

How to Choose an Airport Hotel

Remember: it's more important to get a good night's sleep before your flight than to take the fanciest of car services the morning you depart. That said, you must look carefully at what it takes to find that good night's sleep of your dreams – just a heartbeat away from the airport. Learn how to select the best airport hotel for your needs.



Step One

Look for a hotel very close to the airport. If you're booked for an 8 a.m. international flight you must be at the airport by 5 a.m. You know what that means, even if you live only 45 minutes from the airport. If you aren't prepared to skip sleep, plan to book an airport hotel.

Step Two

Cull a list of two or three that sound promising and research each one carefully. The Internet age is great for the modern traveler. If one hotel has five reviews and four of them claim they've found bed bugs, run! (Even one claim of bed bugs would make most of us run.) You can also do research by calling each hotel. If the staff is friendly and sounds professional when you call and if the hold time is minimal and directions to the hotel are clear, that's a good start.



Step Three

Inquire as to whether there is a shuttle service. You want to make sure it's not only running, but running during the hour when you will be traveling. If the shuttle service runs every 20 minute like clockwork, you're in good shape. Be sure to read traveler's reviews carefully to make sure the shuttle service sounds reliable. Obviously, at four-star hotels you probably won't have to worry about problems of this nature.

Step Four

Book a hotel with an on-the-go breakfast. This is usually a good plan for most travelers who are flying long jags and who don't want to spend a fortune on an Egg McMuffin at the airport. Many hotels offer complimentary breakfasts, but be sure to check the time. If you are very nice, perhaps you can arrange to pick up a muffin or piece of fruit in advance if you are to miss breakfast.

Step Five

Watch out for unsafe neighborhoods. For example, Newark, New Jersey has a great airport – in a very dodgy town. At this and many other airports around the world, just make sure you'll be staying in a safe area and that the incidence of crime is low. A good security system at the hotel is also important, especially in high-crime neighborhoods.



Tips & Warnings

Remember to ask about deposit policies. Holds on your credit card can add up. Many hotels place a small hold on your charge card for incidentals, while some do not if you specify that you won't, for example, use the mini bar. Just ask.

Try to avoid last-minute hotel purchases. If you must book a room spur-of-the-moment, be wary of the hotel with too many rooms available on a prime booking night. Also, in these instances, try to get the airport staff to recommend the best lodging in the area.

Date: 2009-03-30

Article link:

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