

A Thoughtful Guide to Buying Your Next Home

For clients ready for their next chapter on Southern Vancouver Island

Buying a home is a significant decision — emotionally, financially, and often logistically. If you're reading this, there's a good chance you're not buying your first home; you're buying the right home for where life is now. That might be something smaller, closer to the water, closer to family, or closer to the community you want to be part of.

This guide walks through the process with that in mind. It's written for discerning buyers on Southern Vancouver Island — Sidney, Greater Victoria, the Westshore, Bear Mountain, Saanich, and out to Sooke.

A Personal Note

Before real estate, I spent thirty years in the luxury wine industry, where the quality of service always mattered more than the transaction itself. I've carried that same standard forward into everything I do.

I also recently walked through a major life transition myself — downsizing from a larger family home on Bear Mountain into something more intentional. When I say I understand what you're weighing, it's not a sales line. It's experience.

1. Financial Preparation

Even for seasoned buyers, a quick financial check-in before you begin searching is time well spent. A conversation with your lender or financial planner will clarify:

- Your borrowing capacity if you're taking out a new mortgage
- How proceeds from a concurrent sale will coordinate with a new purchase
- Financing options that may serve you better in this life stage (shorter amortizations, flexible rate options, reverse mortgages where relevant)
- Tax and estate implications of a move

If you'd like introductions to lenders, planners, or accountants I trust, I'm happy to make them.

2. Clarify What You're Looking For

The more seasoned the buyer, the more specific the wish list — and the more we can focus on what will actually make the next chapter feel right. We'll work together to clarify not just the property, but the life you're moving toward:

- Community character and neighbourhood atmosphere
- Walkability, water, views, and lifestyle features that matter most
- Accessibility and single-level living where that's a consideration
- Proximity to family, friends, medical care, and travel (airport, ferries)
- Space for grandchildren, guests, or quiet time apart when needed
- Low-maintenance features — lock-and-leave livability for those who travel

A Needs vs. Wants list is a useful starting framework. I also gently challenge assumptions along the way — sometimes the right home isn't shaped exactly like you pictured, and sometimes the picture only sharpens after we've walked through a few homes together.

3. Choose the Right Advisor

Your REALTOR® is your advocate, negotiator, curator, and guide. In the higher-end market, the right advisor should also be a filter — saving you time by showing you only what's genuinely worth considering. That's especially valuable for buyers coming from out of town or those with limited time to search.

A strong advisor will:

- Listen closely before ever suggesting a property
- Know the real differences between our micro-markets — Sidney, Oak Bay, Broadmead, Bear Mountain, Sooke, and beyond
- Arrange and accompany showings with care and thoughtfulness
- Protect your best interests in negotiation
- Keep you calm and informed through inspection, subjects, and closing

4. The Curated Search

With your criteria clear, I begin shaping a selection of properties that aligns with your vision — MLS® listings, quiet off-market opportunities I hear of before they list publicly, and homes coming to market in the weeks ahead.

Many buy off-market or through pre-launch access. It's one of the advantages of working with an established advisor who is active and well-connected in the community.

As we tour, we refine. Each home teaches us more about what you're really looking for — and the right home often reveals itself in that process.

5. From Offer to Keys in Hand

When the right home appears, I'll help you craft an offer that is strong, strategic, and appropriate to the market condition. We consider more than just price — deposit, dates, subjects, and negotiation posture all matter.

Once your offer is accepted:

- The home inspection and any additional specialist reports are arranged
- Adjustments, repairs, or credits are negotiated
- Your financing is finalized
- Legal documents are signed with your lawyer or notary
- Keys are delivered — and the next chapter begins

A Final Word

Buying a home in this part of the world should feel like an adventure, not a burden. If you'd like to talk about what you're considering — whether or not you're ready to move right away — I'd love to have that conversation. No pressure, just a thoughtful exchange.

“Lucy truly made what could have been a high-stress experience feel smooth, manageable and even fun.” — recent client

Lucy Pheiffer

REALTOR®

Coldwell Banker Oceanside Real Estate

info@lucyislandrealtor.com • lucyislandrealtor.com

Serving Sidney, Greater Victoria, the Westshore, Saanich & Sooke