

Holiday Hospitality How-Tos from the Pros at Four Seasons Hotel Austin

Easy ideas to make guests feel welcome, from managers who do it daily

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Hospitality is making your guests feel at home, even if you wish they were, or so a wise person once said.



With Thanksgiving and Christmas in just a few months, along with the inevitable stream of friends, relatives and acquaintances, [Four Seasons Hotel Austin](#) managers share the hotel-inspired ideas they use in their own homes to create a welcoming atmosphere for holiday guests:



Sleepy Scents

“Being in a new room and a different bed can wreak havoc on sleep, and that’s even without jet lag factored in. I put a few drops of lavender or peppermint essential oils in a diffuser, which not only makes the room smell great but also has subtle aromatherapy benefits.” *Stacy Gill, [Spa Manager](#) (1 year with Four Seasons)*

Keepsake Cards

“For relatives, especially the grandparents, I always enlisted my daughter to pen a handwritten welcome note or a handmade drawing, which we’d prop on the pillows in their room. It gave her something to do and made her feel a part of the preparations, but more importantly, made our guests feel immediately welcome. In this age of pre-printed, impersonal communications, simply taking the time to write a hand-written note shows you’ve sincerely anticipated their visit.” *Christine Bloemsma, Executive Assistant (17 years with Four Seasons)*

Distinctive Details

“When I have guests visiting, I take a few minutes to roll the towels and crease the toilet paper in the extra bath into a display. It doesn’t cost anything and it immediately makes the bathroom feel more like a luxury spa than a run-of-the-mill restroom. I also like to put fresh flowers in their room to bring life to a space that’s usually empty.” *Beverly Magee, Hotel Manager (29 years with Four Seasons)*

Tech Tutorials

“I’ve mastered my Roku and Nespresso, but for out-of-town guests unfamiliar with these I’m sure it can be overwhelming. A while ago, I took ten minutes to type up simple step-by-step instructions for potentially confusing items around the house. Now, my guests can entertain themselves when they wake up extra early due to jet lag. Those 10 minutes have probably saved me countless hours of sleep over the past several years!” *Kerri Sholly, Public Relations Manager (12 years with Four Seasons)*

Wow Welcome

“Baking is one way I express love for my family and friends, so I like to place a plate of homemade Christmas cookies by their bed. It also takes care of any late-night sugar cravings visitors might have!” *Amanda Pallagi Naim, Executive Pastry Chef (9 years with Four Seasons)*

Toiletry Treats

“Toiletries are sometimes forgotten in the rush to pack, so whenever I travel I collect unused mini-bottles of shampoo, conditioner, lotion and tubes of toothpaste from the hotel to place in my guest bathroom, along with a small glass container filled with cotton balls and Q-tips.” *Michelle Engfer, Front Office Manager (6 years with Four Seasons)*

Play Footsies

“Some people have a weird hang-up about walking barefoot, so every year when Old Navy has their \$1 flip flop sale I buy a bunch in different sizes to have on hand. If I know their shoe size, I’ll tie a bow on them and have them waiting on the bed; otherwise, I just present them with a basket so they can choose their own.” *Kia Holland, Conference Services Manager (15 years with Four Seasons)*

Personalised Preferences

“Having been in hospitality for more than two decades, I probably notice people’s preferences more than most. Whether it’s my sister’s favourite coffee, vegetarian items for my best friend or extra firm pillows for a friend who can’t sleep on anything softer than a rock, I try to stock the house with items that will make guests feel like they’re at home.” *Rob Hagelberg, General Manager (23 years with Four Seasons)*



Happy Kid = Happy Guests

"I've also been known to buy small toys, stuffed animals and books to give to visiting kids and babies. Most parents bring along a few favourites, but when those become boring I break out the new toy or book and they're instantly engrossed again, giving me more time to catch-up with adult friends and family." *Kia Holland, Conference Services Manager (15 years with Four Seasons)*

Tourist Time

"As a concierge, it's in my nature to help people plan their time in Austin. Often I'll put together an hour-by-hour itinerary with ideas for things to see and do, along with local magazines and maps to help them make the most of their visit." *Allison Berguin, Concierge (2 years with Four Seasons)*

Or There's Always This...

"When people stay with me, I usually make up a welcome basket with treats and items designed just for them. But honestly, I try to get my family to stay in a hotel whenever possible. We're all just happier that way!" *Claire Cross, Catering Assistant (30 years with Four Seasons)*

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