

Top Health Trends in Business Hotels

As Americans are becoming more health conscious and employers are looking for ways to increase productivity and reduce insurance costs, various hotels are offering fitness, nutrition and even, cleaner air to lure business travelers. According to a study, employees who need to take more than 20 trips in a month are likely to suffer from various health problems, including obesity.



Before availing any hotel, travelers need to check out whether the hotels provide the special amenities along with the basic amenities. The special amenities are:

1. In-room Equipment – According to a survey of 8500 hotels by American Hotel and Lodging Association in 2010, in-room exercise equipments are offered by 17% of upscale hotels, 21% of luxury hotels and 15% of mid-price properties. At Hilton Garden Inn, guests can not only check out a Stay Fit Kit that is inclusive of an eight-pound abs ball and pilates band but can also purchase On Demand work-out programming. Besides Get Fit Kits that feature similar exercise options, guests can book a Get Fit Room with a treadmill, at Omni Hotels Resorts.
2. Staff Nutritionists and Wellness Coaches – Nutritionists or Wellness Coaches are employed by some hotels like Four Seasons Westlake Village, which is situated close to Los Angeles. At this hotel, guests can book an individual session or a class with Paulette Lambert, registered dietician and nutrition director of the California Health and Longevity Institute. In the Wellness Kitchen of the hotel, she not only teaches the healthy travel tips to the guests but also teaches the method of preparing heart-healthy dishes like roasted beet salad with asparagus and avocado and miso-grilled salmon with bok choy.

3. Allergy-free Rooms - Though majority of the hotels have eliminated smoking rooms, guests may get landed up in such a room if all the non-smoking rooms get booked. They can visit the site "FreshStay.com", where some 5000 completely smoke-free member hotels are listed, including Choice and Marriot chains. Guests can book 'Pure' rooms if they are suffering from asthma or allergies or are just concerned about the quality of air. As per the Chief Executive of Pure Solutions North America, Brian Brault, around 250 hotels in North America offer 'Pure' rooms, at the cost of around \$20 to \$25 per night. The 'Pure' rooms feature hypoallergenic bed encasements, air purifiers that use natural tea tree oil and also, undergo cleaning treatments to remove bacteria and allergens.



4. Organic, locally produced food - Besides low-fat and low-calorie food options, more locally produced, organic and natural ingredients are being incorporated by the hotels into their room-service and restaurant menus. Dishes with vegetables, meat and cheeses from nearby farms and sustainable wines are served by Destination Hotels and Resorts.

5. Smartphone apps - Some eight years ago, StayFit@Hyatt concierge service was introduced by Hyatt Hotels. The amenities for walkers and joggers are now becoming more high-tech. Joggers and walkers can now access a digital scan of the map on a smartphone or choose between palm-size route cards with detailed directions.

6. Healthy break-outs and team-building - According to Paulette Lambert, dietitian and nutritionist, certain activities are provided by some hotels that help to extend corporate wellness programs beyond company doors. With exercise and intake of more nutritious food, employees can sleep better and wake up rejuvenated, thereby, turning out to be more productive. As per Lambert, her Wellness Kitchen classes are booked by event planners as elective programming during conferences, executive team-building sessions and as networking opportunities.



7. Paraben-free amenities - In 2008, the Destination Earth program was launched by Destination Hotels and Resorts. As per the Managing Director, George Fischer, the goal of the program was to standardize green practices like energy-efficient lighting and recycling, across its 37 upscale U.S. properties. The hotel also offered healthier options for the guests like paraben-free lotions, shampoos, conditioners and soaps. Parabens is a type of chemical that is often used as an antibacterial agent and preservative in personal-care products. It cannot only trigger skin allergies but is also found to mimic estrogen, which is capable of developing breast cancer.

These factors will surely help the business and pleasure travellers to take care of themselves in a much better way, than perhaps even at home. So, make sure when you avail a hotel, these features are there to give you a healthy and happy stay.

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