



Ocean
Atlantic

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY



What can you do to make sure guests' have an incredible vacation experience in your home?

Your home has just one chance to make a great first impression with each guest. And it can! The following tip highlights will help keep guests returning year after year with advance bookings for your property. You can help make your home stand out from other homes for rent by determining whether or not your property is marketable and desirable. You should ask yourself the following question. Is my property up-to-date enough and have the amenities that many travelers are looking for such as high-speed internet, comfortable furniture, etc.? When people travel and rent vacation homes or condos, the general rule of thumb is to make sure that everything works, nothing is broken and that the property in its entirety is very presentable.

- 1. Guest Welcome Binder with Letter: YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A COPY TO YOUR RENTAL AGENT.** This is the friendliest and best thing you can do for your property. This letter will assist guests' during their vacation and hopefully encourage them to book again next year, as it will make their vacation more relaxed and enjoyable. This letter is also a great opportunity to express your expectations as the property owner; please be gentle and friendly. We recommend you to purchase an inexpensive binder and enclose the letter with anything extra you desire such as menus, map, trolley schedule, etc.

You may also want to include an emergency plan for your renters explaining where to go in the community in the event of a natural disaster.

DO NOT put your contact information in the binder as you may be inundated with unnecessary phone calls. It is our responsibility to ensure the guests enjoy their stay by taking care of their issues. We will always call you if necessary.

Provide Instructions for your Guests upon Arrival

With every property, there are certain things that you will want your vacation rental guests to know about upon entering such as how to use certain where to place trash, whether or not to recycle, what the rules of the neighborhood are (i.e. loud music, parties, etc.), and other elements. It's important to provide them with a set of instructions that they can clearly follow, so that the experience is an enjoyable for your guests.

Trash Removal Please include trash disposal instruction in your welcome letter as well. Also, make trash bag liners and trash cans available.

Supplies We ask that you provide extra light bulbs for the cleaning crew. That is part of their guidelines when they do their cleaning. Guests tend to keep the property clean so keeping some cleaning supplies and extra vacuum bags are strongly recommended.

CATV/Satellite/WI-FI/Telephone Service

Cable television is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. Homes with Wi-Fi access tend to have more reservations than those without. The reality is that most people depend on the internet in their daily life.

Your welcome letter should including instructions on how to use your television, satellite, etc. as we are not pros on how to work all of your electronics. Some internet services require a pass code which should be made available to guests'. Telephone service is not mandatory, but strongly encouraged due to an emergency.

2. Revive - Brighten Up with Paint

It's amazing what an inexpensive, fresh coat of paint can do. It not only brightens up & puts new life into rooms, it helps cover odors.

3. Make Home Sparkle & Use Your Nose

Obvious, often overlooked & easy fix. Prior to the summer season schedule a deep clean with a housekeeper. It is highly recommended to take a weekend to prepare your property on your own as you will find things that even the best of housekeepers won't; as you know your property best. Vacuum behind couches, under beds, shampoo dirty carpets, clean ceiling fans, under sinks & all windows – inside and out. Pay particular attention to kitchens and bath rooms. Replace air filters, light bulbs (CFL bulbs are highly recommended as they will keep your electric bill lower and eliminate tedious phone calls from guests), and smoke detector batteries. Open windows to let in fresh air. Empty & clean all trash cans, dry clean drapes and wipe blinds. Do not use a lot of air fresheners or perfumes, some people will find this offensive.

4. Clear Out All Clutter

Another easy fix is to clobber the clutter – do a room by room purge, including closets, basements, attics, garages & porches. Less stuff will make a home appear bigger. Get rid of anything personal - family & wedding pictures, special gifts or items, etc. Such objects may be breakable and may not be able to be replaced in your heart.

5. Owners LOCKED Storage Closet: It is highly recommended for owner(s) to designate a storage closet for special items and personal items such as an owners closet with a lock, where only you have the key.

6. Room Definition: Guests' should not have to guess a room's purpose. Rooms should have a purpose & be furnished accordingly.

7. Lighting: All lights inside & outside (especially at night) need to be in working condition - even during the daytime.

8. Don't Forget the Details: You cannot afford not to pay attention to details. You should write a to do list as you visit in the off season-complete all home repair to-do list items prior to the summer season, including: fixing-replacing leaking faucets & showerheads; broken windows; missing shingles; inoperable appliances; patching cracks/holes/dents in walls; re-caulking around bathtubs, sinks, counter tops; fix squeaking steps & floors; replacing broken tiles. Having a fire extinguisher located in the kitchen is required; one on each floor of the home is recommended. A final home suggestion is to use inexpensive prop extras, including: candles; throw blankets; pillows to make the guests comfortable.

9. Kitchen & Household Items: I would put yourself in the guests' position and think about what would be nice to have while you are staying in a vacation rental property. Your home should include an ample supply of dinnerware, stemware, and kitchen utensils to service the maximum number of occupancy permitted. Here is a list of recommended items, but by no means comprehensive, just a start to jog your mind:

- Glasses (at least 2 sizes)
- Silverware
- Kitchen Cutlery
- Serving Utensils
- Cooking Utensils
- Mixing and Serving Bowls
- Dinnerware
- Sauce Pans with Lids
- Frying/Sauté Pans w/Lids
- Large Pot for Crabs, Corn, etc.
- Roasting Pan
- Can and Bottle Opener
- Large Pitcher
- Colander
- Cutting Board
- 12 Cup Coffee Maker
- Blender
- Food Processor
- Toaster
- Salt & Pepper Shakers
- Trash Cans
- Extra Trash Liners
- Mop, Broom, Dustpan & Bucket
- Plunger
- Clothes Hangers
- Extra Vacuum Bags
- Extra Light Bulbs
- 2+ Pillows per bed
- Bedspreads

10. Building an Emergency Supply Kit for Your Vacation Rental: If natural disasters affect your area, you may consider providing an emergency supply kit—just in case. A basic emergency kit is easy to put together; it's just a box with first aid supplies, tools, emergency supplies, and special items. You may not be able to provide all the items on this list, but you can at least include a few. While it is a rare occurrence that you or your renters would need emergency supplies, you want to be safe rather than sorry if your vacation home's area is frequently affected by natural disasters. The lists above are by no means comprehensive, but it will help create a basic supply kit. You may also want to include an emergency plan for your renters explaining where to go in the community in the event of a natural disaster.

Tools & Supplies

- Emergency preparedness manual, such as the one available on the FEMA website
- Several empty gallon-jugs for holding water
- Mess kits (paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils)
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Paper, pencil
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Disinfectant
- Battery-operated radio
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife
- Duct tape
- Shut-off wrench, to turn off household gas and water

- Map of the area (Ocean Atlantic can supply you with this, as we keep them on hand for guests)
- Needles, thread

First Aid Kit

- Adhesive bandages, various sizes
- Sterile gauze pads, various sizes
- Hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Antiseptic wipes
- Large medical grade non-latex gloves, 2 pairs
- Adhesive tape, 2" width
- Anti-bacterial ointment
- Cold pack
- Scissors (small, personal)
- Tweezers

© MMXI Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates LLC. A Realeo Company. All Rights Reserved. Sotheby's International Realty® is a registered trademark licensed to Sotheby's International Realty Affiliates LLC. An Equal Opportunity Company. Equal Housing Opportunity. Each Office is independently owned and operated.

OCEAN ATLANTIC SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

330 Rehoboth Ave | Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971 | O 302.727.5120 | F 302.227.3043
 209 Fifth Street | Bethany Beach, DE 19930 | O 302.539.4633 | F 302.539.1163
 102 Savannah Road, Suite A | Lewes, DE 19958 | O 302.827.2821 | F 302.827.2827