



COURTESY PHOTOS

# Take a Gamble on MCA's Dream Home

I'm not sure whether it was playing heated games of canasta with my grandmother every time she came to visit or going to the horse races with my dad almost every day during racing season while growing up, but I am a die-hard gambler. I still love both card games and horse racing, so it's no great surprise that I also love Las Vegas.

I'm not a reckless gambler, mind you, so trips to Vegas just a few times a year for a few days at a time are enough to satisfy my urge. But those bright lights and the 24-hour, nonstop excess never fail to please. I won't say no to a luxury suite on the Strip, but if I get to choose, and I usually do, I'll pick a place downtown every time. Downtown Las Vegas has cheaper tables, friendlier dealers, the neon museum, and Binion's Gambling Hall, where once a day, just for showing up, you can get your picture taken with a million dollars and take home a free souvenir print in a cardboard frame.

Here at home, the closest I'll get to a quick million dollars is the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara's Dream Home Raffle. The museum is currently raffling off a chance to win more than 2,500 prizes including cars, cash, electronics, and an eight-day vacation for 10 to Italy. One grand-prize winner will receive their choice of either \$3 million in cash or a Santa Barbara dream home valued at \$3.8 million.

The opportunity to tour the dream home appealed to both my love of open houses and my love of gambling. Of course I wanted a sneak peek at the dream home—as long as it didn't make me ineligible to win the raffle.

My friend Rachel and I visited the dream home one recent sunny afternoon. I can't tell you exactly where



Address: **Undisclosed**

Status: **Not for sale**

Value: **\$3,800,000**

it is, but suffice it to say that we didn't have to leave our downtown office more than a few minutes before our appointed arrival time. I'm familiar with the area, but I don't think I've ever been on this exact street. A friend who grew up nearby described it as a family neighborhood from which people never move away. Kids still play out in the street, and there's been an annual block party for at least the past 20 years.

As we drove up the hill and approached the house, we could tell it was going to have a nice view. So before we went inside, we walked around an exterior balcony to the backyard. Once we saw the entire view, it almost didn't matter what we found indoors. The view encom-

passes almost every Santa Barbara landmark, along with the harbor, the ocean, and the Channel Islands, but from a rarely seen angle. The backyard takes full advantage of this panorama, and every room in the house is oriented accordingly.

The house has three bedrooms and three bathrooms, with the bedrooms on the bottom floor and the living rooms on the top. It is contemporary in style, with clean lines, high ceilings, and a modern feel. Built in 2004, it occupies more than 4,000 square feet and sits on more than three acres of land. The kitchen, living room, and dining room form one open great room on the top floor, with a family room tucked up a few steps behind the living room. We walked in the back door and entered the kitchen, which is outfitted in gourmet fashion with marble-topped counters and an island, plus top-notch appliances.

Downstairs, the three bedrooms enjoy another living room. I envision this as the kids' living space, where they do homework or play video games away from the grown-ups. The master bedroom and bath are spacious. A walk-in closet built behind the headboard is but one of many examples of the well designed and beautifully appointed custom touches throughout the house.

However, no matter how well designed, in just about every room of the house, the view steals the show. My gaze kept drifting out the window and down the hill. I probably looked like I was day-dreaming, which wasn't far from the truth. The winner of the raffle will have to decide: \$3 million cash or this \$3.8 million house and view? It will be a tough decision but one I'll gladly make if I'm the winner. Whether it's me or another lucky player, I can feel good about this gamble because the proceeds from the raffle benefit a good cause—which is more than I can say for the money I spend in Las Vegas. Nevertheless, I'll be back soon. You can bet on it.

The dream home is not for sale. Tickets to the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara's Dream Home Raffle can be purchased for \$150. The second early-bird deadline is October 7. The grand prize drawing will be held November 11. For details, visit [sbhomeraffle.com](http://sbhomeraffle.com) or call (888) 402-9222.