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I thought I knew how to welcome guests, but I just had an unpaid Masterclass from my weekend at my in-laws. My brother-in-law and wife (the minister of Internal affairs as he fondly calls her) invited my husband and me for an activity-filled weekend (their child’s dedication in church and her birthday). It was going to be a full house. Before every trip, I will pack my bags the night before (or earlier), so I am sure I have everything I need. Unfortunately, for some reason, I did not have the time to do so. I found myself rushing in the morning to pack, and many things did not fit in my bag (e.g. towel). My husband told me not to even bother taking such things because they will even get offended that we think they can’t host us. I reluctantly left the towel and off we went. So we are back from the weekend, and I am here to testify they were even better hosts than I imagined. We had 3 other guests as well, so it was a full house for a whole weekend! Here is a summary of the tips from my ‘Masterclass’, more details are below: Relax and enjoy the ride Discuss the schedule in detail Clean your house Budget ahead of time Prepare entertainment ahead of time Give them a warm welcome Offer refreshments Tips for guests who stay over A proper good bye 1- Relax and enjoy the ride: I know your mind is probably thinking about everything. Will they like my house? Do I have enough money or even time to be a good host? How will I manage them? Abey relax, it will be enjoyable. You can be so worried about making everyone comfortable and you miss on the fun. 2- Discuss schedule in detail: When are they coming? How are they coming? Do they have the right directions, and can they find their way? And also important, .when are they leaving? (before you find yourself leaving from a sleepover to over a week!). Check on them during the journey. If you can, pick them up. Oh do not forget to ask how many people are coming (you can be expecting one person and boom, it’s a whole family or tag along friends who wanted to ‘surprise’ you). 2- Clean your house: This one doesn’t need any emphasis now does it? De-clutter, dust, etc. and all this before they come to the house (it’s sometimes considered quite rude when you struggle to clean when you have guests around). Pay attention to the toilets (your guest might want to ease themselves, sometimes immediately they come in). Stock up your toilets. 3- Budget ahead of time: Do not go empty your pockets because you want to be a good host. That’s why it is important to plan ahead. This applies for normal guests and guests that sleep over. What meals are you going to cook? Buy all snacks and drinks ahead of time to avoid having to step out. 4- Prepare entertainment ahead of time: Music? Have a playlist ready. Have some quick games ready or engage discussions everyone can flow with. Where are those photo albums we used to have in homes? Now is the time to take them out. 5- Give them a warm welcome: Invite them in with a warm smile, make them feel welcome. Carry their bags, ask about their trip. Put your phone away and focus on your guests. Be a good listener. 6- Offer refreshments: Let them settle a little before choking them down with food. You can offer some light snacks and drinks. It is important to stock up before. The mistake I used to make before was to always ask my guest what they want and then I have to either go get it myself or send someone to. I will often be disappointed if the nearby store is locked, or you can’t find what the person wanted. Offer downsides are that it is more expensive (everyone has different tastes, and some are more expensive than others) and in the meanwhile, you are stranded with what to offer. Stock-up on snacks like biscuits, chinchin, groundnuts etc. some variety of drinks and bottled water handy. .some fruits too. If you have children or you are low on self-control, then stock these far away. If you are cooking a meal, make sure you considered what they like. 7- For guest who stay over Prepare sleeping arrangements: As soon as we came, she took our luggage to our room. This is much better than coming to a house you had signaled to before and it’s when you come that they start asking how they will do about your sleeping arrangements. If you have a guest house, that’s perfect. Put fresh bedsheets and ensure good fragrance. In our case, my mother-in-law was already settled in the guest room so our hosts had back-up plans. An inflatable mattress was set-up in the baby’s room (and the baby was taken to their room). The couch also had double function, it could be transformed into a bed and our cousins slept on it. An extra guest came and I was wondering how she will do...she had a spare mattress. So if you do not have a guest room, you can have spare mattresses. I also learnt a thing or 2 from my father about hosting guests overnight. You can make some sacrifices for your guests. When guests come, we will lay the mattresses in the parlor for us to sleep on and give our rooms to the guests for the night/weekend. Show them around: Show them the bathroom, kitchen, toilet, and in fact where to get whatever they need. I had a great house tour. If you have time on your side, also show them around time especially if it’s their first time in that town. Anticipate and provide their needs: She had already laid towels on the bed for us and asked if we needed anything. Here I was thinking I ‘forgot’ just my towel. In that rush, I forgot my toothbrush and body lotion. I only noticed I forgot those when she placed them next to the towels....ah isn’t that 5-star hotel treatment? Do not forget to stock-up on breakfast things. She had to rush out early in the morning but had already shown us where the breakfast things were. By the time she came back, we were all filled up. Set ground rules: This is especially important if you have children at home. e.g. no smoking, media choices, security. If you have family devotions, make sure to let them know and invite them. Give them privacy: I know you want to gist all night, but your guest is probably tired or came to town for something specific....e.g. a job interview or an exam. Let them have space of their own. Avoid constantly knocking on their door. 8- A proper goodbye: Thank them for coming, give them compliments and in some cases, you can give gifts (I know I left with plenty gifts from there). One precious thing you can do for your guests is to pray with and for them, it’s very refreshing. Bless them. Now do you understand why she is called the Minister of Internal Affairs? Hope these tips helped you top up your guest welcoming game to 5-star VIP standard. For hosting a meeting or party, we will need another post on that (and one on being a great guest too). Oh, one last thing, get a multi-head charger available (I am the kind of guest who will come, and my first question is ‘please where can I plug my phone?’). How about you? What are some of the things you do in your house to make your guests feel welcome? What tips have you also gathered as a guest in others houses? Please share in the comment section. What a great gift you can provide to others when you choose to host your family and friends! It is an opportunity to show your guests a bit of pampering and extra care and perhaps some appreciation, too – all while sharing together in laughter, good food, and great conversation. If you are going to be a host, I say, be a great one! After all, these hosting efforts reinforce our relationships as well as strengthen our understanding of each other, which ultimately enhances our lives. And that great feeling the day after, when you know you have shown those guests some love – it can’t be beat! Come scroll on down to 3 things I think a great host does every time to make guests feel great and create a magical time you all will talk about for years to come! From the minute your guests cross the threshold to your home, a warm welcome is in order – otherwise, what is the point of inviting people over? It really is the most important thing you can do and sets an immediate tone to the evening for everyone. Put your entertaining jitters aside, open that door with a smile (and maybe even a hug) and let the party begin. Below are more ideas to create that warm and welcoming atmosphere with ease. Turn on the music before they arrive. It’s nice for you and it sets the tone you desire. Create a long playlist so that you don’t have to play with the music all night. Here is a playlist of ultimate party classics. Sprinkle some fresh blooms about and let the candles flicker all around casting some flattering light! For more ideas, be sure to check out my list to create a warm and welcoming home environment right here. Set out a few treats that don’t need your attention before hand – top-reviewed spiced nuts or a dip with crudites. Prepare as much as you won’t get flustered and you appear so much more at ease. I always create a menu list or special reminders to myself so that I don’t forget to include an item, which I have done when I get going in a conversation or get interrupted! If this is a spur of the moment invite, a clean-up of the bathroom is at the top of the list but the rest of the house does not have to be pristine. Close the doors! I have even more ideas to master that impromptu gathering all here. After the meal, don’t rush to do the dishes when your guests are still around. Gather everyone in another area away from the mess sending that message to please stay awhile! After that warm greeting, take your guest’s coat and bag, offer a refreshment or cocktail and bring on the nibbles! Find a comfortable spot for your guest and let the pampering begin. This is the perfect time to start some introductions to any others you have invited and get a conversation going. Make your guests feel special and create that bond with the other tips listed below. Basically, generosity here primarily means you feed your guests well – all night! Whether this is a sit-down dinner, a wine and cheese or a backyard barbeque, keep lots of platters and portions available! Look below for some easy ideas to help keep the food coming. Want to come back to these ideas later? Here is a pin to save to your Entertaining or Friendship board on Pinterest and share, too, for others to see! ExplanationStep 1: Let the total amount of money shared be $\frac{1}{x}$. Step 2: According to the ratio, John’s share is $\frac{1}{\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{7}}$ of the total amount, which is K600.00. Step 3: Set up the equation $\frac{1}{\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{7}} = 600$. Step 4: Solve for (x) by multiplying both sides by the reciprocal of $\frac{1}{\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{7}}$, which is $(\frac{1}{\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{7}})$. Step 5: $(x = 600 \times \frac{1}{\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} + \frac{1}{7}})$. Step 6: Calculate the value of (x) to find the total amount shared. Step 7: $(x = 1000)$. I invite people who you like and trust. Don’t bother to invite people if they don’t appeal to you or you have no intention of growing close with them. Choosing good guests may enable you to be a better host. Consider also how well the guests will get along with each other. Try not to invite people that you know won’t mesh well, or that have a history of winding up at each other’s throats. 2 Specify a time. It is important to know when to expect your guest/s. Make sure to give them plenty of advance notice – at least a week, and even more if the occasion is very important. Assume that they will also need to work around their own schedules. Don’t let them to come “sometime” if you really want them to show up. Tell them specifically when to come so that it feels more like an invitation. A range of times is also okay, but it should be no longer than a few hours. If your guests show up late, try to make them feel welcome. Do not sulk for the rest of the evening, or you may compound the problem. Just continue laughing and ignore the fact they were late. Telling your guests in advance is just a matter of courtesy. If they know what to expect, it will be much easier for them to plan their schedules around it. 3 Take guest preferences and food allergies into account. When you decide on the food you will be serving, consider your guests’ food concerns. Always contact them beforehand and ask if they have any allergies or food specifications. Inviting a vegetarian over for dinner and preparing a roast would be embarrassing for both of you. Be sure to cook something that you’re comfortable cooking. Don’t just say, “Do you have any preference for the meal?” Instead, ask your guests to name specifics. Say, “I’m planning the meal for Friday night. Do you have any allergies or food restrictions that I need to be aware of?” Don’t go out of your way to prepare a main course which takes days to make. A good guest will appreciate any decent meal that tastes good. 4 Clean house. Before your guests arrive, tidy up the space to convey that you care. If they arrive in a messy household, it shows you do not care for your surroundings, and it may make them feel less welcome in your home. Put away toys, tools, and clutter. Remove allergens by vacuuming carpets, rugs, and upholstered furniture. If you have a dog that tends to greet, bark at or jump on guests when they come through the door, put it in another room. Some people are scared of dogs and intimidated even by their approach. Some are allergic. If you have pets, find out beforehand whether your guests have any fears or allergies. If they are allergic, give them a heads up so they can take medication to help better handle the situation. 5 Be welcoming. Once your guests arrive, open the door and show them where to put their things. Show them the bathroom on the way in before taking them to the living room and offering them a seat. Never leave them hanging at the front door; don’t expect them to follow you if you don’t say anything. If you still have things to prepare, engage with your guests whilst organizing what you have left. By now, you should have finished tidying the area, so that you have only the food to finish. Have your family or a housemate engage the guests so that you can finish preparing the rest of the food. Keep finger food on the coffee table in the living room to whet everyone’s appetites. Ask your guests if they would like a drink. Offer them at least two options – whatever you think is most suitable for the event. The options could range between coffee, tea, water, beer, and wine. 6 Have all of the food ready (or on the way) when your guests arrive. Don’t rush. Move casually otherwise you will let your guests think they have become a burden for you. 7 Offer an after-dinner drink. After you have finished dinner and are eating dessert, offer your guest something to wash down the meal. Depending on the mood and energy of the gathering, consider coffee, tea, or an alcoholic digestif. Sit and talk on the couch with a drink. 8 Engage your guests in conversation. Talk about things that they want to talk about. Ask questions about their work, their travels, their families. Don’t complain about how your child was sick all week or how you are having family issues. Show interest in what your guest has to say. Build on the conversation and let it flow. Business can be a good subject, but be careful with whom you bring it up. Many people like to separate their work from their social lives. Take cues from your guests, and don’t try to force any topic. 9 Make your guests feel appreciated. If they want to leave, ask them to stay a bit longer since you have enjoyed their company. Tell them it has been a lovely time, and you are keen to see them again. If you noticed that they enjoyed part of the meal in particular, consider giving a portion of it to them. Tell them you won’t need it; say that it’s a pleasure to see someone enjoy your food. 1 Consider how well you know your guests. Most overnight guest-hosting is a matter of common courtesy; however, the level of access that you give your guests will vary depending who’s staying. If you are hosting family or close friends—people that you know and trust—you may invite them to feel at home in your space. If you are hosting a stranger (say, through Airbnb or Couchsurfing.org), you should still be a courteous host, but it may a greater risk to give them the sort of access that you’d give your family. If you’re hosting an Airbnb guest, you may not be around the house when they’re around. You may even be away on a trip. Make sure to leave plenty of notes around to help your guests understand the way you want things done. 2 Put clean linens onto the bed. Make sure that there are plenty of clean towels, if possible. Provide a neutral-smelling soap for you guest to use in the shower, and consider setting aside a basic but neutral mid-range shampoo and conditioner for you guest to use. If he/she has a private room, place all of these toiletries on a bedside table with a note saying “If you need anything else, don’t hesitate to ask.” If your guest will have a private bathroom, you can just leave the toiletries in the bathroom.[1] 3 Provide for your guests’ temperature needs. You never know how someone will feel about the temperature in your home; some like it hot, and some do not. Do not assume that your guest will be comfortable just because you are. Consider leaving an extra blanket in a dresser, at the foot of the bed, or on the top shelf of a closet.[2] 4 Consider giving your guests access to laundry machines and an ironing board. Leave an iron and an ironing board in the closet or corner of the guest bedroom. Show your guests your laundry machines, if you own any, or tell them where they can clean their clothes if need be (say, there’s a laundromat down the street). If your guests have traveled a long distance, they might want to freshen up their clothes, and they might need a wash. 5 Provide breakfast, but don’t feel the need to change your schedule to accommodate your guest. If you wake up early, leave a note on the bedside table saying that you eat breakfast at 7:00 am (or whatever time), and you’d be happy to have your guest join. You may also simply coordinate breakfast plans with your guest at night before you go to sleep. Make sure to mention what’s on the menu for breakfast.[3] If your guest doesn’t like eating breakfast or doesn’t want to rise early, you have several options: invite her to use your kitchen, give her a tip about a local breakfast spot, or leave a simple breakfast spread out on the counter for her. Consider leaving some warm baked goods along with butter and jam for your guest to snack on until lunchtime. It’s important to make a guest feel special, but there is a fine line between feeling special and feeling like a stranger in a loved one’s home. You need not change your entire family’s routine to accommodate your guest. 6 Help your guest feel at home. Encourage guests to help themselves to food, snacks, to go out for a walk, and to make themselves at home. Show them how to find essential amenities like tea, coffee, snacks, internet access and wifi.[4] As a household host, you aren’t there to wait on your guest, but to include them in your household routines. Offering to take them out to see local sites or to go on a hike is great, but don’t push it if they just want to chill around the house. 7 Show your guest around or give her directions. If you have time, show your guest around your area. Introduce her to local friends, steer her through the sights, and try to give her a good impression of what it’s like to live where you live. If you don’t have time to spend the whole day with her (say, you have work or school), give her a bit of direction for her explorations, or invite her to hang out at your place until you return. If your guest wants to explore on her own: don’t feel obligated to let her use your car, but consider loaning her a bicycle or a bus pass to get around. Tell her the most effective way to use public transportation. Suggest things that she needs to see, and tell her you’ll meet her somewhere after work. Try to ensure that your guest isn’t bored. However, it’s not your responsibility to spend every waking moment worrying about whether she’s enjoying her stay. 1 Prepare the house before your guest arrives. Being a good host is about making people feel comfortable from the minute they walk in the door. This means you need to do some preparation before your guest arrives. Clean the house, have a clear space for guest to put their bags/shoes/coat/umbrella. If you’re planning on playing games or watching something, make sure that the supplies are easily accessible.[5] Anything that could embarrass you may also make your guest uncomfortable: dirt, potentially-offensive books/magazines/movies, or having to rove around in the closet or kitchen for something. Know your guests’ allergies beforehand so you can be prepared. Consider allergies to food, drinks, animals, and cleaning products.[6] 2 Be clear about the house rules. When your guest arrives, lay down the basic house rules right away. This doesn’t mean that you need to give them a lecture: it means being kind but clear about the expectations for the space in which they’ve found themselves. If you like guests to remove their shoes, don’t let them walk around for a bit and then comment on it. Pointedly take off your shoes and ask if they would like you to put theirs away too. They will get the hint. If you have furniture that you don’t want your guests to touch or rooms that you don’t want them to enter, be clear from the beginning to avoid awkwardness later on. Point out the bathroom right away. This way, no one will need to ask where it is in the middle of another conversation. 3 Give your guest the chance to help out, but make your expectations realistic. Don’t pressure the guest to clean up with you, but don’t deny them if they really want to help. Many people would rather contribute than be waited on. Having something to do takes the mind off of any lingering discomfort. Give your guests little things to do, like emptying the table or putting the dessert on the table. If they offer to clean the dishes, you may find it most polite to decline and offer them a drink. Sit them at the bar in the kitchen and let them talk to you while you clean dishes. If they are determined, then leave the dishes, sit at the table and talk; ignore the fact that there are dishes to be washed. 4 Make sure your guest is physically comfortable. No one likes to stand in the middle of a room, clutching their bag, wondering where to go. Put away whatever they are holding (if they want you to) and motion for them to take a seat. Offer to get them something to drink. Once they are settled in, it might even be nice to leave the room (maybe under the guise of getting that drink) so that they have a chance to take a break and look around. If you are constantly with someone, they won’t get the chance to absorb the environment, and they might be distracted while you are with them later. This does not mean leave them for a long time – a minute or two tops should do it. People like having things to do with their hands. So having a drink or munchies can help. Don’t offer your guest food and not eat yourself, they will feel rude and gluttonous. Take some snacks too. 5 Have a plan of events. Invite someone over and then asking them what to do is rude. They won’t know what you can and can’t do at your home, and they likely won’t feel comfortable taking charge of someone else’s territory. Even if you aren’t sure if the guest will enjoy playing Scrabble, anything is preferable to sitting and staring awkwardly in opposite directions.[7] 6 Keep the conversation flowing. One of your biggest jobs as the host is to keep everything going smoothly. You will need to set a positive tone, and act as a moderator if anything goes awry. Be prepared to smooth tensions: always be ready to change the subject or talk to anyone who’s causing trouble. Your social “job” as the host is to make sure that your home is a safe and welcoming space for all who enter – no matter who is causing the problems. Consider coming up with conversation topics beforehand. Think about what you’ve been wanting to ask each person – about a new job, or a baby, or a big trip. Plan ahead so you don’t have to think about it much in the moment. Add New Question Question How do you deal with guests who stay too long? Tami Claytor Etiquette Coach Tami Claytor is an Etiquette Coach, Image Consultant, and the Owner of Always Appropriate Image and Etiquette Consulting in New York, New York. With over 20 years of experience, Tami specializes in teaching etiquette classes to individuals, students, companies, and community organizations. Tami has spent decades studying cultures through her extensive travels across five continents and has created cultural diversity workshops to promote social justice and cross-cultural awareness. She holds a BA in Economics with a concentration in International Relations from Clark University. Tami studied at the Ophelia DeVore School of Charm and the Fashion Institute of Technology, where she earned her Image Consultant Certification. This article has been viewed 89,241 times. Co-authors: 22 Updated: June 28, 2020 Views: 89,241 Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 89,241 times. “Very helpful article! Some things addressed the awkward things that I do, but I didn’t realize that they could make my guests feel awkward. What do I do if my guests expect to be waited on?”... more Being a great host is an art form. It’s part knowing your guests and what they like, part being organized and prepared, and part having the right attitude. If you want to be the perfect host, here are some simple tips you should follow. Know your guests Being a good host is more than just serving up food and drinks. It’s about creating a welcoming environment where guests can feel comfortable and relaxed. And one of the best ways to do that is to get to know them. First, consider the occasion. Is it a formal dinner party or a casual get-together? You’ll want to keep the mood light and easygoing if it’s the latter. But if you’re hosting a more formal affair, you’ll need to be more aware of etiquette and protocol. Once you know the tone you want to set, you can start thinking about your guest list. Who do you want to invite? What kinds of people will they be? What are their interests? The more you know about your guests, the better equipped you’ll be to make sure they have a great time. So before you plan your next gathering, take some time to get to know your guests. It’ll make all the difference in the world. Be prepared One of the best ways to be a good host is to be prepared. That means having a plan for what you want to do and being able to execute it without a hitch. Of course, things will always come up that you didn’t anticipate, but if you’re prepared, you’ll be able to handle them without breaking a sweat. Here are a few things to keep in mind when preparing to host: Make sure you have enough food and drink for all of your guests. Nothing is worse than running out of anything, especially if it’s something that people are counting on you for. Have a backup plan for everything. What if the weather doesn’t cooperate? What if someone gets sick? A backup plan (or two) will help you be prepared for anything coming your way. Don’t forget about the little details. From ensuring enough chairs to having toilet paper in the bathroom, paying attention to the small details will go a long way in making your guests feel comfortable and welcome. By doing all that you can to be prepared, you’ll be well on your way to being a great host. Look presentable When you have guests over, it’s important to look presentable. First impressions are important, and you want your guests to feel comfortable in your home. You can do a few things to make sure you look your best. Make sure your clothes are clean and wrinkle-free. Choose an outfit that is both comfortable and stylish. If you’re unsure what to wear, ask a friend for help or look for resources online. Once you’re dressed, take a quick look in the mirror to ensure you’re happy with your appearance. Then, focus on your hair and makeup. Again, you want to strike a balance between looking put-together and natural. A little bit of makeup can go a long way. And finally, don’t forget about your smile! You want to have the brightest smile possible, so visit a dental clinic before your event if you have oral issues such as yellowed teeth or tooth loss. The dentist will be able to fix any problems and give you a confident, beautiful smile. They’ll also give tips on keeping your teeth looking their best for future events and everyday life. By greeting your guests with a warm smile, they’ll feel welcome and at ease. With these simple tips, you’ll be sure to look like the perfect host. Be hospitable This one should go without saying, but it’s important to be hospitable if you want to be a great host! Once again, greet your guests with a smile when they arrive, ensure their glasses are always full and be attentive to their needs throughout the party. If you make an effort to take care of your guests, they’ll have a great time—guaranteed. Clean up after Lastly, don’t forget to clean up after your party! This is probably the least fun part of being a host, but it’s important nonetheless. Not only will it help you avoid any messy accidents, but it’ll also make sure your home is in tip-top shape for future gatherings. Hosting a party can be a lot of work, but it’s definitely worth it in the end. By knowing your guests, being prepared, looking your best, setting the tone, being hospitable, and cleaning up after, you’ll be able to host the perfect party—no matter what the occasion may be. D3 DIMENSION TECHNOLOGY PTE. LTD. Address: 152 BEACH ROAD #11-05 THE GATEWAY SINGAPORE (189721)

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