



Mike Canning

The Lawyer

Specializing in ocean- and golf-view properties in Carmel and Pebble Beach and premier properties in The Preserve, Mike Canning is the go-to guy for luxury real estate in one of California's most celebrated coastal regions. With a sales history that includes more than a dozen sales of properties priced \$10 million and up—including one \$55 million transaction—it is no wonder that Mike was just recognized by Sotheby's as its No. 1 agent for the ninth consecutive year.

HAUTE LIVING Where are you from originally?

MIKE CANNING My wife and I are both originally from Minnesota (high school sweethearts), went to undergrad and law school at the University of Denver and lived in Colorado for 15 years. We have lived in Pebble Beach and Carmel for the last 21 years.

HL How long have you lived in San Francisco and what neighborhood do you live in?

MC Once our two "kids" left for college Nan and I bought land in The Preserve, built our home there, and have been living there for the past six years.

HL When did you first become interested in a career in real estate and what about it sparked your interest?

MC My fascination with real estate began in college and continued through law school and an eight-year practice as a real estate attorney before my affection for the law waned, my tolerance for winter went to zero, and Pebble Beach cast a siren call. I transitioned into residential real estate and have been at it ever since.

HL What would be your dream property to list and why?

MC I've been fortunate to have been retained to sell several of the true "dream properties" in the Monterey Peninsula, but a couple of my favorites were the Crocker Castle on the ocean in Pebble Beach, and the five-acre site near The Beach Club, which became the new fifth hole of the Pebble Beach Golf Links.

HL What is the secret to succeeding in the San Francisco real estate market?

MC I think the key to success in most upper-end markets is specialization, establishing expertise in a geographic or categorical niche; it's much better to be the king of a limited hill than merely competent in too wide an area.

HL What are some annual cultural/social events that would appeal to Haute Living readers?

MC Carmel and Pebble Beach have an abundance of events that draw audiences from a wide area: Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament; the 2010 U.S. Open; the Concours D'Elegance; Bach Festival; Jazz Festival; Big Sur Marathon; Masters of Food & Wine; races at Laguna Seca, as well as hundreds of fantastic restaurants, shops, galleries, and the like.

HL The last place you went for fine dining?

MC My favorite restaurant at the moment is Marinus at Bernardus Lodge—the food, wine, and service are simply the best. I have probably a dozen in mind that compete for second but Marinus is at the top of the list.

HL If you weren't in real estate sales, you would be...

MC I'd probably be in commercial sales. I can't get real estate out of my blood, and having represented a number of commercial developers and landlords as an attorney, I could clearly see that as a possibility.

HL When not selling properties, what is your favorite pastime?

MC While golf has been a passion for more than 30 years, my true obsession is fly-fishing, which I've also done for about 30 years. We built a home on the Bitterroot River in Montana a few years ago and spend as much time as possible there in the summer and fall.

HL What is something that people would be surprised to find out about you?

MC Being 6-foot 4-inches tall, most people are surprised to learn that I played hockey most of my younger life, not the presumed basketball.

HL What are your predictions for the local market in 2010?

MC My crystal ball is forecasting a slowing in the market decline throughout 2010 with stabilization happening in 2011. In Carmel and Pebble Beach, the market does not behave uniformly throughout the price spectrum. The bottom brackets will likely continue to enjoy more demand than the top but my sense is we will begin to see some increase in activity in the top brackets in 2010 as sellers continue to recalibrate to the market and buyers accurately perceive a market bottom with reduced risk of future decline.