

Tips for Taking Better Tour Photos

Equipment

Starting with the right equipment is an important first step to taking better photos. You can find all of the items below at: www.ritzcamera.com

1. Make sure that your digital camera takes at least 5-mega pixel photos.
2. Shoot your photos using a wide angle lens, it will make all of the rooms look much larger, and will make your shots more interesting to view.
3. Purchase at least a 1 Gig memory card for your camera, and take all of your pictures at your camera's highest resolution setting.

Community Tour

Every sales associate should have a library of images that help provide a picture of the lifestyle offered in the listing's community. You can use these to create a community tour, or to mix in a couple of neighborhood highlights with your home tour.

4. Take at least 15 shots from the local community. Take shots of the local elementary, middle and high schools. Parks, greenbelts, nearby shopping and restaurants also tell a nice story. Golf courses, beaches, tennis courts, and baseball fields also make for nice shots. Entrances to communities without cars present also makes for a nice shot. After you have selected your home images, if you have fewer than 10, use these community shots to round out your tour.

Prepping the Home

When you paint a home, the quality of the finished job depends upon good prep work. The same is true for your photos. Here are some tips that will get you off on the right foot.

Exterior

5. Remove all cars from front of house and driveway
6. All hoses should be neatly coiled and the garage doors closed
7. Remove all cars from the front of the home, including driveways.
8. Remove BBQ and patio furniture covers and place them out of sight, also open the patio umbrellas.
10. Hose down all of the hard surfaces, e.g. driveways, walkways, patios, etc. they will look much nicer in your shots
11. Schedule your shoot soon after the yard has been tended to, ideally after some perennials have been planted.

Interior

12. Turn on all of the lights, lamps, artwork lights, cabinet lights, and light the fireplaces.
13. Open the curtains, blinds and shutters, etc.
14. Set the dining room table, and light candles.
15. Fresh flowers add color and warmth to your photos, and make the home more welcoming.
16. Clear off all counter tops and coffee tables, make sure the sinks are empty, the beds need to be nicely made, and close the toilet seats.

Shooting the Home

After you have prepped the home, the fun begins. Here are some overall tips on taking better photos of your listing.

17. When possible, plan to take your shots at dusk. The afternoon light will add warmth and richness to your images.
18. Shoot with the sun at your back, or at least directly overhead.
19. Use available light when possible. Indoors, the mood created by natural light is lost with a flash, that is why we want all of the lights on.
20. Your images will be more interesting if you take shots from different angles. Crouch and shoot at up angles, shoot down from stairways, stand on a step ladder or foot stool and shoot at down angles. You will be surprised at what a difference this will make in your final series of photos.
21. When shooting a room, position yourself in a corner. This, combined with a wide angle lens, will make the rooms look much larger and roomier.
22. Take more pictures than you think you'll need. Any shots that you have lighting concerns with, shoot with both the flash on and flash off. Move in tight on some of your detail shots. With the larger memory card you can take plenty of photos, and you can always delete those you don't end up using.

Shooting Specifics

Exterior

23. When you shoot the front of the home, get as close to curb as possible to avoid street/cars in photo while still capturing the entire house front.
24. Make sure you try shooting the front of the house from a $\frac{3}{4}$ angle, this shot will often times be much more interesting than the straight on flat image.

25. When shooting house and view shots avoid telephone and power lines and streets whenever possible.

26. Look to capture an elevated shot, looking down towards the residence, these provide a good overview of the property and make it look more expansive.

27. Don't forget the backyard, highlight the amenities/features in the yard, e.g., pool, Jacuzzi (jets on), BBQ, bar, patios, fountains, waterscapes, architectural features, etc.

Interior

28. When shooting towards a window, make sure you take a picture with the forced use of your flash.

29. When shooting rooms with lots of mirrors (especially baths), avoid having your reflection appear. Try shooting from a low angle, or reaching in and snapping a shot will help you stay out of frame. You can also open medicine cabinets slightly to redirect reflections. Good luck with this one, it can be challenging.

30. Open French and sliding doors and your photos will better depict an indoor/outdoor lifestyle.

31. Take some tight detail shots that highlight features like fireplaces, wet bars, crown molding, wood work, fountains, tile, etc.

32. Get creative, stage some beauty shots, e.g. a flower arrangement on a center island with stainless steel appliance in background, try some severe angles, and most importantly, have fun!!

If you use these tips, we are sure you will notice an improvement in your tour quality, and all your online walk-throughs are going to be working harder for you.

Good Selling!