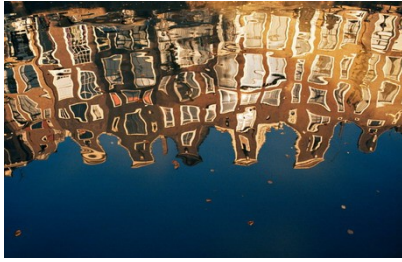


Top Unusual Hotels of the World - Budget WOW



The second most often asked question visitors pose (*) on the Unusual Hotels of the World website is how much it costs to stay in the 150 properties in the current guide. All are surprised at the low price and great value of the properties, and recognize the truth in the UHOTW promise that the only WOW is the property itself, not the bill! Steve Dobson picks some of his top rated favourites from the guide below. Brought to you by Tourism-Review.com.

(*) the top question we're asked concerns the availability of toilet facilities in treehouses and ice hotels.

Safari Land Resorts, Tamil Nadu, India

Treehouse and game reserve next door for under US\$100 for a double room half board.

Offering 6 treehouses around 5 metres high built from local materials and bamboo this property was originally the summer home of Indian National Shooting Champion Mr. Nawab Shafath Ali Khan. On his retirement from competition he relocated his family to enjoy the lush vegetation and beautiful landscapes of the Masinagudi reserves. Adjoining 2 national parks, there are plenty of opportunities to watch wildlife and the team are happy to arrange early morning and late evening game drives by prior arrangement.

As with all rustic treehouse accommodation, inquire prior to your booking for seasonal info. Just after monsoon can give the best animal opportunities, however as there are single storey cottages available on the same site, you might want to ask for the option to reserve one of these in case the weather isn't good enough to use the treehouses. Don't forget to bring binoculars!

Under US\$100 for a double room half board

Safari Lans Resorts
Masinagudi, Nilgiris,
Tamil Nadu, India

Photo: (c) Safari Land

Das Park Hotel, Nr Linz, Austria

Sewerpipe hotel that offers rooms for a donation only!

Although this is currently one-of-a-kind, offering basic facilities, you realize when you've been on the road that you don't need much to enjoy a good night sleep. Somewhere secure is a priority and you don't get much more secure than a 9,5tonne concrete tube. Warm in winter and cool in summer, much like a cave these concrete tubes provide a double bed, light, power point, blanket and a cotton sleeping bag. The toilet and showers are a couple of minutes walk away in the grounds of the park. Designed from the outset by Andreas Strauss to use worldwide standard concrete drainage or sewage pipe sections - you could well see more of them in the future. The beauty of these pipes is that the utilitarian look needs little alteration to make them habitable - a coat of varnish is all that is

necessary. The tubes have also had wall paintings by the Austrian artist Thomas Latzel Ochoa to make them seem a little more user friendly. After a season or two of use, they can even be returned to the manufacturer for reuse, as the bed, door and lock mechanism, as well as the lighting and internet access are all easy to remove.

Donations are accepted for upkeep and they have proven a big hit with cyclists travelling along the Danube cycleway as somewhere warm, cheap and a comfortable change from a soggy tent!

Donations accepted for upkeep

Das Park Hotel

Near Linz

Austria

Photo: (c) Das Park Hotel

Kolarbyn, Nr Skinnskatteberg, Sweden

Sleep in a traditional forest hut in the woods for under US\$40 a night

Consisting of twelve little forest huts located by the beautiful lake Skärsjön, Sweden's most primitive hotel has no electricity and the dark evenings are lit by candles or traditional oil lamps. However, there are few more beautiful or memorable places to stay - especially for under US\$40 a night. Each tiny hut provides two berths with sheep skin rugs to cushion your slumber, and has a tiny wood fire to keep you cosy. Your first task on arrival is to gather and chop adequate wood for your cooking and heating needs from the nearby woodstore. Guests bring food to cook themselves at one of several fire places and pans and cutlery are available in the storehouse. There is also a sauna to chop wood for, though as washing facilities are limited to a stream, you are encouraged to be brave enough to cool down with a dip in the nearby lake. The toilet is in a natural outhouse, which though rustic, serves its purpose adequately, as was the normal practice for centuries! Children love the back-to-nature experience and tours to see moose, wolves and beavers can be arranged locally.

US\$38 a night for adults, with 50% reduction for children

Kolarbyn

Nr. Skinnskatteberg

Sweden

Photo: (c) Kolarbyn - Mikaela Larm

Kasbah du Toubkal Nr. Imil, Morocco

Honourary citizenship of the berber community for US\$150

The Kasbah is a combination of Berber retreat and mountain-top hotel providing the best views of the high Atlas mountains and traditional charm. On booking you need to provide your shoe size so that you can receive the traditional Berber slippers on arrival as a mark of your acceptance into their community. The building of the Kasbah itself has become an inspirational model for redevelopment in both Morocco and abroad, mentioned by His Royal Highness Prince Charles of the UK as an example of sustainable development. Originally the home of a Feudal Caid it unobtrusively looks out over three major valleys. Happened upon by an English adventurer, Mike McHugo he believed that the beauty of the Toubkal National Park should be accessible to all who respect it. This vision was shared by the local tribesmen and village elders who in an imaginative Berber and

European partnership restored the property using traditional methods and local tribesmen. Now providing luxurious facilities, visitors staying at the centre pay a small levy to fund community projects for the local village and are inducted as honorary berber tribesmen.

Standard doubles from €150 per room per night

Kasbah du Toubkal, (Near Imil)

Morocco

Photo: (c) Kasbah du Toubkal

Dog Park Inn, Idaho, USA

Giant dog with rooms inside for US\$88 a night

Since 2003, this giant beagle, over 30 feet long and high, has welcomed guests as a giant landmark off highway 95. Described by owners Frances and Dennis as a Noble and Absurd undertaking, it is christened Sweet Willy and has a smaller 12 foot sibling Toby alongside. The beagle's artist parents have catered for all dog needs and provide a giant fire hydrant alongside, hiding a toilet.

There are two rooms in Sweet Willy. The larger inside the body, provides a veranda looking out over the fields surrounding the property and sleeps two in a queen sized bed. The head of the dog sleeps two in roll out futons. The amenities are comprehensive and include a bath, microwave and refrigerator - however for some, the lack of a television and telephone might be one of the few reminders that you are staying inside a giant dog, and not a regular chain hotel.

Hire of the dog is US\$88 per night including breakfast

Dog Bark Park Inn B&B

Cottonwood,

Idaho USA

Photo: (c) Dog Park Inn

About Unusual Hotels of the World

For over 5 years, this guide to over 150 of the worlds most Unusual Hotels has showcased properties from around the world in Lighthouses, Caves, Treehouses, Planes, Trains - even Underwater - with a unique WOW rating based on the feedback of around 3,000 daily visitors to their website.

They have recently published a top rated Unusual Hotels of the World book, available from www.gounusual.com with 50 favourite properties, available in English, French, Italian and Spanish.

For more details of the hotels suggested, comments and rating, check out their website

www.unusualhotelsoftheworld.com

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