

MBBA Gift Certificate Program Good Deal for Innkeepers and Guests

Many B & B associations have found that a statewide gift certificate program increases business and exposure for participating member inns. The recipient of the certificate chooses the B & B they would like to stay at, calls to make a reservation and identifies that they have a Minnesota Bed and Breakfast Association (MBBA) certificate. The innkeeper calls or emails the MBBA office to check the certificate number for validation. Once used, the innkeeper mails the certificate to the MBBA office for payment. The commission the MBBA charges is 10%. This pays for the handling of the program and marketing it.

Perfect for corporate gifts, anniversaries, holiday gifts, weddings, thank you's and special occasions, the MBBA gift certificate is available on the website, www.minnesotabb.org as well as by calling the MBBA office. MBBA also uses the certificate program to pay in trade for various needs the MBBA has. For example recently \$2000 of the conference cost (rental fee for the venue) was paid for with MBBA certificates. The board felt not only was this a great opportunity to promote the program with the catering firm but the money spent as a business expense will actually go to MBBA members when they are used.

In this day of a difficult economy many consumer advocacy groups are encouraging consumers to NOT buy gift certificates from small independent businesses because they may not be in business when it comes time to redeem. They encourage buys from shopping centers and restaurant and hotel conglomerates so the choices are greater. This opportunity with MBBA certificates gives MBBA members an opportunity to benefit from this tendency.

Innkeepers interested in participating in the program will have a key by their inn name in the guidebook. The guidebook is part of the certificate packet sent to the purchaser. If an inn would like to be included in the program once the guidebook has gone to press, notify the MBBA office and an addendum will be added to the guidebook.