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Twenty For Breakfast



Synopsis

Have you ever fantasized about welcoming interesting strangers into your home and turning spare rooms into cash? *Twenty for Breakfast* takes you behind the scenes of a thriving urban Bed & Breakfast. Unable to cope with leisure following early retirement, author Pat Materka and her husband Bob opened a nine-room B&B overlooking the University of Michigan campus. With humor and candor, she shares the challenges of hiring help, marketing while renovating, and building relationships that make an inn run a land fun. Unabashedly upbeat yet candid and down-to-earth, *Twenty for Breakfast* is a unique hybrid of memoir and how-to, full of anecdotes, checklists, can't-fail recipes, and practical advice for aspiring innkeepers and anyone who enjoys entertaining guests. Whether you're thinking of dipping a toe in the water of Airbnb or launching a boutique hotel, you'll find entertainment, ideas, and insight in *Twenty for Breakfast*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Pat Materka is a newspaper reporter, freelance writer and editor, public relations specialist, university administrator and adjunct professor, director of alumni relations and development, author, antique dealer, workshop leader, first reader, and time management speaker. None of these roles prepared her in any way for running a bed & breakfast, but anyone who enjoys people and making breakfast can achieve success with the B&B lifestyle. Pat and her husband Bob live in Ann Arbor, Michigan and are the parents of a daughter, and a son, and have three grandsons.

Peek behind the curtains and sign the guest register for an intriguing and unique view of life operating an award winning Bed & Breakfast from start to finish, steps from the University of

Michigan. This wonderful book is laced with light hearted humor and delightful cartoon illustrations by Harvey Schwadron. The journey includes personal and financial challenges faced over the years, packed into 20 chapters ranging from 'Try it before you buy It' and 'Extreme Shopping.' The author is a profession writer and editor and the book reflects these skills loud and clear, not only in her writing, but also in the format and organization. Question: Did her past book; 'Time In, Time Out, Time Enough' prepare her to dive into this unknown lifestyle? Maybe, but not altogether. Pat drills down on the nuts and bolts of the whole B&B canvas from European buffets to excellent internet sites and resources. An American snapshot, with overtones of 'Under the Tuscan Sun-at home in Italy, by Frances Mayes and quest surprises and requests to include the "Taco Wedding." It should also be required reading for those in the hospitality industry, take note Bill Marriott and Motel 6 for insider tips on the right 'thread count' for sheets and color coding inventory for efficiency and profitability. It also includes 10 delicious recipes from Baked Apple French toast to Quiche for a Crowd. It would not be complete without the help of her husband Bob and his fascination with Jumbo Balloons and financial wizardry. Take your seat next to the country kitchen and join for other quests for "Twenty for Breakfast."

This is the most entertaining, informative, perfect book. Although it's indispensable for anyone considering running an inn, it's also great reading for those who just enjoy staying at B&B's, or even those who just want to get a warm and human glimpse of what life is like on the inside of an inn--sort of like Upstairs Downstairs or Fawlty Towers. It's loaded with really useful practical information, including recipes, along with heart-warming and amusing anecdotes about all sorts of guests, help, things that go wrong (or right). I would even recommend it for people who deal with lots of house guests, or those with large families in one house. And I love the illustrations (check out the cover--doesn't that say a lot?). If you actually are considering running an inn, this will give you the kind of insight you need to determine whether it would be a good fit for you. If you already are running one, I'm sure you could pick up some great tips here. If you never thought about being an innkeeper, I doubt you'd suddenly decide you must--it's very balanced, and acknowledges that this isn't the lifestyle (more than simply a career) for everyone. But it will help you appreciate all that goes in to running a great inn--and being a good guest. Highly recommend!

If you were to think Twenty for Breakfast is a book written only for current or prospective inn or B&B owners, you would be, well, mistaken. I am neither of these things, yet I loved the book and took a great deal of wisdom from it. It's true the author sprinkles a series of tips for aspiring

innkeepers throughout the book, many of them about logistics. But numerous of those tips apply to anyone who aspires to be a good host to guests. This book, though, is about much more than B&Bs. Below is my partial list of the kind of nuggets of wisdom you'll find in this gem of a book.

On running a business:

- How to disguise no as some form of yes
- establish reasonable rules but also know when to bend them or overlook them entirely
- let yourself, as a business person, be lighthearted and even silly at times
- earn the loyalty of people who work for you...ask for reviews (and respond to the occasional bad one)
- run a business deeply rooted in personal values

On being human:

- How to laugh at people's foibles and move on
- have faith through hard times
- deal with personal tragedy (of the worst kind) with strength and grace you never thought possible
- win people's hearts through generosity and understanding
- make the world a better place through graciousness

In summary, this book is full of engaging stories for just about any reader. The author's tone and writing style is warm, gracious (that word again), and entertaining, much like her hosting skills. Reading it is like sitting across the table from her at her B&B over a cup of coffee (or tea). If you like to be inspired and read great stories, this book is for you! And as a bonus, you'll learn how to cook an omelette, which by itself is worth the price of the book. Bon appetit!

Delightful! I read it in one sitting! Pat Materka is a darn good writer who provides practical information about running a B & B and the feel of owning one, as well as the feel of staying as a guest in such a welcoming B & B. As you read, you get to know Pat, a sunny and amusing storyteller, and her husband, Bob, without whom many practical aspects of B & B ownership would leave Pat at sea. She's honest and funny about learning some things the hard way, and cheerful about the learning. She's also a great hostess and you'll finish reading the book envious of guests who stay at the Ann Arbor B & B.

For anyone thinking of owning a B&B, *Twenty for Breakfast* offers a great guide for thinking through your decision and learning how to manage a marriage through such a close working relationship. For those who are already owners, you will laugh with The Materka's and nod your head in agreement with some of their travails. But, for those of you who have either frequented B&Bs or are contemplating spending a weekend there, you will see the experience in a new light. Pat Materka's bright and breezy writing style will make you smile and make you hope that your inn keepers are as guest oriented as Pat and Bob. This book is a winner.

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