



MEDIA BAKERY

Guest-room guidance

Bed-and-breakfast owners share their tips

By **Lynne Meredith Schreiber**

WHETHER THE MESSAGE—"We're coming in two weeks. Can hardly wait to see you. Planning to stay at your place"—comes by phone or e-mail, panic can set in. You love having guests, but how to accommodate them?

Even if you relegate guests to your child's room, it can be a wonderful place to stay if you do it right. The guiding wisdom for creating a comfortable guest room in any space, according to bed-and-breakfast (B&B) owners, is to think about what you like when you're on vacation and do your best to reproduce that experience in your home.

"Create a refuge and pay attention to the details," advises Brad Cunningham, Costco member and owner, with David Godfrey, of the 1908 Edwardian-style Dundee Manor (www.dundee Manor.com) in Dundee, Oregon.

From the bed down to the bottled water, every detail in a guest room matters if you want to ensure visitors' comfort, ease and supreme relaxation. High-thread-count (600 or more) sheets. A place to stow luggage. Several varieties of pillows.

*Guests
bring good luck
with them.*

—Turkish proverb

"There's nothing worse than having a pillow that's too high for your head or one that's too low," says Costco member David Knowles, owner of Shasta MountInn (www.shastamountinn.com) in Mount Shasta, California.

While inn owners create rooms to dazzle paying guests, it's not hard for the average homeowner who hosts family and friends from time to time to carve out private space for visitors.

If you don't have the luxury of an extra guest room, clean out a couple of drawers and make room in the closet so guests have somewhere to unpack their clothes. If that's not possible, affix a rack to the door for hangers

and offer a foldaway luggage rack for easy suitcase access. Remove any clutter that might make your guests feel shoved in a corner, such as toys, breakables or collector's items.

"I furnished [my] rooms simply, clean, without tchotchkes," says Knowles of his 1904 mountain-view B&B. "I wanted it to be the kind of place that evoked the air of visiting a cousin or an aunt—a homey feeling."

Cunningham and Knowles suggest creating a cozy seating area if there's space. A couple of pleasant chairs and a small table are enough to provide an area other than the bed for lingering. "Make them feel that if they want to sit and read a book, they have a cozy place to do so," says Cunningham.

And while you're at it, offer some reading material—current magazines or well-loved paperbacks (short stories are better than novels, so guests can finish a tale or two during their visit).

Little things make all the difference: plush robes, hair dryers, a night light so no one bangs a knee, enough toilet paper to avoid meek requests for a new roll, toiletries in case they forget something.

And snacks. Allow guests to satisfy between-meals hunger without badgering you. Arrange packaged snacks, bottled water and, in the morning, coffee and tea from a

FOR TIPS ON SELECTING FURNITURE FOR YOUR GUEST ROOM, SEE PAGE 46.



BRAD CUNNINGHAM

Dundee Manor features themed rooms such as The Asian, (left) that also have cozy sitting areas.

The Costco Connection

Costco and Costco.com offer many items to help put together a guest room, including beds, lamps, chairs, bottled water, sheets, flowers and snacks.

Shasta MountInn's Twin Peaks Room (right) invites guests to snuggle in.



KENNETH WARD

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hot-water carafe for early risers.

Just as in a B&B, guests in your home want to feel self-sufficient and not burdensome. Assuring a positive experience for them is about the accoutrements, but ultimately it's really the welcoming attitude you extend, and spending time together and enjoying one another's company that makes the difference.

"If you have consistency and passion about hosting someone in your home, they will feel special and that they are in a special place," says Cunningham. "We have repeat guests who say they keep coming back because they like the relaxed atmosphere, the comforts, the nurturing—just the general warmth they feel throughout the house. It's a genuine refuge. And we get that because we pay attention to the details." ☺

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Buyer's pick



Nino Garcia
Furniture Buyer

IN AN OLD Abbott and Costello movie there was a scene in which Costello pushed a hidden switch and walls and furniture swirled to turn a bedroom into a casino. That might not be your need, but you may indeed want one of your rooms to serve two purposes—for instance, a home office that occasionally can double as a guest room.

One incredibly versatile item is the Ravenna Pillow-Top Euro Lounger. Various articulations make it a sofa, a sofa with armrests, a lounger, a split-back or a bed. It's like five pieces of furniture in one. The Ravenna Lounger is upholstered in tufted Java premium faux leather with contrast tan baseball stitching, and is easy to adapt to any of its uses. It requires minimum care: dusting and an occasional wipe with a damp, soft cloth.

If the utility of the piece isn't enough for you, check out the value. You can expect to pay twice as much, or more, for similar pieces sold elsewhere. ☺

