



*Gage Park during Winter, Brampton*

## Market Watch

### Good Start to 2011

Greater Toronto REALTORS® reported 4,337 transactions through the TorontoMLS® system in January 2011. This result was 13 per cent lower than the record result reported in January 2010.

“While off the record pace experienced a year ago, the GTA resale market has started the year on a solid footing. Home buyers in Toronto and surrounding areas continue to benefit from a diversity of housing types for sale at many different price points,” said TREB President Bill Johnston.

The average selling price for January 2011 sales was \$427,037, representing an increase of over four per cent compared to the average of \$409,058 reported in January 2010.

“The average selling price is expected to grow at a moderate pace in 2011. Growth rates in the three to five per cent range will be sustainable from an affordability perspective,” said Jason Mercer, TREB’s Senior Manager of Market Analysis.

Source: TREB

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## HOME DECORATING IDEAS - WHERE TO START?

Paint is the ultimate in discount home decor. It is one of the least expensive home decorating ideas, yet creates a huge impact on the overall look and feel of your room. Decide the look that you want to achieve in your room and select the paint color accordingly. Light colors create an open, airy and light feel, darker shades create more drama and brighter colors are more eclectic, cheery and youthful.

If you are keeping most or all of the existing furniture in the room, choose a color that will complement that furniture and that blends well with it. One of the best home decorating tips is to make sure you look at a paint chip in all lights and all times of the day. A paint chip that looks great in the full light near the window may not look right next to your sofa in the evening light. Try it all out before you buy the paint.

If you are into DIY projects, painting is something most of us can do on our own, rather than hiring a contractor. If you are up to the challenge, painting a room yourself can be a big savings when decorating your home.

Window treatments, curtains, blinds or shades, are items that can create a big impact in the room with minimal cost. If you currently have shades or blinds, consider side curtains to soften the look of the room. Even Roman shades, which roll up, add color, vibrancy and interest to your room, where plain blinds may not. Today, inexpensive curtains, which look costly but are easy on the budget, can be found in many home decor or department stores.

## HOME DECORATING IDEAS - FLOORING AND FURNITURE

New flooring is often considered out of reach if the budget leans toward discount home decor. But new technologies and flooring materials are changing that reality. Laminate flooring, cork, bamboo and ceramic laminates can often fit into a limited budget.

Laminates are a good option for those who love the look of hardwood but can't afford it. Today's laminate floorings can be mistaken for hardwood or ceramic tile and are much more budget friendly.

Laminates can also be installed with just a few tools and some instruction. Peel and stick tiles are also better than they were years ago and come in a variety of

Continued on page 4...

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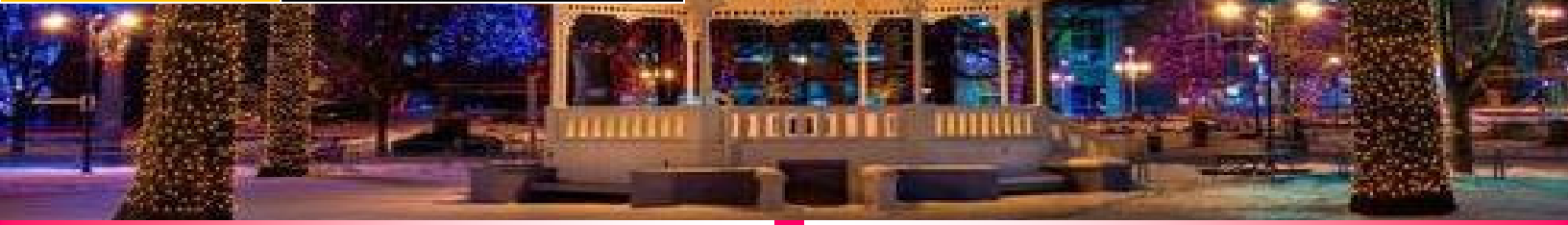
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attractive patterns. They can easily be laid by a DIY enthusiast. Check out the options and the prices at your local home improvement store. You just might be amazed at what you can afford.

If your upholstered furniture is tired looking but still in reasonable shape, consider furniture covers rather than replacing the furniture itself. Like flooring, furniture covers have come a long way in the last few years and you can get covers that can look quite attractive and cover the furniture well on a limited budget. Slip covers that are made specifically for your furniture will make it look like you bought all new furniture. Check your local listings or online for companies that will make custom slip covers.

## HOME DECORATING IDEAS - ACCENT PIECES MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Once you have the basics completed, the accessories you choose will make all the difference in the world. Select these items carefully and your room can look like you hired a decorator.

Mirrors are inexpensive and can add a lot of pizzazz to your room. Consider a mirror over your sofa or in an entranceway. Mirrors give the appearance of a more expanded space than you really have, so they are excellent for small spaces.

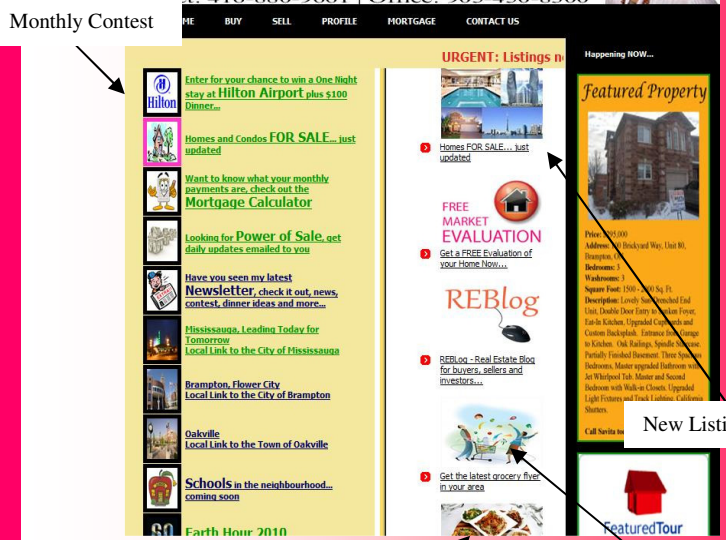
A tip for purchasing mirrors - consider the place the mirror will be hung when you choose the size. A mirror that is too small for its position in the room will look lost and one that is too big will overpower the space it occupies. When you purchase a mirror, make sure you can return it in case it is the wrong size or style when you place it in the room.

Artwork, candles, vases and other display pieces finish the room and give it that polished look. They can also be purchased over time as you find them, which make it easier on a tight budget. This is where you can really show your personality in the room. Make a statement with your choices. Do you want to create a restful haven? Then choose white or light and soft colors to accent the room. Or add a splash of vibrant color and jazz it up a bit.

Hopefully our home decorating tips and ideas have shown you that redecorating your home doesn't have to break the bank. It just takes a bit of planning and creative shopping to create the new look you want in your home.

<http://www.todayshouse.com/home-decorating-tips.html>

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