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Why Gratuities Matter to Your Hunting Guide: Insights from Northeast Guides

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Gorham, NH – When booking a guided hunting experience, hunters are investing in more than just the trip itself—they're supporting the hardworking guides and their dedicated teams who make each outing possible. Gratuities are an essential part of the experience, representing an appreciation for a guide's time and expertise and helping offset the real costs and efforts involved in crafting an unforgettable hunting experience.

Behind-the-Scenes Preparation: Weeks of Hard Work and Coordination

Guides don't simply show up the day of your hunt; they spend weeks preparing for each trip. Scouting prime locations, securing landowner permissions, and negotiating access to prime hunting spots with other guides or landholders are standard for most trips. This preparation involves considerable time, fuel, and wear and tear on vehicles and equipment, which is why gratuities play an important role in covering these expenses.

Team Effort for a Memorable Experience

A successful hunt is rarely a one-person operation. Many guided hunts involve a whole team behind the scenes, including trackers, cooks, extraction team members, and camp cleaners—all dedicated to ensuring a smooth, comfortable, and safe experience. Gratuities allow guides to compensate these team members fairly, recognizing their efforts in cooking meals, tracking game, or ensuring the camp is ready for hunters.

Customizing the Experience to Each Hunter

Every hunter is unique, and experienced guides understand that customizing the experience is essential. Guides often adjust tactics to meet a hunter's specific needs, physical capabilities, and preferences, sometimes on the spot. This adaptability can mean last-minute strategy changes or even rerouting an entire hunt, underscoring a guide's commitment to each client's success and enjoyment.

Time Away from Other Responsibilities

In the Northeast, most hunting guides are not full-time. Many, including those in Northern NH and Maine, balance guiding with other jobs, often taking time off to provide these experiences. The time they dedicate to guiding is time away from regular work, personal

lives, and family. Gratuities are one of the ways hunters can recognize and appreciate this commitment.

The Value of a Tip: A Standard of 15%

In the guided hunting industry, a gratuity standard of around 15% of the hunt cost is customary. This acknowledgment reflects the countless hours and resources a guide has invested in creating a memorable, successful experience. A fair gratuity reflects appreciation for the expertise, dedication, and support that guides bring to each outing.

The Bottom Line: Gratitude and Respect for Your Guide's Dedication

Hunting guides do this work because they love it, but receiving no tip—or an inadequate one—can be discouraging. Word can travel quickly within the guiding community, and hunters who consistently fail to show appreciation may find it harder to book with guides in the future.

Gratuities aren't just an extra; they're a crucial part of what makes these experiences possible. On behalf of guides throughout the Northeast, we thank every hunter who values the dedication and expertise that guides bring to every hunt.

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