

## realtor profile:

# Taos Properties: It's the relationship, not "the deal"

## John and Lisa Cancro

Story by Virginia L. Clark

**D**oing business in a small town like Taos is trickier than most places, because you will definitely meet your clients at the grocery store, at the soccer field, in line at the bank or a school board meeting.

And because a home is so deeply personal, John and Lisa Cancro of Taos Properties, say it is vital that they make the right connections for each buyer or seller. "We're not trying to put a square peg in a round hole," Lisa explains. "I want to be a 100 percent sure, so (that buyer) will move here and live on and have happy life."

The couple moved here from the East Coast in 1994, with two young daughters; Olivia, now 14, is a freshman at Taos High School, and Alex, 15, is a sophomore.

"We try to be an integral part of the community," John said, and Lisa agreed, "We love this community. We found that hard work in a small community pays off in the form of references or word of mouth."

The Cancros take such great pains with their people because they are looking at long term relationships. John said a lot of the choices for who they work with is intuitive. "During those first contacts we're finding out who we're going to work with," John said, attempting to nail down exactly how they do what they do so well. "Rather than going after someone, it's more like creating the right environment."

The emphasis on receptive environments has also worked on their children. Both athletes, John said they grew up in the realty offices, hanging with their parents. Now they come by and bring their friends after school.

John has a degree in real estate investment and development from New York University and has many years of high-powered East Coast property sales and leasing under his belt. Coming to Taos was a choice for community values. "New York wasn't the life style we wanted to pursue," John said. "We came out here because of family values. We're not about career and ego."

True to his word, John has trotted off the fast lane and involves himself in his daughters' lives. "Here I can pick them up from school and take them to play soccer. I like being involved in their lives. I like seeing them. I love this."

"These children have really nice values," Lisa said about her daughters and their classmates. "They have evolved as these beautiful people who understand small town community values." Celebrating their 20th marriage anniversary this year, Aug. 22, John and Lisa first started coming to Taos in the mid-'80s. They said they traveled over a good part of the globe and never found anything that felt like New Mexico. When choosing between Santa Fe and Taos, they chose Taos because they felt the community was stronger here.

"It surprises some visitors how people here are willing to go out of their way to help you," Lisa said, adding that even though this is a small town, there's "lots of things under the radar" that the couple strives to help newcomers identify and understand.



Photo by Gabe Toth

"We really orient them to this place," John said. "We're much more interested in getting them to know this place, rather than sell the land. We start out wanting a relationship, as opposed to making a deal."

"Fun" is the operative word at Taos Properties, and if a relationship isn't fun, it isn't likely the Cancros will be hanging around for much of that. If big-city-types come in with nasty or bullying attitudes, chances are, the Cancros won't be home when such clients call. "What's cooking" is a neat feature that really highlights the Cancro touch. Each client's kitchen is on the Web site, featuring a food prepared by Lisa and arranged to bring the kitchen to life. "Kitchens are where the gatherings happen, where the main nurturing of a home goes on." Bringing the food into the kitchen, food like scones or pasta, brings the gathering and nurturing energy into the entire house.

"(What's cooking) has made a significant difference to me, because it gives me a connection to the house. If you can bring an essence alive, you'll find a connection with another person," Lisa said.

That their clients are first acquaintances and then become close friends is one of the main reasons the Cancros feel they have been so successful over the past eight years of owning Taos Properties. "People trust us and respect us and that's a really lovely thing," Lisa concluded. "We love what we do."

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*Taos Properties Real Estate Investments, John R. Cancro, Qualifying Broker; Lisa Cancro, Associate Broker.  
Offices at 205 Ranchitos Road, Taos, NM 87571  
Phone (575) 758-9500. Web site: [www.taosproperties.com](http://www.taosproperties.com)*