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From high rises to historic townhomes, Philadelphia real estate expert **Lora Hemphill** takes a customized, creative, and hands-on approach to helping clients move up in the world.

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From high rises to historic townhomes, Philadelphia real estate expert Lora Hemphill takes a customized, creative, and hands-on approach to helping clients move up in the world.

by LINDSEY GETZ

Finding a new home can be overwhelming. After all, navigating Philadelphia's housing market and finding a home that suits one's unique lifestyle, needs, and budget is no simple task. With the right Realtor as a guide, however, the journey can be an exhilarating, if not life-changing, experience.

Because Philadelphia neighborhoods such as Rittenhouse, Fitler Square, Washington Square, and Society Hill are such vibrant and wonderful places to put down roots, they're also in high demand. That's why many discerning buyers turn to real estate experts such as Lora Hemphill.

Hemphill not only "lives the life," but

she is also committed to helping others do the same. An Associate Broker with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Fox & Roach Realtors in Philadelphia, Hemphill is an award-winning luxury home expert who has spent the past 20 years connecting sellers and buyers with properties throughout Center City, Chestnut Hill, and the Main Line. Her in-depth knowledge of the local market—as well as the way in which she embraces her clients—has made her a sought-after talent.

"Over the years, as the number of Realtors has grown, I've had to ask myself, 'How do I stand out?'" she says. "The answer is that I work harder and smarter, and I find ways to be more creative. I'm

available to my clients 24/7. They know that I'm there for anything they need. It comes down to trust—people know they can count on me."

Hemphill can "live and breathe" real estate in this way because of her genuine love for the profession. She sees her work as more than just a job; rather, she considers it her calling.

Prior to working in real estate, Hemphill gathered experience in other industries. The University of Pennsylvania graduate worked in finance and public relations in both New York, including on Wall Street, and Philadelphia. When she entered the real estate business, she found that the skills she acquired and talents she honed—a tireless work ethic, good judgment, and a commitment to exceeding expectations—served her and her clients well.

As proof, Hemphill has numerous awards to her credit, including being named a Five-Star Real Estate Agent by *Philadelphia* magazine. Most recently, she took home the 2019 Philadelphia Award in the Real Estate Consultant Category. Each year, the Philadelphia Award program identifies individuals who have made significant contributions to the community and attained a high level of success in their particular area of business. Hemphill says she's honored to have received such prestigious honors because she believes they demonstrate her dedication to her craft.

"I want clients to know that I'm someone who will go above and beyond for them," Hemphill says. "That's one of the reasons that I've even gotten into home staging. I am always looking for ways that I can be of best service to my clients and help ensure that all of their needs are being met."

In other words, people turn to Hemphill because of her ability to create opportunities and develop solutions for every client.

Over the years Hemphill has handled everything from luxury townhomes and condominiums to historically significant properties, from estate sales to brand-new construction. That often means staying abreast of what is coming to market and bringing her clients the best possible options. As new and exciting properties are developed in Philadelphia, Hemphill prides herself on being able to get clients in on the "ground floor," so to speak.

"I'm known amongst my clients for staying on top of what's new," Hemphill says. "In real estate, it's all about keeping up with state-of-the-art technology and the everchanging market."

As an example, several iconic condominium buildings surround Rittenhouse Square, soon to be joined by one more: The Laurel, the premier high rise currently being built on the last undeveloped parcel on Rittenhouse Square. Designed by the internationally renowned Solomon Cordwell Buenz, The Laurel will measure 48 stories,



Due to open in 2022, The Laurel will offer lavish amenities, inspiring views, and unfettered access to one of the city's most adored neighborhoods.



making it the tallest residential high rise in the city. The building's 64 ultra-luxury condominiums will range from approximately 1,700 square feet to 8,600 square feet, and offer lavish amenities, inspiring views, and unfettered access to one of the city's most adored neighborhoods.

"The Laurel will have doormen, valet parking, a town-car service, an indoor pool and spa, and a fitness center with locker rooms and saunas and steamers," says Brian Emmons of the Southern Land Co., who is overseeing The Laurel's development. "It will also have a residential lounge, an executive meeting room, and an outdoor pool with cabanas, and a summer kitchen. That makes us the only building in the area with

both an indoor and outdoor pool."

Such amenities are in high demand among buyers in the Philadelphia area, according to Emmons. This includes homeowners in the suburbs who have recently become empty nesters, and are now seeking the many comforts and conveniences that come from living in the Rittenhouse neighborhood.

"We're finding that many folks who had homes and raised their families in the suburbs want to plan a transition into the city," says Emmons. "In fact, so far 50 percent of our buyers have come from the suburbs. These are people who want a maintenance-free lifestyle. Their children have grown and moved on, and they want to downsize.



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They can get rid of their cars and use the town car or even walk no more than three or four blocks to have almost everything they could possibly need."

The Laurel will be completed and ready for occupancy in 2022, giving buyers plenty of time to plan their transition. Whereas some buyers may choose to live in the city full time, Emmons suggests some buyers intend to keep a secondary home and split their time between two locations.

In the end, that's what Hemphill's business is all about—helping people find homes that best suit their individual tastes, comforts, and dreams for the future.

"The real estate experience with me is all about customization," she says. "It's about me truly getting to know my clients and then connecting them with properties that meet their needs." ■