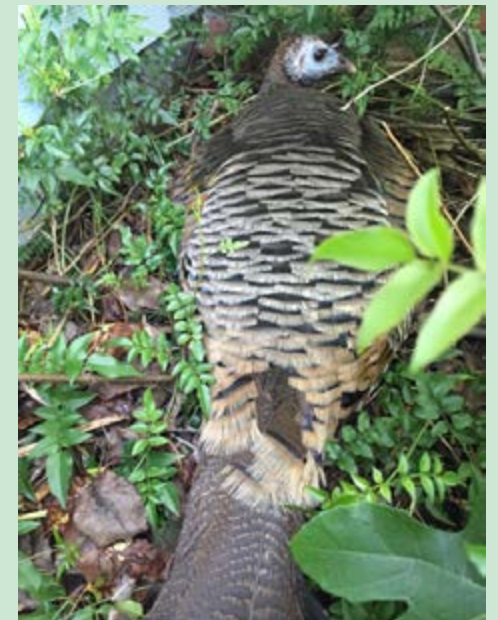
**EMPTY** standing water from pots, tires, neglected ponds, pools or any place where mosquito larvae will breed. With all the rain we've had this year, mosquitoes could spread West Nile virus. If you have a pond, the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control will provide free mosquito fish by calling (925) 771-6196. California authorities are monitoring the activity of West Nile virus and request that any dead birds or squirrels be reported to them at (877) 968-2473.

**SEED** and reseed your lawns specifically when it's raining. Make sure to keep the seed moist until it sprouts. Pearl's Premium may be the answer for a lush, green, drought-resistant lawn. [www.PearlsPremium.com](http://www.PearlsPremium.com)

**DANCE** the snail stomp, a dance my children and I invented one very wet winter years ago. Go out at night with gloves on, flashlight in hand, and a bucket to pick up slugs and snails. Find an area to dump and dance. (If you don't like to dance, fill the bucket with soapy water and the dirty deed is done.)

**TOUR** gardens when you are not enjoying your personal backyard. Check the newspaper for garden tours around the Bay Area. You'll find inspiration in what others have designed and accomplished.

Enjoy the splendors of spring while you dream of a personal journey through nature.



*A turkey hen sits on her eggs under a fig bush at Cynthia Brian's home.*



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So don't wait until it's too late, Call your local ISA certified Arborist at Advance Tree Service for all your tree needs.

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Calla lilies and a Pearl's Premium lawn thriving in Lamorinda.



The crunchy round leaves of wild Miner's lettuce adds zing to salads.



Cynthia Brian welcomes spring to every garden.

Happy gardening. Happy growing!

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