



Stacey Grossman: Living, Buying And Selling A Life Of Luxury

One of Chicago's most authentic luxury home experts knows the term is more than a dollar sign; it's about being yourself and living your adventure.

Sharon Powills
10/02/2017

ESTATENVY: Did you always know you wanted to be a realtor?

Stacey Grossman: I grew up wanting to do one of two things: become a flight attendant or a realtor. Growing up in Virginia Beach, Virginia, I took my first flight at 9 years old. I immediately knew that I wanted to be a "stewardess" from that point on. I joined United Airlines as a flight attendant in my early 20's and absolutely loved flying. It provided me an opportunity to meet people from every walk of life and to travel all over the world!

After I married (a little later in life than typical!), I was ready to take a leave of absence from flying and pursue a career in real estate, which became my passion. There are several similarities in both careers. Working mostly first class on my flights, I had the ability to

“entertain” our customers as if they were in my own home. Flight attendants need to be nurturing, and the same is true as a realtor. Working with buyers requires a certain amount of “hand holding.”

EE: How did you end up doing real estate in Chicago?

Grossman: My flight attendant job eventually brought me to Chicago, United’s largest hub, by way of Cleveland and six years in New York City. I have loved living here in Chicago. I lived quite a few years in the Gold Coast when I was single and moved to Lincoln Park after I got married, which led to my real estate career.

After I married, I got my real estate license thinking I would get a new home for my husband and I! Ironically, we’ve stayed in the home we were in before I got my license, although it’s been through quite the transformation. I have lived in Lincoln Park for over 20 years, and my neighborhood has become one filled with luxury homes.

EE: How did you get involved in the ‘luxury’ end of the real estate market?

Grossman: I prefer working in the luxury market because that’s the area that I happen to know through my life circumstances. It’s where I live and who my neighbors are, so it’s a very comfortable market for me. With my clients, I can really appreciate what they have in their home. How luxurious the kitchen is, as well as their entertaining spaces and outdoor areas. Realtors tend to market themselves around a neighborhood they know. We lean towards marketing ourselves in our own neighborhood for this reason. You know your neighbors and understand the dynamics of the neighborhood. You become an expert on why it’s the best location to live. You know the restaurants, theatres and all it has to offer, and this knowledge is especially valuable to people moving to the area from outside of the neighborhood or outside of the City in general.

EE: What is a luxury home to you?

Grossman: I would describe a luxury home as an expensive home built on expensive land. Location is key. In Chicago, for example, Lincoln Park’s location is what has made it so special. It is close to the lake, parks, shopping, restaurants and all the city has to offer along with good school districts. Also, a luxury home should be “timeless” regarding finishes and details, especially in kitchens and baths and have a practical layout that works for a family. Amazing outdoor spaces have become very expected in the luxury market with built-in kitchens and impressive landscaping.

EE: What do you see happening in Chicago, the luxury market you represent?

Grossman: The luxury market will continue to be about location, whether it’s Lincoln Park, the Gold Coast, Streeterville, River North or West Loop, and we will continue to see this market grow with all of the new construction in each of these locations. There is always something new to learn about real estate in Chicago and it keeps it interesting and exciting.

EE: Why do you love real estate?

Grossman: Selling real estate is just a part of who I am, and I couldn't be happier that I have been able to enjoy such a vibrant career and I look forward to that continuing for years to come! There's nothing more important than purchasing the home you want to be living in and perhaps raising a family. Being a part of that process is such a rewarding experience. Whether it's selling someone's home and telling the story of why the sellers have loved the home for so long, or working with buyers and finding the right home for them, it's wonderful.

As much as I enjoy the luxury market, it's not about the price range when I am working with my clients. It's about the process, which is the same regardless of the price point. The good feeling it brings you is so satisfying; the sense of accomplishment when you can find what someone is looking for!

EE: What makes for a good real estate agent?

Grossman: When you deal with real estate, you deal with people and have to be nurturing, a hand holder, and a good listener. Whether on the buy or sell side, you have to take care of people and have a genuine interest in them, which makes for great friendships! Having people trust you and having them respect your knowledge of real estate industry regardless of which market you're in is a great honor. In the end, it's about taking care of them and having their best interest at heart.

EE: What are the skills real estate agents need regardless of who they represent?

Grossman: Regardless of how "seasoned" my clients are, the process takes a lot of time and effort, patience and good listening skills. When I list a home, I find out what my clients truly love about their homes, and I try to project that when I am doing showings. In certain ways, I feel as though my client's home becomes my home, and I want buyers to feel a true sense of being "welcomed" into my listings.

EE: What would you say to someone who is thinking of a career in real estate?

Grossman: You need to love it. If you don't love it, you won't be good at it. Often, I am unsure about my schedule, as it can change rapidly with showing requests for listings or buyers. You need to be available, as it can truly be a 24/7 schedule. But it is so rewarding when I am doing a showing, and it is obvious that the buyers truly love my listing. It's equally rewarding when I am out with my buyers and they fall in love with a property and know this is where they want to call "home"! My business is about building relationships, and I have been blessed with so many clients who truly become friends.

EE: Do you only represent the Lincoln Park area of Chicago?

Grossman: No, I also really enjoy being in other surrounding neighborhoods and becoming educated on what they have to offer. I work a lot in Streeterville and River North, for example. There are big buildings that are luxurious, but there are also great small vintage gem buildings

off the beaten track. It never ceases to amaze me what unique properties there are in Chicago!

EE: What's a recent special real estate moment you had lately?

Grossman: Today, I just had brunch with my first client ever. I met him when he was moving to Chicago and was looking for a rental. Then he moved into a one bedroom, then a duplex down in Lakeview. Now he lives in the suburbs. The relationship we've built over the years means a lot to me. From meeting his fiancée to being there when his first child was born; it's an honor to develop a relationship that is continuous for years.

EE: How do you keep up with past clients?

Grossman: I like more of a personal touch. Take them to lunch, remember their birthday, have a client party. I like to invite past clients to events of interest. My hope is to stay in their lives as a trusted advisor they can call on and be there for them when they need me.

Stacey Grossman has worked for Coldwell Banker her entire career. She is a "Coldwell Banker Luxury Property Specialist," a designation for realtors who qualify as such based on sales and listings in the luxury market as well as achieving education goals related to the designation.