

Hotels Embrace Extra Charges Policy

The hotel surcharges are quickly growing which is becoming a huge trouble for the tourists. Things as common as changing the check-in and check-out timings, adding queen beds and some in-room facilities are charged extra.

In the hotel's minibar, the stuff is overly charged and sometimes there is a cost of simply moving things from the bar. These surcharges in the travel industry are making it extremely hard for the vacationers to anticipate the actual cost of their stay. The reason behind this is also the variation in these charges from hotel to hotel even for those which belong to the same chain.



The fees and surcharges have become a trend in the travel industry after the recession. The services like electronic toll collection devices and navigation systems are charged extra by car rental companies. Airlines have applied additional fees for checking luggage, skipping lines at security, choosing seats in advance as well as early boarding.

A professor at the hospitality school of the New York University, Mr. Bjorn Hanson says that airlines have done a nice job of making hotel fees and surcharges seem reasonable. According to a recent study released by him, these add-ons will add \$2.25 billion to the revenue made by the hotels this year. The surcharges and the increased fees account for about half of this increase. According to STR, a travel research company, U.S. hotels took in \$122.2 billion in-room revenue last year. Though, the fees add only 2 percent extra in the revenue, most of that money is pure profit, as noted by Hanson.

Now, there are charges even for storing luggage and advance shipping which was considered a courtesy some time back. Storage charges about \$2 per bag. There is an extra charge for the in-room safes, no matter they are used or not. Some budget hotels charge \$1.50 a night for in-room safes.



Fees are common when it comes to travel business, according to the American Hotel and Lodging Association. They say that these charges are disclosed by its members while the booking is being done. The surcharges were added initially at resorts with pools, fancy gyms and tennis courts in 1997. Then,

energy charges were added three years later. For many years after that, hotels didn't add any major surcharges. According to Hanson, they started adding such fees and charges in the last four years inspired by the airlines and car rental companies.

Some hotels charge for the internet on a per night basis ranging from \$10 to \$25. \$5 is the cost for a cold Coke can at The Liberty Hotel in Boston which is just the base price. An 18-percent administrative fee to restock the bar is revealed by the fine prints on the menu.

An exceptionally surprising surcharge is priced by The Aria Resort and Casino located in Las Vegas and a number of other hotels where the items in the minibar are billed to guests rooms if the sensors integrated in the minibar record that those items have been removed for 60 seconds or more. A \$25 per day personal use fee is also charged by them if a guest puts their own water bottle or soda bottle in the minibar. Even there is an extra \$35 per night if a mini refrigerator is requested by the guests.



The resort fees are also being updated by the hotels and are increased significantly especially at the high-end resorts. The guests at The St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort, Puerto Rico, are charged \$650 for a single night. The resort is set on a former coconut plantation and the guests enjoy rooms with 300-thread-count sheets and walk-in-closets. Along with the resort fee, there's a mandatory \$60 nightly charge, which is charged for the welcome drink upon check-in, using the beach umbrellas and lounge chairs, using the bicycles, internet access as well as the ice tea service at the poolside.

Some of the hotels have also added mandatory tips. Apart from that, The Serrano hotel in downtown San Francisco charges \$20 per night fee for the Internet, newspapers, local phone calls, morning coffee and using bicycles.

There's a \$30 charge to skip the Las Vegas check-in lines, \$30 to check-in early and \$30 to check-out late as well as there are extra charges for queen beds and king beds.

For an extra \$30, the Bellagio locks in room preferences such as bed type, near or far away from the elevators, rooms on a high or low floor or the option to have quieter rooms. These prices are alarmingly high as well as surprising for the travelers.

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