

Instructions

To personalize the front of the May 2014 Newsletter Template for your region, visit the buy vs. rent calculator available here:

<http://journal.firsttuesday.us/wp-content/uploads/BuyVsRentFarm-FINAL-usage-rights.pdf>

Use the information from that calculator to personalize the message and table comparison on the front of the May 2014 Newsletter Template.



Real Estate Matters

May 2014

Dates to remember

Cinco de Mayo – May 5

Mother's Day – May 11

Memorial Day – May 26



Chicken quesadillas

- 2 tbs vegetable oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 tbs honey
- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into strips
- ½ cup barbeque sauce
- ½ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 8 (10 inch) flour tortillas

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

2. In a large skillet, heat 1 tbs oil over medium high heat. Slowly cook onion. Mix in honey and stir until onion is golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from skillet and set aside.

3. Place remaining oil and chicken in the skillet over medium high heat. Cook until chicken is no longer pink. Stir in barbeque sauce and evenly coat chicken.

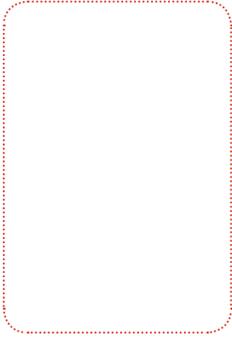
4. Place tortillas on a large baking sheet. Layer individually with chicken, onions, Cheddar cheese and Monterey Jack cheese. Top each tortilla with remaining tortillas.

5. Bake uncovered for 20 minutes, or until cheese is melted. When done, cut into quarters and serve!

(from allrecipes.com)

Buy Versus Rent Comparison Analysis

Costs	Buy	Rent
Monthly Rent	\$ NA	\$
Monthly Principal and Interest	\$	\$ NA
Monthly Mortgage Insurance	\$	\$ NA
Monthly Taxes	\$	\$ NA
Homeowners' Insurance/ Renters' Insurance	\$	\$
Monthly Maintenance/ Landscaping/Pool	\$	\$
Utilities	\$	\$
Homeowners' Association (HOA) Dues	\$	\$
Monthly Income Tax Savings	\$(-)	\$ NA
Monthly Cost	\$	\$



Thinking about going solar?

The cost of solar panels has fallen by 50% in the past four years, while electricity costs have risen considerably in California. Consider these questions before you purchase solar panels or enroll in a solar lease program.

1. How much will going solar save me on my monthly electricity bill?

Solar lease programs advertise a monthly savings of 15% off your current monthly electricity rate. This rate is locked in for the length of the lease and will not rise with inflation. On the other hand, purchasing a solar system outright (costing an average of \$15,000-\$30,000) may take years to pay off.

2. Will installing solar panels add to my home's value?

Yes, going solar may add to your home's value. Nine out of ten homebuyers prefer to purchase an energy-efficient home even if the purchase price is two-to-three percent higher than a similar non-energy-efficient home, according to the National Association of Home Builders. However, a two-to-three percent price increase is not worth the \$15,000-\$30,000 investment. A zero-money down solar lease may offer a solution, but there are complications to consider with solar leases, as well.

3. Will a solar lease derail the sale of my home?

There have been cases of solar lease contracts putting a home sale on hold or even cancelling a sale. To avoid these complications:

- ask the solar leasing company about the requirements for transferring a solar lease to a homebuyer before you sign a monthly contract;
- do the math to figure out if the monthly savings are worth the potential complications with the eventual sale; and
- if you decide to go with a solar lease, disclose the solar lease to all potential homebuyers upfront to make sure it doesn't become an issue before closing.

Your May Maintenance Tip

Maintaining a healthy lawn requires plenty of water and fertilizer, but you don't have to empty your wallet to keep your lawn green. Cut your costs by:

- watering your lawn only one to two inches per week;
- keeping mower blades sharp and clean to trim grass for maximum moisture retention;
- mowing your lawn to no lower than two or three inches to reduce root exposure and water evaporation; and
- investing in a self-mulching lawn mower to allow the cuttings fertilize the lawn.

A vibrant yard doesn't always mean having a lawn, either. Consider replacing your grass with cost-effective alternatives, such as:

- drought resistant plants;
- seeds or young plants as they are cheaper than buying full grown plants;
- trees and plants native to your area to eliminate the need for extraneous watering; and
- fruit trees or a vegetable garden.

