

THE NEW YORK OBSERVER

Country, Mountain & Waterfront Properties

After stopping briefly in White Plains for a quick bite and to grab my rental car, the next stop for me was The Catskill Mountains; where I had a very nice discussion about location and real estate and the joys derived from both with Jennifer Grimes. Jennifer is a VERY nice, knowledgeable licensed professional and after welcoming me to her charming office and offering a delicious glass of iced tea to this determined journalist, Ms. Grimes got right to it!

“When people think of the Catskills, I think they picture a cabin by a lake, ducks swimming by, endless woods, and a whole lot of quiet,” says Jennifer Grimes, founder of Country House Realty. “So when I was invited to list just such a property recently (\$699,000), which shares 850 magnificent acres of meadows, woods and trails with 9 other homeowners on Round Pond in Claryville recently, I knew that would tantalize New Yorkers who are sitting under all that fluorescent lighting, dreaming of just such an escape.”

A new upstart has joined the ranks of Catskills real estate in the form of Country House Realty, a boutique firm dedicated to conveying the exceptional natural beauty of its territory with cutting-edge technology, and New York-style professionalism. At the helm is Jennifer Grimes, herself a former Manhattanite and weekender, who originally sought out the area for its renowned local fly-fishing rivers.

Grimes believes the value for money, particularly in Sullivan Co., is “outstanding” given the proximity to the city (about 2 hours from the George Washington Bridge). “For the price of a decent two bedroom apartment you can buy an estate like Wisteria Farm, with charming 1850s home, saline pool, guest house, pond, privacy and 1,200 square foot antique “party barn” for just over a million bucks.

According to Grimes, Sullivan County has been a victim of dated perceptions (casinos, Borscht-belt), which leaves the market to people in the know, a good chunk of whom are dedicated outdoor enthusiasts. And those savvy buyers are recognizing the exciting opportunities that exist in the current

economic climate.

“The inventory is becoming more diverse, too. A talented NYC architect has rehabbed what really was a teardown farmhouse in my town, and doubled the size with an ultra-modern addition that floods the place with light, and utterly transforms the whole living experience. So while the number of modern houses for sale is somewhat limited still up here, this property would certainly be among the most exciting modern listings in this region (\$395,000).”

“Almost all of the properties I’ve sold over the last few years have been to young(ish) New York couples, who have been attracted by the relatively undeveloped nature of our local terrain,” Grimes continues. “Just the other day I showed a turn-key, one bedroom cabin on 4+ acres, (\$125,000), for the first time to a great couple from the city, and the next day they made an offer. The thing that got them: the bonfire pit up the hill with the view. And I’d say being adjacent to 142 preserved acres didn’t hurt.”

Now through her website, CountryHouseRealty.net, she uses the luxury of unlimited space for a detailed narrative and comprehensive photography to paint a detailed picture of each property so prospective buyers feel they’ve already made their first visit before leaving their computer. “Why waste people’s time with listings that don’t suit?” says Grimes. “Providing detail in words and images is a filter for both of us, so we can focus our time on properties that have a real chance of being their dream home.”

Her original venture, RedCottageInc.com, has been bringing a select range of wonderful cabins and stylish contemporaries to the vacation rentals market for over 3 years now.

Based in the picturesque region of Claryville/Neversink, home to two scenic reservoirs and some of the Catskills most enduring, unspoiled beauty spots, with a proximity to the city that makes it the destination of choice for people seeking to let their inner Country Mouse shine.