



## From the Broker's Desk

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Flooring is a very visible component of every structure so it is important to select flooring that compliments the structure's architectural style and interior design. Today there is a wide selection of flooring products which offer numerous styles, finishes, textures and installation methods. The cost of flooring can be significant and careful consideration should be given as to what would best suit your lifestyle and budget. Hardwood flooring continues to be in demand as it offers natural beauty, durability and blends with all architectural styles and interior designs. Most hardwood flooring is from oak, maple or walnut with regional hardwoods offering a more unique grain design but these are more costly. The installation of hardwood flooring requires that the plank or strip be nailed to the subfloor but because of its thickness and stability, hardwood flooring can be refinished multiple times. Prefinished hardwood flooring has become more popular as advances in finishes have produced tough surfaces that withstand wear. If you see the initials FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) or SFI (Sustainable Forest Initiative) on wood floor-

ing, then the wood was harvested from sustainable, managed forests. Engineered wood flooring and laminate flooring are two different materials. Engineered flooring has a real wood veneer top backed by layers of plywood or other substrates while laminate flooring has a top layer of a plastic coating over a photograph of a flooring material. Engineered wood can be nailed, glued or installed as a floating floor over a cushioned pad but refinishing is limited to one time. Some manufacturers are offering self-locking tiles or planks for easier installation. Laminate flooring can be installed directly over existing flooring without glue or nails as it also is a floating floor system. An advantage of engineered and laminate flooring is that it can be installed where solid wood cannot be installed. Bamboo is not a wood but a grass whose strands are glued together to form solid strips or planks and creates a very tough and durable material. Because bamboo is an imported product, cost can be high. Cork comes from the bark of trees and the flooring uses a top layer of cork glued to a stable core material. Planks can be glued in place or installed as a floating floor. Cork flooring produces a warm, natural appearance and is comfortable to walk on but must be sealed frequently to prevent staining and moisture intrusion. Ceramic tile

comes in many shapes, sizes, colors and textures and is made from a mixture of clay and shale that is baked and hardened in a kiln. While ceramic tile is durable and stain resistant, the grout lines are hard to clean, tiles can chip and items dropped on the floor will either break or crack the tile. Linoleum, made from renewable, biodegradable materials, comes as sheet goods designed for glue down installation and is considered a top environmentally friendly flooring choice. Felt backed vinyl flooring can be bought as tiles or sheet goods and is tough, durable and virtually maintenance free. Stone flooring comes in granite, marble, limestone, slate and travertine and the degree of hardness will govern how often sealing will be required. Carpet offers more colors and textures than any other flooring. Fibers can be of wool, nylon, acrylic, polyester and polypropylene olefin for outdoor use. If you are looking for a unique flooring consider acid-stained concrete which is affordable, non-porous and easy to maintain, rubber which is durable and easy on the feet or brick pavers which gives a vintage look. As with any major purchase, research your options before making a commitment. If you have real estate questions, don't hesitate to call on the experienced Agents of WILLOW Realty.

## Recovery From Addiction is a Family Affair

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Constructive and active family engagement in the recovery process is essential if the family is to heal from the destructive impact of addiction. To move on in hope, families need a variety of supports, information and skills including the following:

- 1. End the Isolation and Connect:** By joining an education or support group.
- 2. Education on Addiction and the Family:** Understanding how addiction affects both the addicted person and the family is an essential foundation to moving on.
- 3. Learn Communication Skills:** Active addiction destroys family communication. Developing these skills is essential to family recovery.
- 4. Detachment and Responsibility for Self:** Learning to detach with love and focus on assuming responsibility for our own behavior.

**5. Stop Old Behaviors:** Many of our old ways of coping are ineffective and contribute to the problem not the solution: enabling, denial, blaming and minimizing the problem.

**6. Engage the Children:** As a parent, depending on ages, you play a critically important role in providing support and protection for the children. But, engaging them in their own recovery is very important.

**7. Build on Resilience:** Surviving active addiction to alcohol and drugs is never easy. Use the recovery process as a means of building on your personal and family strengths.

**8. Engage in Personal and Family Activities:** working alone and together to find activities that serve as a source of personal and family fulfillment (ex. volunteering)

**9. Understand and Prepare for Relapse:** Relapse into old behaviors is as real for family members as it is for those addicted to alcohol and drugs. Family members need to develop strategies for dealing with their own relapse issues and other challenges. People recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction, their families, and their children can and often do achieve optimum levels of health and functioning, but this achievement is best measured in years rather than days, weeks, or months. In the process of recovery, families are strengthened through increased levels of genuine intimacy and families are better able to cope with life's challenges. Over time, the discipline of recovery can bring the family together to be the healthiest it has ever been!

## Zucchini and Yellow Squash Gratin

© Martha Stewart

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|---|------------------------------|
| 2 tbsp. butter  | 2 garlic cloves, minced      |
| 2 med. zucchini (about 7 oz. each), sliced crosswise 1/4 inch thick | Coarse salt & ground pepper  |
| 2 med. yellow squash (about 7 oz. each), sliced 1/4 inch thick      | 1/2 c heavy cream            |
| 2 shallots, minced  | 1 c panko                    |
|   | 1/2 c grated Parmesan cheese |



Preheat oven to 450. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat; add zucchini, yellow squash, shallots, and garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until zucchini and squash are crisp-tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Add cream, and cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove skillet from heat; stir in 1/2 cup panko and 1/4 cup Parmesan. Spoon mixture into a shallow 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining panko\* and Parmesan; season with salt and pepper. Bake until top is golden, 8 to 10 minutes.

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A child without education, is like a bird without wings.  
~ Tibetan Proverb