



Elite Homes for Under \$5 Million

From Greenwich, Westport, New Fairfield and New Canaan in western Connecticut to Katonah in Westchester up the Hudson to Germantown in Columbia County, several palatial homes are listing for reduced prices during this buyer's market.

Built in Katonah in 1807, Willow Green Farm, at 159 North Salem Road, is a 10,000-square-foot Italianate colonial home with a saltwater pool and a tennis court that was once the centerpiece of a much larger estate. At just over 10 acres, the property abuts the 250-acre Mount Holly Sanctuary and the adjoining 320-acre Audubon Sanctuary, affording the owners a massive playground of gently rolling and level lawns, mature trees and open fields crisscrossed with old stone walls. A two-year gut renovation, completed in 2009, brought the total to six bedrooms and 10 bathrooms, add-

ing a solarium with radiant-heat floors, and copying all the vintage millwork and the quarter-sawn oak flooring so that it is nearly impossible to see where additional elements were added.

The house is on the market for \$4,475,000. "This is effectively a new old house, with a multi-million-dollar renovation on a beautiful old property with ancient trees, in which the owners invested about twice the current asking price," said Dan Ginnel, president and principal broker of Ginnel Real Estate in Bedford Hills. "It now has a huge open country kitchen and family room, and they added a master bedroom suite and a



Photo: Houlihan Lawrence

playroom, all the things a young family would want, while keeping the authenticity intact. Most of the original acreage, which was once a part of the property and is now forever protected, is directly adjacent, with plenty of trails and easy access from this property, giving the buyer all the benefits of all that extra acreage without the cost of maintaining it. And with the renovation, all the heavy lifting has been done for you.”

Farther north of the city, at 19 Wire Road in Columbia County’s Germantown, a sprawling 86-acre estate along the Hudson River is on the market for \$4.9 million. The six-bedroom, 10,211-square-foot main home, a thoughtfully restored, renovated and expanded Second Empire Victorian, includes a six-sided stone icehouse converted into a bar and wine room and an indoor pool with a specially designed energy-efficient ventilation system for year-round use.

More than half a mile of direct frontage on the Roeliff Jansen Kill, which flows into the Hudson, allows for private access to some of the area’s best trout and smallmouth bass fishing. The grounds also include a working orchard of 450 apple trees, two-level slate terrace with a pergola, summer kitchen and a fire pit, and two miles of woodland trails for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing and country walks. Two red barns, a three-stall horse barn with two paddocks, a chicken coop, raised bed and fenced vegetable gardens with drip irrigation and a sports court round out the outdoor amenities. Thanks to geothermal wells and solar panels, the property costs an average of \$200 a month to heat and cool — even when keeping

the pool at a steady 80 degrees year-round. “A property of this magnitude closer to New York City would have property taxes well beyond the current assessment of \$42,000 a year,” said Harry Hill, associate broker with Houlihan Lawrence. “At a little over a two-hour drive from the city, and close to the town of Hudson, which is popular with people relocating north of the city, this is a truly one-of-a-kind opportunity at a very fair price.”

The six-bedroom, 8,497-square-foot colonial at 87 North Wilton Road is located in an estate section of New Canaan popular with many New Yorkers since the 1920s, when they picked the area for their summer retreats. On the market for \$4,675,000, the classic New England colonial, built in 1951 and situated on 6.63 acres of land, features an orchard with varietal apple trees that the current owners have carefully maintained, inviting local school children, nature centers and local food banks to pick apples as a community builder. Besides over two acres of orchards, there is a pool with a pool house suitable for entertaining, with a full kitchen and a

OPPOSITE: Willow Green Farm, 159 North Salem Road, Katonah, N.Y.

ABOVE: 19 Wire Road, Germantown, N.Y.



Photo: Douglas Elliman



Photo: Houlihan Lawrence

seating area, with a separate cottage that has a kitchenette, bathroom and a walk-in closet — ideal for guests to spend the weekend.

Other highlights include seven wood-burning fireplaces, a long driveway leading to a circular courtyard and the sweeping front lawn, a well-equipped gym, laundries on both the first and second floors, and a kitchen with fieldstone floors and an authentic bakers' table. "We've had a bit of a market correction, so this is a great value and should sell quickly

now that it is priced under \$5 million," said Taylor Tait, sales agent with Houlihan Lawrence. "I don't know of any other property in our area that has such a well-maintained apple orchard, with a main home that has an appealing layout with two large family rooms and a living room, all done in the Old World style that made this area so popular."

On the market for \$3,595,000, 25 Fox Run Lane in mid-country Greenwich was built on 2.4 acres in the early 1900s and fully renovated by the current owners in 2005 with a staggering list of improvements, additions, upgrades and the latest smart-home features. Highlights include a 40-zone web-based irrigation system, keyless entry, smart-device-controlled surround sound throughout the house (including the terraces and the porch), expanded saltwater pool, walk-in wine room, a library with a silver-leaf tray ceiling, family room with 25-foot ceilings and a 15-foot cathedral-ceiling kitchen. An 80-kilowatt whole-house generator system is capable of powering the entire house (including central air-conditioning) for more than two weeks. The owners also added a fenced in gravel dog run off the first-floor master suite, so that when it rains, the dogs do not come in with dirty feet.

"It also has a gorgeous cupola, a long list of very useful upgrades, and is in a great location that is 10 minutes to town, with exquisite gardens that are fully manicured, with rose bushes, hydrangeas and maples everywhere," said Monica Webster, sales agent with Douglas Elliman Real Estate. "I have never seen gardens as extensive and well-maintained."

Built in 1981 on two lots and 16 acres overlooking Candlewood Lake and Squantz Pond, 158/154



Shortwoods Road in New Fairfield is a six-bedroom home that features its own extensive list of resort-like amenities, including heated gunite pool, a golf green flanked by sand traps and three tee boxes, a full-size basketball court, tennis court and an outdoor grill with multiple stone patios. Indoors are five gas fireplaces, a dining room with a curved wall of windows, a light-filled gym, a lower level with radiant-heated floors, media and game rooms, wine cellar and a guest suite. House functions are controlled by 13 in-room iPads, and the entire property can be powered during emergencies by a 45-kilowatt generator.

The asking price for the 10,218-square-foot property, which is bordered by Pootatuck State Forest for complete privacy, is \$3,495,000. "The current owner acquired this as a more modest home, and then started adding wings — it would be a perfect house for an athlete or an outdoorsy person," said Laura Freed Ancona, sales agent with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. "This is a true wooded retreat, overlooking the lake, with views, privacy and significant acreage, with easy access to the boat slips on Candlewood Lake, about an hour to New York City and a bit over two hours to Boston. You don't have to go to the Hamptons to get a waterfront lifestyle."

Rabbit Hill is the name of the brick and clapboard Georgian home with pool and heated pool house built by author/illustrator Robert Lawson at 57 Weston Road in Westport. Listing for \$3,299,000, the five bedroom, 10,560-square-foot home, completed in 1936 on 5.66 private acres, is named after the only book to have won both the Caldecott Medal for best picture book and the John Newbery Medal for young adult lit-

OPPOSITE TOP: 25 Fox Run Lane, Greenwich, Conn.

OPPOSITE BELOW: 87 North Wilton Road, New Canaan, Conn.

ABOVE LEFT: 158/154 Shortwoods Road, New Fairfield, Conn.

ABOVE RIGHT: Rabbit Hill, 57 Weston Road, Westport, Conn.

erature, and still has Lawson's illustrations for it on the walls. The current owners purchased the property in 2000, and then spent 18 months updating and expanding the house, moving many walls and replacing nearly every window.

The home, which features a five-sided pentagonal library, four fireplaces and another stone fireplace in the four-season pool house, has been recently updated with new air-conditioning, Sonos sound system and a 48-kilowatt generator. "The main part of the house has a cook's kitchen, with a large two-tiered island and a six-burner range — with a raised-hearth fireplace in the kitchen where you can cook over the embers, with three different rack heights and an authentic and functioning swivel pot arm," said Cathy McGee, sales agent with Coldwell Banker. "It has always been a bustling house, and is still a destination for authors and illustrators when they tour Westport. The renovation maintained the integrity of the age — all the improvements were thoughtfully done, so that you still feel the solid character of an updated 1936 home. You just cannot build something like this today, to this level of quality, at any price." ■

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