



Give house guests the gift of a 5-star hotel experience

Holidays, birthdays, graduations or even just weekend visits, you can expect house guests to pop in sometime this year. Whether visitors are spending just one night or an entire week in your home, the situation can be stressful for everyone involved. Never fear. You can do a few simple things long before your company arrives to ensure their stay is a comfortable one. In fact, they might even mistake your guest bedroom for a luxury hotel room.

First, remember that less is definitely more when it comes to guest bedroom clutter. While you might enjoy your vintage doll collection that sits on top of the dresser, visitors might not share that sentiment. Remove all unnecessary items in the room, other than some stylish accent pieces, to give your guests a restful, clutter-free home away from home.

Of course, it goes without saying no one wants to stay in a room that isn't fresh and clean. Make sure your guests stay in a tidy bedroom. Clean the room thoroughly from top to bottom, starting with the ceilings, and systematically work your way down to the floors until everything is spotless.

There's also nothing worse than having no place to put your clothes and personal items while visiting friends or relatives. You feel as if you're living out of a suitcase, and you are. While the guest bedroom closet might be a convenient place to store your family's off-season wardrobe, this is the time to find a new place to store it, at least until your company leaves. Once you remove the clothes, be certain there are enough hangers in the closet for your guests to use. Don't forget about clearing out dresser drawers, too.

Once cleaning and storage are addressed, it's time to focus on the room's decor. Create a comfortable, calming environment for your guests, starting with the color of the room. The use of paint color is one of the quickest, easiest and most cost-effective ways to dramatically change the look and feel of any space. One option is to begin with hues that tend to relax and soothe such as neutrals, light greens, pale blues or even creamy yellow, then give it your personal style with coordinating paint accents in fresh, vibrant colors.

If you're having trouble deciding on a color, check out the new [Better Homes and Gardens Editors' Choice Paint Colors](http://www.bhglivebetter.com) (<http://www.bhglivebetter.com>) at Walmart. Tinted in Dutch Boy paint, the palette offers 160 colors handpicked by the magazine's editors. Plus, the paint also coordinates with a variety of other [Better Homes and Gardens](http://www.bhglivebetter.com) (<http://www.bhglivebetter.com>)

products available at Walmart, including window treatments, bath products and bedding.

Speaking of bedding, carry that feeling of tranquility through to one of the most important parts of a guest bedroom - the bed. Don't scrimp on a cheaper mattress; choose a high-quality one that will last for several years. Your guests will definitely thank you for it.

Beyond the mattress, offer plush, inviting bedding that further enhances that feeling of a quiet, hotel-like retreat. A high thread-count sheet set, featherbed mattress topper, oversized pillows and a down comforter can help create a feeling of serenity. Don't forget to top things off with an equally luxurious bedcover and matching throw pillows.

While creating a beautiful and cozy bed is important, if your guest bedroom has ample space, you might want to also consider creating a small sitting area. Placing a comfortable chair, an ottoman and a side table in your guests' room will allow them to relax and unwind without having to sit on the bed. Make sure there's lighting in case they decide to read. Go one step further and place some magazines or books you think might interest them in the room. Or, if they'll be sightseeing, provide them with books about the region and tourist information.

Also offer special extras that show you've taken the time to personalize their stay with you. Lay out two plush robes and matching slippers for them. Guests can also get the munchies long after you've retired to bed, so have water, drinks and their favorite snacks on the nightstand when they arrive. Find out what types of movies and music they enjoy and stock the room with a variety of DVDs and CDs they might like. If you don't have wireless in your home, make sure they have access to a computer so they can check their e-mail.

Finally, don't forget the most important part of your guests' visit will be spending quality time with you. The visit can be a blur of activity, so kick back, relax and enjoy each other's company while it lasts.