

INSIDER TIPS FOR CREATING AN UNFORGETTABLE GUEST EXPERIENCE



ABSTRACT

Do you love having out-of-town friends and relatives stay at your place when they come to visit? While most loved ones are happy enough to crash in a comfy bed and spend time catching up, there is an art to preparing your house for guests so that they feel at home during their stay.

INTRODUCTION

Curating a home that feels welcoming – one that beckons you to linger and wander – will make for a thoroughly enjoyable, memorable and inviting space for both you, your family and friends.

These exquisite ways to make a home feel welcoming – and more attractive – are a great starting point to help you choose the right home decor ideas for each room – what you choose should reflect what you love, too.

I. How to prepare your home for guests in 7 easy steps



After all, your home and suburb may be familiar to you, but if it's the first time guests are visiting it can be quite disorienting. The less questions your house guests have to ask (such as: where are the shops? Where is the closest bus stop? Where do you keep cups and mugs?), the more relaxed they'll feel, *and* the more time you'll have to talk about more important things.

1. Get the guest bedroom and bathroom in order

Clear away as many of your personal belongings as possible from the areas your guests will be using, such as the bedroom and bathroom.

“Empty a drawer in the bedroom, make space in the wardrobe and leave extra hangers so they can unpack. Make sure there’s space in a wardrobe or under the bed, so they can store their empty suitcases,” says Abbie Allen, personal concierge and founder of Lifestyle Elements.

Mastering the logistics is key, says Angie Kelso, CEO of Platinum Housekeeping. “Remove your items from the bathroom counter, so guests can put their toiletries on the vanity,” she says. “It’s also a nice touch to leave a laundry bag for their washing.”

“On the day your guests arrive, open the windows in the bedroom so that the space smells fresh and clean.”



2. See the room through their eyes

Pretend you're a visitor in your own home and spend a night in the guest room," says Angie. "Is it too hot? Quiet enough? Is the bed comfy? If you aren't comfortable, your guests won't be either.

The simplest way to make the bed look inviting is with "fresh crisp white bedlinen to make an impact", says Angie.



3. Add creature comforts

“Add extra pillows and a throw. Leave fresh folded towels and face washers on the end of the bed.” “If your guests have children, find out beforehand if they’ll need a travel cot or mattress on the floor,” says Abbie.

Make sure bedside lamps are easily accessible and “leave tissues, water, a clock, phone charger, notepad and pen on the bedside table”, says Abbie. Finally, make the room feel luxurious. “Provide some current mags to read, a scented candle and place a vase of flowers on the dressing table.”

It’s not expensive to make your bathroom feel like a hotel. “Supply plenty of clean soft, fluffy towels,” says Angie. “A good trick is to colour code towels for each person so they can keep the same ones for the duration of their stay.”



4. Don't forget toiletries

Before guests arrive, let them know they can save space in their suitcase by leaving basic toiletries at home. "Leave full bottles of shower gel, shampoo and conditioner in the bathroom. Put soap, hand lotion, moisturiser, room freshener, facial wipes and a hairdryer in a basket."

It's not just about the glamour factor though; the practical things are just as important. "Make sure the plugs for the bath and washbasin are easy to find," says Abbie. "Ensure there is plenty of toilet paper that's easily accessible so guests don't have to ask you for it."

A container of cleaning wipes under the sink is also handy in case people like to wipe down the sink or countertop after they've used it. Make sure there is a bin, and the toilet brush is clean." Adding a bunch of flowers to the bathroom vanity is an easy way to keep it fresh and vibrant.

5. The finer details

"Give your guests their own set of keys so they can come and go as they please," says Abbie. "They'll feel more at home if they don't have to ring the doorbell every time they come in. Don't forget to give them the code for any alarms you might have, show them how to work them, and mention where you hide spare keys in case of an emergency."

Give your guests all the info, such as your phone number and address. "It's handy for them to have these details in case they get lost or catch a taxi home," she says.

If you won't be at home the whole time your guests are, then put together an information folder so they can navigate both your house and the neighbouring area. "Include a local map, things to do, points of interest, directions to the nearest coffee shop, shopping centre, park, local gym, pool or beach," says Angie.

"If they'll be using public transport, buy a travel card topped up with \$20, instructions on how to use it, directions to the closest bus/train/ferry and timetables, plus phone numbers of taxi companies. Leave any important phone numbers for family and friends, and emergency numbers for the electrician, plumber, security, doctor and dentist. Also give them the wi-fi password, instructions for the oven, microwave, coffee machine and air conditioning."



6. Communication is key

Let them know what your daily routine is so they know what to expect.

“Note your shower times, breakfast routine and, if you are working, what time you leave and expect to arrive home,” says Angie. “Don’t forget to let them know what day a cleaner or gardener comes, so they don’t get a fright!”

7. Stock the fridge and pantry

Before your guests arrive, find out if they have any special food requests or allergies, and stock up on anything they might need – even if it’s something you don’t like.

“Show them where to find tea, coffee and snacks,” says Abbie.

“Let them know the spots for cups and plates or leave a couple out on the benchtop so they can find them easily. Have a supply of breakfast items, including fresh fruit, in stock. If there are kids staying, mini cereal boxes are always a hit.”

Don’t neglect the drinks, either. “Ensure you have plenty of soft and alcoholic drinks available,” adds Angie. “Fill your pantry with extra champagne, beer and wine, plus nibbles to go with them. Keep a couple of small bottles of water in the fridge for them to take when they venture out and about.”

II. How to make a home feel welcoming – 8 rules for an inviting home

How to make a home feel welcoming

'A home evolves over time – some argue it never gets to a stage of full maturity – and yet I am often asked how you can quickly and cheaply inject new life. I believe there are a number of ways to instantly get an amazing look,' says interior designer Martin Brudnizki. 'Every object and every space should make a contribution to the home – even a single piece of art can make a big and immediate difference.' Here are some of my easy wins to help make your house feel more like a home.

1. Create instant curb appeal



The term 'curb appeal' refers to the attractiveness of a home's external appearance, particularly the way it looks when viewed from the street – that all-important first impression that moulds the opinion of every visitor and passer-by. Designing a home with universally aesthetic appeal is a tall order, but worth it when curating a home that feels welcoming and inviting.

If you want to add instant curb appeal, think about introducing symmetrical elements to add the most curb appeal. Symmetry in interior design is a technique used by designers to create a space that looks incredibly cohesive and tailored – and therefore welcoming and inviting.

A simple solution is to introduce a symmetrical pair of topiary planters to your front décor ideas, as demonstrated in this space by Margaret Ash Design. Clipped evergreens are perfect for creating a punctuation point in your planting scheme, for introducing low shapes to front yard walkways, and are the optimum choice for making your front yard look nice.

2. Create a welcoming spot for visitors



Creating an entryway that's impactful but functional, aesthetically-pleasing but entirely practical is a fine balance. However, it's a vital area of home design to get right, despite the fact the only time spent there is when we're passing through. So, while browsing the most beautiful entryway ideas, what do you need to consider?

Priorities include making an entryway inviting while minimizing clutter – the two go hand-in-hand.

'To make a home feel welcoming, think about the impact the entryway will have when you first walk in,' says luxury home accessories maker, Birdie Fortescue. Take inspiration from this space by designing a cozy corner to sit, layered with piles of cushions for warmth and beauty. 'If you have space, a rug with a practical texture is a great addition, particularly underneath a well-proportioned entryway table,' says Birdie.

It is certainly worth designing an entryway with other areas of the home in mind. 'Many rooms lead off the entryway, so the design not only sets your home's tone but also creates an inviting place for guests,' says Tom Cox, co-founder, Hám Interiors.

3. Build a collection



If you want to make a home feel welcoming, it is important to make a house really feel like a home. Your home is an expression of your life: its contents should reflect your journeys, experiences, loves and stories. It is not just a place to rest your head and cook dinners. 'I am a strong believer in owning and building collections – from restaurant ashtrays to Murano glass fruit and vegetables,' says interior design Martin Brudnizki.

'First, find your niche interest and start building the collection. Perhaps it's Italian engravings, Meissen ceramics or 19th-century landscape paintings,' he says. 'Don't

be afraid to really get under the skin of collecting. I think it's healthy to develop interests and an expertise in a small field. Reading alongside my shopping expeditions has allowed me to further my eye.'

'Once the collection is established turn your attention to displaying it. I believe the key to any room is to create a mix so it looks like you're a great collector with a diverse set of art, antiques and objets. However, within that mix you have groupings.'

4. Arrange your seating for conversation



Perhaps more than any other piece of furniture, the sofa is the linchpin of comfort and relaxation in the home. Because of this you want to get your living room seating just right.

'When you have people over for gatherings, you really notice when you've got the seating arrangements right,' says interior designer Nina Campbell. 'Seating plans are very important – and not just at a dinner table. I like to think of seating plans for the living room or family room when I have guests over, and for that you need what I call "conversational seating".'

'The number of chairs you set out is an important consideration. Odd numbers are good for seating plans in general because it allows for some rotation of guests. The interior designer Elsie de Wolf wrote in 1913 that you must never place a chair on its own in a room; she was very shy herself and noted that it is always the shy person who arrives first, sit on the lone chair and then are often rooted there for the whole party. But two next to each other does not always work, either. I find that two people

sitting side by side do not always speak to each other, so having an occasional chair pulled in at a diagonal can create conversational triangles.'

The sofas and bigger pieces of furniture should be covered in a tough, strong and relatively plain fabric, so you don't tire of it; they are expensive to recover. You can jazz them up with cushions and throws.

5. Soften sharp corners with curves



Move over slim profiles and hard angles – voluptuous curves are where the most desirable and welcoming homes are heading.

Modest materials can play a harmonizing role that tones down ornately curved motifs. 'Curves are my addiction – they add instant dynamism and yet make people feel uplifted and relaxed,' says interior designer Colette van den Thillart.

'I strive to use them in more unexpected ways, like the urn silhouette here, which has a lovely simplicity and humbleness as it's fabricated in the most unassuming of materials: fibreboard. The arch lends a hint of grandeur and gives some architecture to the simple space, but again because the materials and painted finish are modest, its overall effect is so pleasing and friendly!'

6. Introduce delightful decorative moments



Use open shelving to introduce decorative moments that make a home feel welcoming and inviting.

Be they decorated with ceramics, vintage glassware, plants or recipe books, shelves can be used to add individual style to a kitchen, as Mike Fetherston, design director of Hetherington Newman, explains. 'As kitchens are increasingly central to the home and where families come together for meals and to socialize, areas for display are important to personalize the space and add interest, giving a more relaxed and welcoming feel.' Choose from floating shelves (without visible supports) to those with stylish brackets, from plate racks to cubby holes built into furniture.

Simple LED strips or miniature spotlights can be used to illuminate shelf displays, enhancing their impact and adding subtle evening glamor, especially useful when you want to create a softer mood for dining.

7. Master the art of curated color



Choosing the right shade for an inviting space can present endless choices and subtle nuances to understand and overcome, but get it right and you can create a home that feels welcoming.

Color theory and the color wheel in its entirety can be complicated but there are a few basic principles to help steer you in the right direction, explains Patrick O'Donnell, brand ambassador for Farrow & Ball.

'Paint ideas and paint tricks are the perfect way to transform a space easily, adding personality and character,' says Ruth Mottershead, creative director of Little Greene. 'Bold, vivid tones work well in rooms made for entertaining, or see a lot of activity, such as kitchens and living rooms. A pop of color is a great way to add impact and an element of surprise to a scheme. Bold colors are also great for spaces with lots of light and can be used in bigger proportions without being "too much".'

Colorful art is another way to go bold. A favorite painting can be a good inspiration and art is always the starting point for any scheme by Sophie Ashby of Studio Ashby who is known for her dynamic designs. 'Ideally, we would work from a client's own collection. From that, we can then build a color palette and design references,' says Sophie. '

8. Add plant life to your home



One cheat that comes to mind when thinking about how to make a home feel welcoming is plants and bringing the outdoors in. The best indoor plants have never been so affordable and accessible: a quick visit to your local garden center or nursery and you can pick up a whole jungle of greenery that will instantly bring life to a drab corner. Pot up all manner of vessels with bulbs or, if this isn't for you, simply treat yourself to seasonal fresh flowers in a pretty vase or jug.

III. 9 small entryway lighting ideas to brighten your home



Adding some additional small entryway lighting is the best way to add some ambiance to your tiny space. First impressions are everything, so make a great one with some of our expert ideas.

Whether your entryway is a hidden corner behind your door or has an awkward layout, there are plenty of lighting options to create a better ambiance as soon as you or your guests walk through your front door.

Here are some great small entryway ideas to set the lighting mood from the moment you set foot in your home.

Cleaning a dorm room can be challenging. After all, small spaces tend to pick up dirt, dust, and grime far more easily than larger ones. As a college student, life also gets super busy and it takes a surprisingly long time to fully clean a small bedroom — no matter how tiny. However, if roommates can make a plan to clean their space together and divide the labor, it can make the whole chore so much easier, according to Rochelle Wilkinson, owner of Dirt Detective Cleaning in Phoenix, Maryland. “Between long days in class and nights and weekends socializing, make a plan with your roommate to carve out a day every two months to deep clean your dorm room,” she says. Plan in place with your roomies but unsure where to start? Here’s her advice on how to deep clean a dorm room.

1. Highlight your decor



Vitaliy Vinogradov, an interior designer and lighting expert with Modern.Place believes that although lighting is often an overlooked element of design, it can make a big impact on the look and feel of your small space.

Their advice? “Install wall sconces or pendant lights, like these paper lanterns from Urban Outfitters, on either side of a mirror or artwork to spread a warm and welcoming glow,” he says. This also allows your decor to be highlighted at the entrance.

“These vertical lighting fixtures not only add a layer of ambient light to the space but also serve as decorative accents, adding a touch of sophistication and character.”

2. Add a chandelier



Vinogradov believes in captivating guests as soon as they step through the door with some dramatic lighting ideas.

“Leave a lasting impression,” he says. “Indulge in the charm of a dazzling chandelier, like this light fixture from Anthropologie. Choose a design that complements the scale of the space while incorporating your personal style.”

3. Try a funky floor lamp



For Vinogradov, adding depth and character in one go is simple with a dynamic floor lamp, like this lamp from West Elm. “Incorporating a stylish floor lamp,” he says. “These decorative lights can serve as focal points, illuminating dark corners and creating a welcoming atmosphere.”

When choosing a design, Vinogradov’s advice is to choose one that will work well with your personal aesthetic. “Choose a design that complements your overall interior style, be it modern, industrial, or eclectic.”

4. Add visual space with a mirror



Michael-Chase Stollo, Principal Designer at Stollo Interiors and Director of Dash Fine Arts, understands how to make a space feel bigger. Stollo's advice is simple.

"Hang a mirror strategically in your entryway to reflect light and make the space feel more open and bright," he says. "Use natural light from windows to your advantage by using sheer curtains or blinds that allow sunlight to enter."

5. Light up your go-to items



When it comes to leaving and entering your space every day, finding a place that is well-lit for your go-to items is necessary. When it comes to finding a space for your belongings, it's great to find a space that is well-lit, whether by small lamps, like this mushroom lamp from Urban Outfitters, or overhead lighting.

Feng Shui expert Victor Cheung also has a solution for dark spaces. “Under-cabinet lighting. If you have cabinets or shelves in your entryway, under-cabinet lighting can be a practical and aesthetically pleasing choice,” Cheung says.

“These low-profile fixtures can be discreetly installed beneath cabinets, providing accent lighting to highlight decorative items or simply illuminate the workspace for tasks like sorting mail or keys.”

6. Use a graceful table lamp



For Vinogradov, one simple solution is one that could be overlooked. “Graceful table lamps,” he says. “Place them on console tables or small entryway benches to not only enhance visibility but also create a warm ambiance as you welcome your loved ones.”

IV. Cleaning For Guests: Essential Tips For A Last-Minute Home Tidy-Up

Whether you are hosting a house party or just expecting guests, getting your home ready can be one of the toughest tasks. But cleaning is still crucial since your home is a reflection of you and you would not want to make a poor impression on the guests. If you are hosting a party, you want everyone to have a good time rather than thinking about the condition of your space. This is exactly why you must tackle all the cleaning work as soon as possible.



Most homeowners in this situation feel overwhelmed, but it does not have to be that way for you. Preparing a checklist of all the tasks and then completing them one by one is the perfect way to prepare your house. This is how professionals who do expert end of lease cleaning Melbourne clean most homes. Here are the essential tips for last-minute tidy-up when you are expecting guests. They will allow you to quickly clean your home.

1. Start With the Entryway

The entryway is one of the most overlooked spaces in most homes, especially during regular house cleaning. However, it is worth noting that this space will be the first thing your guests will see once they arrive. A clean entryway will make a great impression on them. Ensure you keep this space clutter-free. For instance, remove your items from the coat and shoe rack and keep them in a spare room.

This way, you will make sufficient room for your guests to keep their things. Moreover, if there is a light fixture in your entryway, properly clean it and ensure it is in a dimmer setting. This will help set the tone when your guests arrive. According to the professionals who do budget end of lease cleaning Melbourne, focusing on the entryway is highly important if you want to make a good impression on guests.

2. Keep the Guest Room Organised

It is essential to keep the guest rooms clean and organised whether your guests will stay overnight or not. First of all, you need to keep the bedding clean for the people who will stay overnight. This will ensure they are able to sleep comfortably. It is a must to wash any linens on the bed, such as pillowcases, sheets, and blankets. Additionally, keep some extra pillows and blankets accessible.



Ensure the guest room does not have any of your personal items while confirming that there is enough space for the guests to keep their things. Make sure there is a dedicated spot for them to keep their luggage and other bags. Get rid of the clutter and remove every single thing that your guests won't need.

3. Maintain a Hygienic Bathroom

The bathroom is definitely the most used room in a home. Your guests will certainly use it as well. This is why you should keep it in the best possible condition.

- Ensure there is enough toilet paper.
- Keep the shower clean for the overnight guests.
- Clean the toilet, bathtub, and sink.

According to professionals who do cheap end of lease cleaning Melbourne, you can use a cleaning solution prepared by mixing equal parts water and vinegar for cleaning the bathroom fixtures. Allow the solution to sit and do its work. Scrub the surface and rinse with water. Ensure the towels are clean. Finally, restock all the essential items including extra soap.

4. Speed Clean the Kitchen and Eliminate Bad Odours

You can think of the kitchen as the heart of your home. It is the place where your guests will gather to throw the trash or refill their beverages. Any surface that is in

plain sight or easily accessible should be cleaned. Remember to thoroughly wipe down the countertops as well as all the high-touch surfaces, including the faucet and the door handle of your refrigerator.

Unpleasant odours are the last thing you want when you have guests in your home. To eliminate unwanted odours, clean the kitchen garbage can's interior. You should also keep a bowl that contains baking soda or white vinegar on the counter. Leaving it overnight will help absorb all the bad odour.

5. Eliminate Dust from Floors and High-Touch Surfaces

Finally, there are a few surfaces in your home that guests will touch more than other surfaces. This is why you should keep them dust-free. Simply wipe down every high-touch surface, including door handles, doorknobs, remotes, light switches, faucets, etc. This will help decrease the chances of germs spreading. Similarly, floors are known to gather a lot of dust in a short period, which makes vacuuming and mopping a necessity.



Just before the guests arrive, spot-clean your floors and get rid of visible dust and dirt. A quick vacuuming session should be enough for this. However, if needed, you should mop the floors as well. Vacuuming and mopping are two of the most important cleaning tasks, and that is why they are prioritised during professional end of lease cleaning Melbourne.

Preparing your house for guests can be stressful since it involves many tasks. However, if you can just focus on the essentials and use some effective strategies, the work won't take much time. Follow the tips mentioned in this article for a last-minute home tidy-up when you are expecting guests.

V. Guest Bathroom Ideas to Warmly Welcome Anyone

How to Clean Birkenstocks

There's no reason that your guest bathroom should be an afterthought in your home, even if it isn't a place that you set foot into every day. Treat your visitors to a luxurious experience when they stay with you by equipping your guest bathroom with all of the essentials and being mindful when it comes to decor.



Bring in Some Greenery

To liven up your guest bathroom, bring the outside in. If your space receives ample natural light, opt for real plants (be sure to select species that will thrive in humid environments). In the case of a darker bathroom, note that faux plants will work just fine. Pop them into a pretty pot to elevate your display.

Upgrade Your Shower Head

Guests will enjoy rinsing off in a shower with an upgraded shower head that gives off hotel-like vibes. There are many options at a wide range of price points that you can easily install in just a matter of minutes.

Set Out Bath Towels

A good host doesn't leave guests asking for clean towels. If your sink features a built-in ledge, this is a great place to set out bath towels and washcloths for your visitors. Be sure to leave a few extras so that they can use one specifically for their hair if desired.

Keep Extra Toilet Paper Accessible

Make sure your guests aren't left wondering where on earth they can locate an extra roll of toilet paper within your home. Keep a few rolls on display in the bathroom, either on a small shelf or in a woven basket, so that they're visible and easy to grab as needed.

Cut the Clutter

Ensure your guest bathroom doesn't overwhelm your visitors by keeping clutter to a minimum. Leave just the essentials—shampoo, soap, toilet paper, and anything else—available and toss any empty bottles, expired products, and the like.

Incorporate Some Art

By no means should your guest bathroom be devoid of personality. Artwork is a simple way to liven up your space without spending much. Simply print out a favorite digital download and pop it into a frame from Target or IKEA for an instant refresh.

Set Out Basic Bathroom Essentials

While your guests are of course staying with you in your home, it's always nice to provide some hotel-like amenities to elevate their overnight experience. Setting out cotton balls, Q-tips, and other small but useful products that visitors may appreciate using is always a thoughtful gesture.



Keep them neat and corralled in clear glass containers like the ones shown here.

Offer Guest Towels

If you'll be hosting a party and prefer to offer individual guest towels versus one shared hand towel, take a cue from this setup. A wall mount holds plenty of towels for people to reach for throughout the evening. Just place a bin nearby to collect used towels.

Style the Sink Artfully

The way you set out items such as soap bottles or lotion dispensers in the guest bathroom can make all of the difference. Elevate your space by setting small bottles on a little pedestal that will add a sophisticated touch in no time.

Add Ambiance With Candles

While we most often come across taper candles in a home's main living areas, there's no reason you can't use them in the guest bathroom to warm up the space. Flameless candles may be your best bet for a mess-free solution in the bathroom.

Brighten Your Bathroom

Everyone appreciates a bathroom with good lighting. Your guests will be able to get ready for the day with ease thanks to the help of wall sconces placed on each side of the mirror.

Go Whimsical

Why not take a bit of a design risk in the guest bathroom? Opt for colors and patterns you may not normally utilize—this is a low-risk space, after all. Bring some whimsical details through your lighting fixtures or wall decals.

Paint the Walls a Bold Color

On that note, consider painting your guest bathroom walls a bold color to bring some drama into the space. You can't go wrong with a deep, moody blue.



CONCLUSION

To create an unforgettable guest experience, it's all about attention to detail and genuine care. Personalized touches, thoughtful amenities, and anticipating your guests' needs will make their stay exceptional.

Whether it's a cozy ambiance, special treats, or seamless service, these elements leave lasting impressions. Remember, the goal is to make your guests feel at home while providing a unique, memorable experience they'll cherish. Ultimately, hospitality is about creating connections and making each guest feel valued and welcome.

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