
The Luxury Seller's Positioning Guide

A Strategic Advisory Resource for Beverly Hills and Los Angeles

Jean Baptiste (JB) Rugiero | The Agency | Beverly Hills

Introduction

Selling a luxury property is a strategic decision — one that rewards careful preparation and honest market thinking. In a discerning market like Beverly Hills and greater Los Angeles, the sellers who achieve the best outcomes are not always those with the most expensive properties. They are the ones who have positioned their property correctly, identified the right buyer profile, and worked with an advisor who understands how to reach that buyer with the appropriate level of discretion.

This guide offers a direct, advisory perspective on how to approach selling in the Beverly Hills and Los Angeles luxury market.

This is general guidance only — not legal, financial, or tax advice. For decisions specific to your situation, we recommend working with qualified legal and financial advisors.

Selling Is Strategic, Not Reactive

The most common mistake I see among luxury sellers is approaching the decision reactively — listing a property because the market seems active, because a neighbor sold recently, or because the timing feels right without a clear picture of the specific buyer profile most likely to value the property.

A well-positioned seller begins with three honest questions:

- Who is the right buyer for this specific property — and where are they?
- What conditions — price, presentation, and access — will make this property genuinely compelling to that buyer?
- What is my actual timeline, and how does it affect my negotiating position?

The answers to these questions shape every subsequent decision about pricing, marketing approach, and timing.

Understanding the Current Buyer

To position a luxury property effectively, you need a clear picture of who is actually buying in your price range and property category in the current market.

At the \$5 million to \$15 million level in Beverly Hills and greater Los Angeles, the active buyers tend to be a combination of: established local buyers upgrading or relocating within the market; domestic buyers from other major cities relocating to Los Angeles; and international buyers — particularly from Asia, Europe, and the Middle East — looking for a Los Angeles foothold.

Above \$20 million, the pool of buyers narrows significantly — and so does the inventory of genuinely exceptional properties. At this level, transactions are rarely driven by advertising or broad public listing activity. They are driven by advisor relationships, direct outreach to qualified buyers, and the kind of discreet positioning that prevents overexposure while reaching the right people.

Pricing Strategy in the Luxury Market

Pricing in the luxury market is not simply a function of comparable sales. At the high end, every property is distinctive enough that comparables are directional rather than definitive. Sophisticated sellers understand this — and use it to their advantage.

Three principles I advise sellers to hold:

Price with clarity, not optimism

A price that reflects honest market reality attracts serious buyers immediately. A price set above market to leave room for negotiation typically produces fewer serious buyers, longer market time, and ultimately a worse outcome than strategic pricing from the beginning.

Understand the difference between list price and achieved price

In the luxury market, the relationship between list price and achieved price is not always linear. A well-positioned property at the right price can attract competing interest and achieve at or above asking. An overpriced property typically trades significantly below its original asking price after extended exposure — and the discount is often larger than the original premium was.

Consider the true cost of time

Extended market time has a real cost — in carrying expenses, in the perception of the property among active buyers, and in the options it forecloses. A property that has been on the market for 12 months at an unsupported price is harder to sell than one that was priced correctly from the beginning, even if the eventual prices are similar.

Off-Market vs. Public Listing: A Strategic Decision

One of the most important decisions a luxury seller makes is whether to list publicly or position the property privately, off-market.

Public listing offers maximum exposure — every qualified buyer and their advisor knows the property is available. It is the right approach when the seller wants to create competitive tension across the broadest possible buyer pool, and when the property can support repeated showings and public scrutiny without being negatively affected by extended exposure.

Off-market positioning offers discretion — the seller maintains privacy, limits the number of people who know the property is available, and controls who sees it and under what conditions. It is the right approach when the seller values privacy, when the property has characteristics that benefit from context and personal introduction, or when the seller wants to test market response before committing to a full public launch.

Many of the most successful luxury transactions in Beverly Hills are conducted in a hybrid model — a quiet, off-market introduction to a curated pool of qualified buyers, followed by a public listing if the off-market process does not produce the right result. This approach preserves options while maximizing discretion in the initial phase.

Presentation and Positioning

In the Beverly Hills luxury market, how a property is presented to buyers — physically and in its marketing materials — significantly affects buyer perception and achieved price.

Physical presentation

The most compelling properties are those that are clean, well-maintained, and clearly cared for. This does not always mean full renovation — buyers at this level often prefer to customize to their own taste. But the condition of the property must not create doubt about its maintenance or quality. Pre-listing inspection, strategic repairs, and professional staging for key spaces are investments that typically pay for themselves.

Photography and visual presentation

At the luxury level, photography and videography are not decorative — they are how most buyers form their initial impression. Architectural photography that captures the property's scale, light, and

distinctive features honestly and compellingly is essential. Properties that are photographed poorly are effectively invisible to a significant portion of the buyer pool, regardless of their actual quality.

Narrative and positioning

The written presentation of a luxury property should communicate what makes it genuinely distinctive — not in generic terms, but specifically and honestly. What is the architectural story? What is the lifestyle the property enables? What are the features that a knowledgeable buyer will appreciate that a standard listing description might understate?

Working With a Trusted Advisor

At the level of the Beverly Hills luxury market, the choice of advisor is one of the most consequential decisions a seller makes. An embedded, experienced advisor brings three things that generic market exposure cannot provide: access to the right buyers, the relationships to reach them discreetly, and the judgment to position the property honestly and compellingly.

What to look for in a luxury seller's advisor:

- Genuine knowledge of the market at your price point and property type
- Relationships with the advisors who represent the buyers most likely to purchase your property
- A track record of discretion — the ability to position a property privately without overexposure
- Honest perspective on pricing, presentation, and buyer expectations
- The capacity to coordinate the full transaction process from positioning through close

Frequently Asked Questions for Sellers

How long does it typically take to sell a luxury property in Beverly Hills?

The timeline varies significantly based on price, property type, and positioning. Well-priced, well-positioned properties in the \$5 million to \$15 million range typically find buyers within 60 to 120 days in a normal market. Properties above \$20 million may take longer, as the pool of qualified buyers is smaller. Properties that are overpriced relative to market reality can sit for a year or more — and often ultimately sell below what correct pricing would have achieved from the beginning.

Should I renovate before selling, or sell as-is?

This depends on the condition of the property, the likely buyer profile, and the scope of renovation required. In most cases, targeted improvements — addressing obvious maintenance issues, refreshing key spaces, improving curb appeal — produce meaningful returns. Full renovations rarely recover their cost in the sale price, because buyers at this level prefer to customize to their own taste. A good advisor can help you identify which investments make sense and which do not.

Is it better to list publicly or go off-market in the current environment?

Both approaches have merit depending on the specific property and the seller's objectives. Off-market positioning is often more appropriate for properties above \$15 million or where seller privacy is a priority. A well-structured off-market process reaches the most qualified buyers without the exposure cost of a public listing. Your advisor can help you evaluate which approach is likely to produce the best outcome for your specific situation.

About Jean Baptiste (JB) Rugiero

Jean Baptiste (JB) Rugiero is a Beverly Hills-based luxury real estate advisor with The Agency. He works with sellers of high-end residential properties in Beverly Hills, Bel Air, Holmby Hills, and greater Los Angeles, providing the positioning strategy, market access, and discretion that a sophisticated luxury sale requires. His approach is direct and honest — he provides sellers with the clarity they need to make the best decisions, not the reassurance they might prefer to hear. For a private conversation about selling your property, reach out directly through The Agency.

This guide is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, financial, investment, or tax advice. Real estate transactions involve complex considerations that vary by individual circumstance. Readers are encouraged to consult qualified legal and financial professionals before making any real estate decisions. Jean Baptiste (JB) Rugiero is a licensed real estate professional in California.