

Inn This Edition:

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Travel Writer Needs Inns with Unique Amenities

Do you have something you offer free as an amenity that you are pretty sure is unique to your property? This travel writer was originally asking for information from hotels but when I told her she would get much more unique amenities from Bed & Breakfasts and small inns she was eager for me to query inns.

If you offer an amenity that is truly unique for leisure or business travelers let me know at dsakach@iloveinns.com with "Unusual Amenity" in the subject line. Of course, she wants to know asap.

How to Prepare for a Sale of Your B&B - 2 Years, 5 Years from Now

The number one thing you need according to Mariette Gagne of Innmarketing.com is to have very good record keeping. Many innkeepers of beautiful and successful inns are lax at keeping good records. They don't know their real profits. Then when the inn is listed for sale they don't have the documentation that will allow them to add a value to the business part of the sale."

Innmarketing.com has more than 15 years of experience in selling inns. They recommend that you make a decision today to start using a good program such as Quick Books. "Quick Books is very easy to operate and a good way to keep track of any small business."

In the weeks to come, we will point out the most important goals to meet to make a future sale go as easily as possible and return the highest value for all your hard work.

Don't Let This Happen to Your Inn - Selling at 1/2 Price - Losing the Inn

This past week we've heard 2 sad stories - Could both have been avoided?

1. First we heard about several inns more than 3 hours from population centers being sold at almost half the listing price.
2. In the same week, we learned of an inn being taken back by the original owners because the new innkeepers couldn't get guests but didn't believe in advertising on inn directories.

The Solution to a Remote Location

Inns that are more remotely located are the ones that are really suffering these days. They are not in an easy getaway location. The "sold at 1/2 price" inns were more than 3 hours out from a major city. We know from 29 years of working with innkeepers that inns that are remote have to spend much more effort in marketing than others - in fact, the inns we've seen that succeed SPEND 20 HOURS A WEEK marketing. Their inns are on the first page of Google, they are getting articles placed about their destination, calling on local businesses and government offices and working on their Website and Search Engine Optimization. It can be done - but it is a huge commitment to marketing!

Keep Your Listings in Inn Directories Current

In the second case, the new innkeepers were saving money by no longer listing in B&B directories. Little by little they lost their visibility on the search engines because they no longer had the powerful links coming into their website. This caused them to drop their positions on search pages because by losing these relevant links, they lost credibility with Google.

In fact, the worse part of letting go of directories is losing your inn's website position. Search Engines "read" the links coming into your site. High ranking directories that are specifically in your field strongly support your position on the search engines.

This is how Google works.

Search engines recognize/rate and position an inn website as more authentic and more important when they have several of these links. These almost invisible links to your Website are worth their weight in gold if they are coming from a large directory.

Whitestone Marketing recommends inns at least be on 10 large inn directories.

Google maps and Google local often take their information from directories and they do so from iLoveInns.com. They especially take our property descriptions because our travel writers create these individually with unique content.

Room-Cleaning List-- Is Your's Bigger Than This?

- Candies at bedside with "nest" (Songbird theme)
- Alarm clock alarm turned off
- Remotes put away
- Water in carafe with two glasses
- Ice bucket checked and cleaned glasses and water checked for spots
- 2 soaps 1 at vanity (small) one in shower (larger)
 - 1 bathsalt by whirlpool
 - 3 towels rolled up
 - flower in flat vase
 - 1 shampoo in shower
 - 1 soap in shower with washcloth
- Toilet paper folded 1 new roll every time w/sticker
- Extra washcloths/white and make-up black washcloth
- Extra toilet paper in corner in cover or in vanity
- Clorox wipes and paper towel in vanity
- Plastic bag in garbage cans with extra at bottom
 - Flashlight checked
 - Bible in drawer
 - Pen for Journal
 - Soapy sole by tub
 - Bath pillow by tub
- Matches for pineapple candle/w sticker
- Check fuel in candle
- Cosmetic wipes check inside container-makeup washcloth
- Bright bulbs all turn on ?
- If guests hang their used towels: put in dryer, folded and re-hung
 - Robes behind door or in armoire
 - Slippers by Robes except Warbler
 - Empty garbage replace bag in can
- Rooms should have 2-bath towels 2 guest towels 2-hand towels 2 washcloths 1 bathmat and two robes appropriate color for room if possible
- Purple Finch and Cardinal (black) also will have a fingertip towel
- Clean inside drawers of Bedroom furniture, Armoires, vanities,
 - Dust picture frames, fans, check windows and windowsills
 - Clean wood work along floorboards

To Clean Whirlpools

Add one Capful of Germicide then fill Whirlpool turn on
when it drains spray with Industrial Cleaner H-2 sparingly around edge
use scrubbie, remove drain stopper and clean rinse and use squeegee and wipe dry with rag, no spots please
If there is any tarnish on overflow or drain stopper use scour off with scrubbie and not the rag, because it does not
come out of the rag in the wash
To clean shower

Spray with Industrial Cleaner H2 and use scrubbie then rinse with hand sprayer and use squeegee and follow up
with rag removing all spots

Toilet
use spray of G a little on seat follow up with Industrial Cleaner H-2 to wipe off check front and bottom
Check if there are drips on the walls by the hand towel or toilet paper

Clean vanity and mirrors with Industrial Cleaner H-2 and use dry towel to dry so there are no streaks
refill lotion if it is not full
Vacuum bathroom floor before you wash it
Floor: to wash, use rags from shower and whirlpool

Replace rugs on bathroom floor

Vacuum:
Check under beds for things left behind
and vacuum under bed and behind furniture every other week

Dust common rooms removing everything on the table not just dusting around it
Dust lamp shades and light bulbs

Remove rugs and sweep then wash wood floors

Check tables clean with Industrial Cleaner H-2
Sweep and wash sunroom floor

Check fans wipe clean
Outdoor lights clean and wipe off light bulbs
Sweep off front porch and check front door
Clean sidelight windows

Hope this helps someone!
Barbara, Songbird Prairie

Deborah & Staff at American Historic Inns

iLoveInns.com
2009 Travel & Leisure "Best iPhone Apps for Travelers"
2008 Gold Medal Award winner Innkeeping.org
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"Do whatever most kindles love in you." Teresa of Avila