

Tami Pardee on why the brokerage model is “broken” and why she avoids reality TV

Owner of Pardee Properties dishes on worst timing for an open house

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Tami Pardee and a property she listed that is in escrow at 1366 Palisades Beach Road in Santa Monica

When walking along the Abbot Kinney drag in Venice, it’s impossible for the name Tami Pardee not to penetrate the subconscious. Her surname is a ubiquitous force in the hood, and it’s no wonder — she told *The Real Deal* she spends a whopping \$150,000 a month on marketing and social media.

Pardee, a bubbly, go-getting Oregonian, is the owner and principal broker of Pardee Properties. She started the firm 11 years ago out of her home in Venice and has since grown it into a 55-employee operation with three offices in Venice, Santa Monica and Mar Vista that is vigilant throughout the Westside.

Real estate wasn't always Pardee's plan. She entered the field in a roundabout and very L.A. way, after supervising the remodeling of Sharon Stone's Beverly Hills home as her personal assistant. We chatted with Pardee about her career and her own big move — a whopping fifty feet from her previous home.

You grew up on construction sites. Why did you, at first, resist getting into real estate?

To be honest with you, I associated real estate agent as a bad term. My dad was a homebuilder. My mom was a home designer and builder. My stepfather was a Caterpillar tractor dealership owner. Because my parents were in the business, I would see everything. They would hire these agents and I always thought they should be doing more.

When did that change for you?

After I had my first child. After four months, I was tired of being home and had to get out, so I got my license. In my first year, I sold \$33 million. I was Rookie of the Year (at Re/Max). I realized then this was something I was really good at.

So two years after you started your firm, the housing crisis hit...

Business tripled. The only time business dropped for me was when I was pregnant. I have four kids, but only had three pregnancies because I have twins. So, business has only dropped twice in eleven years.

What don't you like about the real estate business?

The brokerage model is broken because there are too many independent contractors and there is no quality control. We are an employee-based brokerage. Our listing agents only work with listings and our buyer agents only work with buyers. I hated the model at Re/Max so I set out on my own. We run things like a Fortune 500 company. We're not one little marketing guy doing a hundred things himself.

Do you become friends with your clients?

A lot of my best friends were first clients. You are in their lives and they trust you with some of the most intimate information imaginable. Also, in this business you want your client to be your client forever, so it's only natural then that you develop a real relationship.

Given that you're not pregnant, I assume business is good. How much does the reality of the market affect your business specifically?

The Westside is a micro market. We don't have the inventory for the people who want to live here. It will increase a little but for the most part it's always pretty stable barring a natural disaster. But really, we'll be fine even with a natural disaster. Election years always settle the market a bit. When people are scared, they don't like to make big decisions when they aren't sure what is happening. August is slower in the beach areas because of all the traffic, too.

What else can you tell us about timing in L.A.?

You can't do anything during Academy Award season or the Super Bowl. Anything TV related is dead because people are inside watching. CicLAvia and the Marathon are terrible days for open houses, but Mother's and Father's Days are surprisingly good because people are out and about on those days.

A lot of longtime Angelenos are resistant to new development. Where do you stand?

The real problem is there are no specific guidelines of what can and can't be done. We need that stuff defined so that everyone has to adhere. There are too many grey areas and people don't like that. We need it to be fair and clear. The coastal zoning has the same problem, it has to be clear, and that's it.

What is one of the biggest mistakes developers make?

Developers forget that people want to be outside on their properties. They are so worried about the price per square foot, but out here it's about the feel of the house and the outdoor space.

Since the Westside is your territory, where do you suggest buyers look if they can't afford Santa Monica or Venice?

Marina del Rey, Mar Vista and Playa del Rey are jewels. They have such value in them for being in a beach city. The Marina houses and architecture aren't as great as Venice and Santa Monica, but it's a great beach location. Playa del Rey has a cute little town area, and the houses haven't been redone.

Where do you live?

I live in the Marina and I chose it because I have a 10,000-square-foot lot for four children. I walk the beach a lot. I wake up at 5:30 a.m. and walk for an hour and half.

What do you do for fun?

I love to play with my kids and be a kid with them. We throw a lot of dance parties and play freeze tag. It's fun for me to be silly with them because work, even though it's fun for me, is serious.

Have you or would you ever consider the Eastside?

Silver Lake and Los Feliz are the most similar to our vibe over here. I go back and forth with clients also with Hancock Park and Larchmont. The houses and architecture are so special and beautiful over there.

Have you ever considered doing one of those home reality shows?

I've been on "Million Dollar Listing." I have been approached about reality TV by Relativity for NBC. I passed because I don't want to look stupid. Personally, I like to think of myself as less a real estate agent, and more a life changer. That's the kind of show I'd be interested in doing. I work with people who are divorcing, people dealing with death, so the sale or purchase of a house then really can change someone's life. People's homes are really personal and they represent a time in their life. I like to help

with the strategy around that. I've never been interested in the side of TV where there's all that phone slamming and fighting over five dollars. I have all that door slamming already at home!

If you're not already living in it, where or what is your dream home?

My dream house is a Kim Gordon-designed home. She is off the hook and thinks of all the things you can possibly come up with and does it. I have never seen houses like she builds. She is building the house that we're moving into in three weeks. I'm literally moving from one cul-de sac to another. I'm moving 50 feet and it's all because I wanted one of her houses.

- See more at: <http://therealdeal.com/la/2016/03/18/tami-pardee-on-why-the-brokerage-model-is-broken-and-why-she-avoids-reality-tv/#sthash.5QuVCdCW.dpuf>