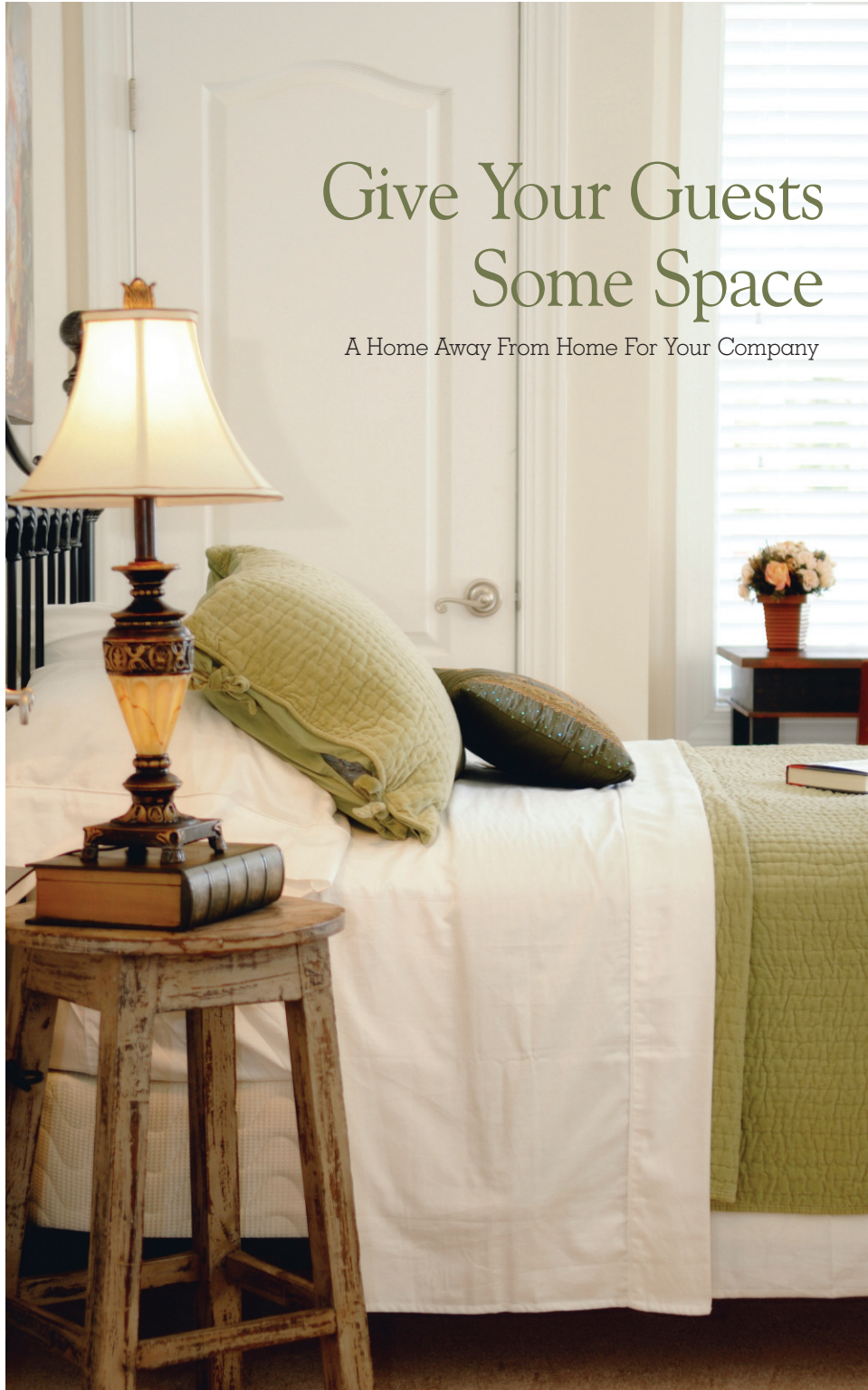


Give Your Guests Some Space

A Home Away From Home For Your Company



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Not everyone has a room
designated just for guests.
Even so, summer is here
and company is anticipated.

Are you ready?

If not, with a little bit of planning
and creativity, you can carve
out a space for guests
almost anywhere.

THE ROOM

Ideally the room you choose will have a door for privacy. This will allow your company to have a place they can call their own. Consider the office, bonus room, or a bedroom that is currently used by one of your children. You can group several children into one room to free up bedrooms, and the kids will enjoy the change. Sleeping on the floor in sleeping bags will be like a big slumber party or a camping trip – and the adults who now have their own room will truly appreciate the courtesy.

If you are using a room without a door – perhaps the formal living room or sun-room – consider hanging a curtain from a tension rod, or using a screen to close off the room. Move out any items - such as your child's stuffed animal collection - or furniture that won't add to the comfort of your guests stay.

THE BED

A full or queen size bed is great for either single guests or for couples. If the room you are using doesn't have a bed, an easy-to-inflate air mattress will work. If you have enough space, prepare the bed for company and leave it as is throughout the visit. However if space is lacking in the guest room, the air mattress can be deflated every morning and put away into a closet.

THE BEDDING

A welcoming bed is the most important element of your guest room, whether you are dressing an actual bed or an air mattress. Use high quality sheets in 100% cotton with a high thread count. Try to have comfy pillows available in both down and foam, to accommodate the preferences of any of your guests. A few extra blankets available at the foot of the bed will keep you guests from having to ask, or from having to search through your closets to find them on their own.

THE NECESSITIES

Be sure the guest room has a wastebasket, an alarm clock, a box of tissues, and a night-light. Because bathroom time may be at a premium if there are a lot of people to accommodate, a mirror in the room or space where your guests are would give them more flexibility in preparing for their day. Try leaning a full-length mirror up against a wall or set out a handheld mirror.

Also, keep plenty of towels and washcloths ready and waiting. Who enjoys going through closets to find an extra towel?

A goody basket of fruit, water bottles, crackers, and breath mints would be a nice added touch for the midnight snacker – or for those who just like to eat every four hours! And throw in a small bottle of aspirin – your guests won't have to go through your medicine cabinet.

If your guests aren't familiar with the area, be sure to have some regional magazines available – even a current national magazine or bestseller – really hitting home that this room is a place to relax and get away. For spaces set apart from other sleeping areas, you

might even consider adding a television with a DVD player. This guest room get away is sounding better and better!

Add blinds for privacy or for light control during the morning hours if the space isn't typically used as a guestroom. (Paper blinds can be a quick, cheap temporary fix.)

THE NICETIES - CONSIDER THESE EXTRAS:

- Extra toothbrushes and razors in the guest room will surely be used.
- Pull out all of those hotel samples of shampoo, lotion, and little soaps and leave a basketful in the room. Just one more thing that your guests won't have to ask for.
- Fresh flowers in the room are an extra special touch.
- If you really feel like going to the max, purchase a couple of terry cloth robes and slippers and leave them for your guests. These are items people like to have but don't like to pack. Be sure to let them know that the items are for them – they may be too polite to use them if you don't tell them beforehand!
- An extra telephone in the house? Put it in the get away room. Your guests will really appreciate the privacy.
- And if you are a coffee drinker, you know how grateful you would be to see your own little coffee station, including coffee, mugs, cream and sugar – so your morning can start exactly when you want it to

Though intended as a get away for your guests, once you have turned a room in your home into this luxury retreat, it may just become the ultimate get away for you!

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