

COMMUNICATION

Interrogate your guests before they arrive. Find out what their plans are, because “whatever you want to do is fine” won’t be fine for long. Casually let them know your schedule, including what time you get up, go to bed, whether you usually eat breakfast, etc. Then, ask their preferences. It’s better than both of you trying to head for the shower at the same time, or buying a lot of groceries for a “coffee only” guest. Ideally, a guest will try to reciprocate your hospitality by treating you to dinner or helping you with household chores. Don’t turn down an offer to finance outings. Don’t expect too much, but accept their help graciously.

PREPARATION

Storage trunks are indispensable. Not only can you keep an extra set of sheets and pillows near the sofa (air mattress or whatever), but you can also use them for a makeshift dresser. As you travel, collect hotel toiletries. By having a stash of extras ready to go, you won’t have to rush around at the last minute. The same goes for groceries. Though you will make some accommodations, it’s best to have

a couple of foolproof meals in the pantry, like dried pasta and ready-made sauce. Also, put together a guide to local attractions, both touristy things and local gems. Just save and print a copy for each new guest. Include ideas for fun overnight stays in surrounding cities if you think the adage “fish and visitors both stink after three days” could be true.

LITTLE THOUGHTFUL GESTURES

Provide an extra key and a local map or directions to your place. Have magazines and the newspaper’s entertainment section in the guest area. Point out available snacks. Supply extra hangers and empty drawers or closet bar for clothes. Set out a basket of towels, soap, shampoo, toothpaste and hairbrush, water glass, facial tissues and a hair dryer. Leave out recent photo albums to allow guests to generate conversation based on which of your adventures peaks their interest. Even if it isn’t fancy, give guests a bed that you’d be willing to sleep in. Share good pillows, extra blankets, coordinated linens. (They’ll never know you bought them on clearance.)

CREATING PRIVACY

Even in tight quarters, do your best to create a temporary guest space. Use a shoji screen to separate the area. Though not noise-proof, it offers a calming modicum of privacy. Include a chair, alarm clock/radio, small table, and a cordless phone. Give guests an opportunity for personal time, too. Bonus: screens can also be used to hide messes.

SAYING NO

Remember, you are not entirely responsible for the success of someone else’s vacation. Be honest if the timing of a visit is inconvenient. Say “no” when you don’t want — or can’t have — company. If you do invite guests, remind them that you still need to go to work, run errands, etc. Don’t become a chauffeur, a car-rental service or a maid. Don’t be afraid to suggest they find their own transportation from the airport. Being generous doesn’t mean sacrificing personal sanity.

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You’ll go crazy if you spend 24 hours a day with guests, so hold their hand for the first few outings, then set them loose. Reserve a couple of activities to share. (Preferably things that you haven’t done a billion times before, but have at least done once to see whether or not it’s cool.) The Golden Rule applies. Treat your temporary roomies to the hospitality you’d like to receive. Stock up on Ben and Jerry’s and the *Godfather* trilogy, and you’ve got at least one night of hosting covered.

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WHO’S GOT THE GOODS?

Apartment Community	Telephone	Price Per Month	W/D Units or Hookups	Security System/Gated	Garages/Covered Parking	Fitness Center	Spa or Sauna	Pool	High-Speed Internet Access	Extra Cool
Post Addison Circle	972-392-6000	Call	•	•	•			•	•	On-site retail, urban environment, planned events for residents
Post White Rock	214-320-9651	Starting at \$605	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Distinctive living environment, private entrance into White Rock Park, next to Dallas Arboretum, 27 miles of walking trails
Jefferson at Texas Street Apartments	214-887-4905	Starting at \$920 Call for move-in specials	•	•	•	•		•	•	Spectacular downtown and skyline views, luxurious pool with cascading waterfall
Walnut Square Townhomes	972-960-6867	Starting at \$1,000	•	•	•	•		•	•	Granite countertops, hardwood and ceramic tile flooring, within 1.5 miles of Addison’s nightlife
Bellagio at Bent Tree	972-307-6100	Starting at \$652	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Indoor basketball court, state-of-the-art fitness center, billiards/game room