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Beverlywood



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Aloha

By Ben Lee

It's not always easy to think of one singular activity that appeals equally to a family of five. We like watching movies, but to choose one that we all want to see is tough. We enjoy going out to eat but sometimes it's so much work to pick a restaurant we all can agree on, it's easier to just order in pizza (but with which toppings!?). Even the happiest place on earth is weighted with the burden of compromise because even though we all like going to Disneyland, we're not all on the same page when it comes to which rides to tackle. So, out of all the activities in the world, we have basically found two that all five of us can universally agree on and smile about: traveling and hanging out with our friends Nikki and Jeffrey. Going over to the Mendelsohns' house is pretty much like combining the two activities because it's basically like a vacation over there. Nikki is a phenomenal cook and there's always some delicious Italian sauce simmering on the stove or succulent meats roasting in the oven. They own the dog hotel Rover in Culver City (and now a second location in Santa Monica) so their house is an extremely dog-friendly environment where all of their guests are encouraged to bring their four-legged family members to frolic in their expansive back yard with whatever dogs they happen to be fostering at any given time. Jeffrey's first love (like mine) is music so sometimes after dinner or the football game is over, we'll sing some tunes around the piano with the other dads

while the kids are running around and the moms are chit chatting the night away. It's loud, it's chaotic and it's always a good time over at their house but, to be fair, it's probably more of a 'vacation' for their guests than it is for them. That's why, when it was time to plan our actual holiday get away, we encouraged the Mendelsohns to join us in Hawaii. No cooking, no cleaning, no picking up after dogs. This was going to be a pure-relaxation week in paradise and who better to spend it with than each other?

Traveling with friends can potentially be a disaster. There's a style to how one travels that if not in sync, can turn a whole trip sour. What if you can't agree on what restaurants to try or what excursions to do? There is ample room for friction because traveling can often be tough especially dealing with airport delays, hiccups in weather, unforeseen expenses and basically just navigating proverbial bumps in the road. Luckily, the two families were quite harmonious in our ability to flow well under certain dire travel-related circumstances. Like that day we all decided to go on a boat to try to swim with the dolphins. In a rainstorm. As soon as we filed onto the rickety old boat, my wife slipped and cut open her foot. Not wanting to attract the attention of possible nearby (nonexistent) sharks smelling an open wound, she bravely opted to stay on the boat while the rest of us jumped into the open ocean in full snorkel gear to try to keep up with Flipper and his friends. We were told to be stone silent in the water so as not to scare the dolphins away but after about two



seconds in the freezing ocean, my youngest started panicking and screaming 'MOMMY!!' at the top of his lungs, causing all the sea creatures to dash off in the opposite direction of the disappointed divers.

On yet another rainy day, we decided if we couldn't enjoy a warm lounge chair on the beach, we should leave the hotel to take a hike instead. Yeah- for the record, one should not take a hike in the rain. After an hour or so in the car, we found the spot of mountain descent, wrapped ourselves in towels and attempted to find any kind of traction on the slippery trail. No easy feat and we didn't make it more than a few steps before sliding down like a row of dominoes. Laughing hysterically and unable to stand up without falling down again, we finally managed to drag our muddy bodies back to the car. Thankful I kept a grip on the keys despite almost sliding down the mountain, we drove back to the hotel during one of the most torrential downpours I've ever experienced.

The Mendelsohns are friends with a Cheviot Hills family who invited all of us to visit them at their new home in Hawaii. What a treat! Their home is situated on the grounds of an exquisite country club complete with private movie theater, exclusive wine and cigar room, swimming pools, golf course, batting cage, bowling alley, and a farm-to-table restaurant, with the farm on the property, too! After treating the entire group to an elegant and delicious lunch, we were invited to go snorkeling with a personal tour guide leading the way. After boating out to a nearby floating dock and spending a few minutes swimming around the cool ocean waters, our guide amazed us by catching a beautiful black and white striped fish with his bare hands. A split



second later, my son reached out to touch the fish and next thing we knew, the fish bites Vinnie squarely on the arm. Who knew fish had teeth!?! As the blood was trickling down Vinnie's arm, our guide seemed more impressed than we had been to see the fish in the first place. In all his 35 years of taking people on snorkel outings, he said he had never seen that happen. For the rest of the trip we nicknamed Vinnie 'Fishbite,' and he was extremely proud of his new moniker.

But excursion mishaps and inclement weather aside, we certainly also enjoyed all the beauty and bounty the big island of Hawaii has to offer: endless boogie boarding in crystal clear waters, night swimming with the majestic manta rays, decadent clam bakes, colorful cups of shave ice and countless mai tais and banana smoothies... all made sweeter as a result of being shared with good friends.

Then, all of a sudden, a week had gone by and it was time to come home and return to civilization. Luckily for all of us though, we can seamlessly sub in Beverlywood for Hawaii because as long as Nikki's cooking and the dogs are playing and the kids are swimming and the dads are singing, our vacation with friends never has to end.



My featured listings

BEN LEE PROPERTIES

Cheviot Hills - ACTIVE!

5 Beds / 4.5 Bath 4,599 Sq. Ft.



3001 Dannyhill Dr – \$4,195,000

This newly constructed Newport-style home in the highly coveted Cheviot Hills' Country Club Estates. Hardwood floors, wainscoting and crown moldings throughout. Beyond the beauty of the kitchen is a view of the backyard complete with tropical palm trees, patio, pool, hot tub and pool house. Paired with the formal living room with marble fire place, formal dining room with butler's pantry and a temperature-controlled wine room, you are ready to entertain.

Westwood - ACTIVE!

5 Bed / 5 Bath



1951 Kelton Ave – \$3,095,000

A symphony of colors and textures set against the backdrop of a recently remodeled, Mediterranean-style family home. The formal living room seamlessly merges with the formal dining room. These rooms extend to the expansive kitchen and great room, both featuring a glorious view of the picturesque backyard. Conveniently located in the highly coveted Westwood Charter Elementary School District and a stone's throw to all the shops and restaurants on Westwood Blvd.

Cheviot Hills - FOR LEASE!

3 Bed / 2 Bath



10272 Kilrenny Ave – \$6,500 p/mo.

FOR LEASE!

Pacific Palisades - ACTIVE!

5 Beds / 4 Bath 4,100 Sq. Ft., 8,276 Sq. Ft. Lot



515 Muskingum Ave – \$3,195,000 Reduced

Newer Mediterranean set on a quiet loop street with unobstructed ocean, canyon & mountain views. Bright & dramatic entry leads to wide open living & family rooms with bar/lounge area. Step down to the spacious dining off center-island kitchen – all opening up to huge entertaining deck & views. Five large bedrooms, 4 baths + several balconies, view decks & covered patios. Lower level storage area, etc. (additional 1,200 sq. ft.) with 12-ft. ceiling opens to patio & view.

Cheviot Hills - ACTIVE!

5 Bed / 6.5 Bath



2715 Forrester Dr – \$5,549,000 Reduced

A luxurious Hamptons retreat on the most coveted street in Cheviot Hills, impeccably designed and newly constructed estate by Diamond West Distinctive Homes. Artfully detailed wainscoting and intricate custom built-ins. Greeted by a formal living room with fireplace and bay window, pass the formal dining room with butler's pantry to enter the gorgeous gourmet kitchen. This dazzling property, unmatched in location is truly an opportunity that cannot be missed.

Rancho Park - SOLD

5 Bed / 6 Bath



10646 Esther Ave – \$3,595,000

Welcome to your American dream home! Traditional style new construction by Diamond West Distinctive Homes. Bright, open and well-appointed, this home is truly ideal for modern family living. From the lovely front porch, enter the fabulous formal living and dining rooms with exquisite custom millwork and wainscoting. Enormous great room with impressive eat-in kitchen, walk-in pantry with beverage center, butler's pantry with sink and wine storage, and convenient access to laundry room and guest bedroom/office. Fantastic Westside location—walk to shopping, dining, cinema, light rail and highly coveted Overland Elementary School.

Cheviot Hills - SOLD

3 Bed / 3 Bath 3,359 Sq.Ft., 8,707 Sq.Ft. Lot



10377 Monte Mar – \$2,950,000

With a beautiful view of the golf course beyond, this modern and minimalist 3 bedroom/3 bath home in Cheviot Hills embraces its inhabitants with both peace and tranquility. Custom wood cabinetry, midnight black granite countertops, oversized island and window wrapped breakfast nook with banquet seating will make preparing and enjoying meals a welcome respite from restaurant dining. With a strong emphasis on style as much as function, this simply glorious home in the award winning Overland School District is precisely what you've been looking for!

Westwood - SOLD

5 Bed / 4 Bath



846 Warner Ave – \$4,495,000

Stunning Spanish hacienda in Little Holmby Hills. Living room with stained glass windows, exposed beams, dark hard wood floors and oversized fireplace. Generous formal dining room with an abundance of light. The kitchen with Subzero stainless refrigerator, La Cornue range, brick backsplash, colorful tiled floor framing the island and a large breakfast nook. Beautiful backyard with mature landscaping, covered patio as well as the swimming pool/spa. An outdoor fireplace and separate entertaining space with built in bar-b-que makes this yard ideal for parties. 10 out of 10 rated Warner Avenue Elementary.

Beverlywood happenings

Westside Places

By Michael Harris

The Bristol Farms market at 9039 Beverly Blvd. was built on the site of the old Chasen's Restaurant. Bristol Farms the market chain was begun by Irving Gronsky after he sold his meat packing business and instead of retiring created his upscale food markets named after the street on which he lived in Brentwood, Bristol Ave. The market was built to retain the wall of the original restaurant building that faced Beverly Blvd and also kept the copper roof treatment. The market retains several booths from the original restaurant and some of the original paneling. The restaurant was the

premier place for the Hollywood crowd ever since it opened in 1936. There were booths reserved for Frank Sinatra, Alfred Hitchcock, James Stewart and Groucho Marx, but all the other stars and movie moguls dined there and Elizabeth Taylor famously had the Chasen's chili specially flown to the set of Cleopatra in Italy so she would have her comfort food while cavorting with Richard Burton. The restaurant closed in 1995 because it could not compete with Spago's and other later "in" places for the newer Hollywood crowd so it is now a grocery store, but a peek in even today may trigger the feel for its better and more glamorous days.



Chasen's restaurant exhibit at the Regan Presidential Library

Not Your Mama's Mommy & Me

By Ben Lee

If you are a new mom, you may want to check out, "Mama Needs a Drink." A fun twist on the traditional, "Mommy and Me," workshops, Mama Needs a Drink is an emotional support group and network of classes offered to modern-day parents and their babies, ages 0-12 months. Located on Pico Boulevard, Mama Needs a Drink focuses on the care and needs of both parents and their young children. It's a great way to meet new friends while getting all your questions answered. What's more, it provides comfort and

support to share the experience with others who are also going through the life-changing event of having a baby. To find out more or see the schedule of classes, please visit: www.mamanneedsadrinkla.com



Raffle

By Ben Lee

It's a new year and we're bringing back the Ben Lee Properties monthly raffle give away! This is our way of highlighting new businesses around the neighborhood. To kick off 2018, we will be giving away a \$50 gift certificate to the new British pub and restaurant: The Stalking Horse. Located where Steingarten used to be on Pico, the Stalking Horse offers authentic English food, a fun array of drinks and a lovely outdoor patio for al fresco dining. To

enter, simply email me: ben@benleeproperties.com and write 'STALKING HORSE' in the subject line. We will pick a winner from all entries at the end of the month. Good luck!



Wine Night



By Ben Lee

My wife is hosting the next neighborhood "Ladies' Wine Night" at our home on February 22 from 7-9pm. A lighthearted and casual way to meet some new friends,

all ladies from around the neighborhood are welcome to attend. If you are interested in coming, please email her at: lillijlee@yahoo.com. Even if you can't make it this time, she can add you to the list to be notified about the next one. Cheers!

If there is a community event with which you are involved and would like a notification about it in this newsletter, please feel free to let me know. We need the information about a month in advance so

if something is happening in January that you would like mentioned in this publication, feel free to reach out: ben@benleeproperties.com or (310) 858-5489. Thank you!