



Platinum Times

The Best Return on your Remodeling Dollar

Realtors are often asked what remodeling project is the best investment. There is not an easy answer, but one of the first things to consider is common upgrades of other homes in your neighborhood.

Upgraded features can mean less time on market & a higher future sales price.

Today, home improvements reap higher rates of return. But be aware of personal "wants" vs. buyer "needs". Adding a hot tub doesn't usually add value but updating a bathroom will.

Consider the cost of the remodel & get a little help through **HGTV.com Remodeling Budget Estimator**. Below are a few projects & estimated rate of return:

- Minor Bath Remodel = 102%
- Landscaping = 100%
- Minor Kitchen Remodel = 98.5%
- Deck, Patio or Porch = 90.3%
- Window Replacement = 90%
- Basement Remodel = 90%

Don't forget to ask your Realtor's advice regarding what sells best in your neighborhood.

Happy Remodeling!

Colorado Springs Upbeat on the Downbeat

People like to live in Colorado Springs. No one misses the hurricanes, mudslides, earthquakes, wildfires, urban blight, population density, gridlock, low performing schools, and all the other trappings of lesser regions of the country. In the November 2008 issue of the **Wall Street Journal's Smart Money Magazine**, Colorado Springs is rated #6 of the top 25 cities to rebound in the United States. Denver is #9.

Over the years Colorado Springs has generally run contrary to the economy of the rest of the country. We now appreciate how fortunate we were not to have attracted the ravenous real estate investors that shredded the real estate markets of Las Vegas, Florida, California and many other cities. Instead we had healthy growth.

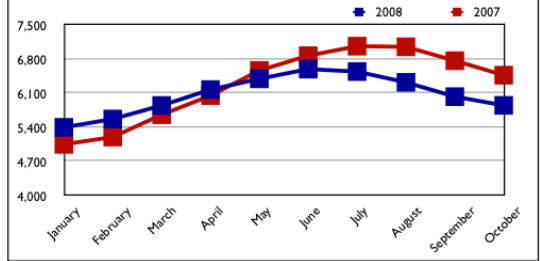
Historically, our market is driven by buyer confidence. In our information gathering, the national and global influence is overbearing to the local reality. Caution is certainly recommended but only in appropriate doses. Long term residents of Colorado Springs recognize this real estate market as the "local's" dream.

No one wants to compete with the "out of town" buyer that drives prices up and creates a demand that outstrips local purchasing power. We don't want to be the same as other cookie cutter cities. We don't have to be. This is a special place and pauses in economic growth help us understand what true quality of life really is. Our economic engine runs on the military, tourism, retirees, and hi-tech industry.

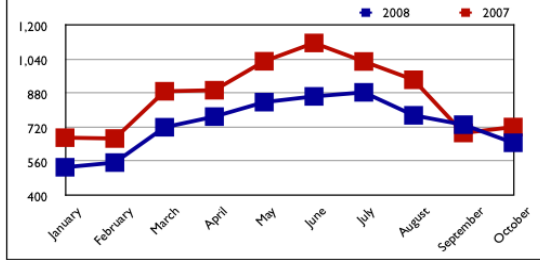
Now is the time to make those adjustments in our homes. Opportunity abounds for making that change to a larger or smaller home, less stairs, better view, a more comfortable floor plan, different schools, convenient location, and on and on. We are the fortunate ones in this time of economic convulsion. Adjust and be ready for the future in the comfort of your next home!

Springs Market at a Glance

HOMES FOR SALE



HOMES SOLD



Featured Restaurant

Taste Tartines, Tapas, Wine in Monument

There's a new, very urban way to sip wine and enjoy tapas in Monument. The **Second Street Art Market and Wine Bar**, 366 Second St., has cleared a space at the front of the art store for an elegant, curved bar.

Wine by the glass is offered, or you can buy from the impressive wine list. Most bottles are in the \$18 to \$35 range.

Once the sipping choice is made, it's time to take a look at the tapas and tartines, a French-style open-faced sandwich. On the tapas side you see offerings such as the Provence Plate with brie, smoked salmon, figs, olives and caramelized nuts with a baguette. The Roast Beef and Pepperoncini (\$8) tartine is a plate of thinly sliced roast beef with horseradish-infused cream cheese, roasted red peppers and diced pepperoncinis.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Live music on Fridays and Saturdays. Call 488-2506 for reservations.



Colorado Fun Fact — The Colorado Rockies are part of the North American Cordillera, which stretches 3,000 miles from Alaska to northern Mexico. The centerpieces of this dramatic uplift are the peaks over 14,000 feet, or "Fourteeners", as they are affectionately referred to by climbers. There are 52 Fourteeners in Colorado.



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The Platinum Group Realtors Surpasses the \$1 Billion Mark!

In today's topsy-turvy world of real estate, customers want value, not false claims, rhetoric and poor customer service.

That's why the agents at The Platinum Group Realtors go to work every day.

The Platinum Group isn't your typical real estate company. And they haven't produced typical results either.

From nothing to \$1 Billion in sales in less than four years. Pretty impressive!

"We are definitely unique," said partner Mike MacGuire. "All of our associates are full-time professional Realtors. We collaborate to get the best results for our clients. We spend our time focusing on the customer."

The numbers don't lie. Of the top 20 Realtors in Colorado Springs, 20% hang their hats at the



Platinum Group. 25% of Platinum Agents are in the top 100. Despite a struggling National economy, The Platinum Groups sales in September were up 26% compared to a year ago.

"We never set out to be #1," MacGuire said. "By focusing on our clients, plus great teamwork, synergy and excellent agents, it actually happened!"

With the Platinum Group, it is Quality over quantity and customer service is king. That's the Platinum Standard!
Congratulations, Platinum Group!

December Trivia Question

"Who opened a restaurant on Pikes Peak Avenue in Colorado Springs in the late teens and early 20s and served one item that became so popular it went on to be sold in cans and is still a best-seller today? Name the man and the product."

Everyone who e-mails the correct answer to ed@behrandbehr.com by December 20th will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate to P.F. Changs!

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