

Guest Relations

The Returning Guest Standard

Five steps for welcoming a guest back so they feel known, not watched.
One past preference already in the room says more than reciting their file.

Who	When	You need
Guest relations, reception and housekeeping supervisors	Every returning guest, from the arrivals list to check-out	Stay history in the PMS, preference notes, last stay's comments
Measured by Every returning guest flagged on the list · One past preference in the room on arrival · No preference asked for twice		

1 Flag the return

On the arrivals list, mark every guest with a previous stay and how many stays. Read the last two stays in full: the room, the requests, any complaint, what they ate and who travelled with them.

"Returning, 4th stay. Last: room 306, sea view. Asked for oat milk. Breakfast tray late in March."

Common mistake Flagging only guests with ten stays. The second visit is the one that decides whether there will be a third.

2 Pick the preference

Choose one or two past preferences to have ready, the ones the guest would otherwise ask for again: the pillow, the newspaper, the milk, the side of the bed. Check them in the room by 14:00.

"306 ready: oat milk in the fridge, two extra pillows, lamp moved to the left of the desk. 13:40, Lena."

Common mistake Placing ten things from the profile at once. The room feels as if someone read the guest's file aloud.

3 Welcome back

Say "welcome back" and the guest's name in your first sentence, at the door or the desk. Do not list their history. If they mention a past stay, let them lead and follow their memory, not the file.

"Welcome back, Mrs Haddad. It's good to see you again. Your room is ready for you."

Common mistake "Welcome to our hotel" to someone on their fourth stay. One word, back, was all it needed.

4 Close the past

If the last stay had a complaint, check that the cause was fixed. The duty manager says so once, in private, in one or two sentences, and never mentions it again unless the guest does.

"Mr Ferreira, last time your breakfast came late. We changed how trays leave the kitchen. Do tell me if it isn't right."

Common mistake Hoping the guest has forgotten. They remember, and they will watch that same moment closely.

5 Update the file

At check-out, add what changed on this stay in one or two lines and delete anything that no longer applies. A note from 2019 the guest no longer wants does more harm than no note at all.

"Stay 4: no longer takes oat milk. Now travels with daughter, 6. Asks for check-in around 11:00."

Common mistake Only ever adding notes. After five stays the profile is a long list nobody reads, so nobody uses it.

Our Three Returning Guests

Fill this in for the three returning guests due this month. If the team cannot complete a block, the guest's history is not reaching the floor.

Returning guest one

Name and number of stays -

Preference to have ready —

What went wrong last time -

Who greets them ———

Returning guest two

Name and number of stays -

Preference to have ready —

What went wrong last time -

Who greets them ———

Returning guest three

Name and number of stays -

Preference to have ready —

What went wrong last time -

Who greets them ———

How to use this with your team

Fill one block at the Monday briefing with the staff who will meet that guest, and pin the card in the back office until arrival. On arrival day the guest relations manager checks the room against it.

Part of the DolceVita Standards Library: free operating standards for every department of the hotel, at dolcevitahospitality.com/free-resources.