

Airport Hotels: The Best and the Worst

Today's hotel industry seems to be working in circles. Whereas it would be fair to say that people are beginning in general to prioritize function instead of luxury in city hotels, the opposite seems to be true of airport hotels.

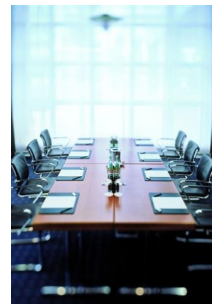
Tourists are tending to seek cheaper accommodation whilst abroad, thus leaving them more money for other activities, such as visiting museums and eating out. Hotels are becoming symbols of pure necessity, not as a luxury item to be enjoyed.



Confusingly, whereas tourists, especially from the business sector, used to view airport hotels as necessary evils and just a place to put one's head down whilst waiting for a flight, airport hotels are now in big competition with each other to provide the most luxurious asylum possible next to the runway.

With such high competition and affordable prices at most of the world's major airports, sleeping on the seats of the business lounge in order to avoid an airport hotel experience is no longer a regular option. Many places boast the perfect mixture of decadent modernity and convenience.

In Europe, perhaps the best example of style in terms of airport hotels is the **Kempinski Hotel Airport** in Munich. Surely a more expensive downtown hotel would be proud of such innovation. Staying in Germany, there is the **Radisson SAS** in Frankfurt, a 19-floor feat of modern architecture with 428 modernist rooms and panoramic views of downtown Frankfurt. These German hotels do not fit the old reputation of shabby airport hotels in the slightest.



Airport hotels are not necessarily expensive, contrary to popular belief. For example, the **CitizenM** in Amsterdam can cost as little as 73EUR per night. Some say that the world's most luxurious airport hotel is the **Crowne Plaza Changi Airport** in Singapore. It has almost all the features of pure modern luxury,

including a swimming pool and numerous luxury facilities. Whereas similar hotels in city centres have routes to town squares, the \$57 million Crowne Plaza Changi has a route to terminal 3 of Singapore airport.

To the airport hotels with high standard of services there also belongs **Novotel in Suvarnabhumi Airport**, Bangkok which is marketed as a four-star hotel. It is situated only two-minute shuttle bus ride from Bangkok's new Suvarnabhumi International Airport. The shuttle works 24 hour a day. The hotel's interiors are stylish. There is a huge marbled foyer with a high ceiling and there are also glass walls. In its four restaurants, a customer may taste Japanese, Chinese, European or Thai cuisine. More active visitors may want to try the outdoor pool or the hotel's fitness centre. For those who prefer pampering there is a large spa. Rooms themselves are also luxurious. They have marbled bathrooms. A guest may also enjoy Wi-Fi High speed wireless Internet service or large flat-screen television. There is a mini-bar and safe in each room. From the hotel, it takes some 35 minutes by cab to the downtown Bangkok and approximately 30 minutes to the seaside resort town of Pattaya.



At the Sydney Airport in Australia, there is **Hotel Ibis**, which has been opened in 2003. This facility is one kilometer from the Sydney domestic airport, and three kilometers from the international airport or 20-minute cab ride from Sydney Central. Its rooms are not very spacious but the services are satisfying. Rooms are equipped with a wall-mounted flat screen TV, internet and other amenities.

However, there are not only good airport hotels. For example, **Manila Airport Hotel** in Philippines, **Riande Aeropuerto Hotel** in Panama and **Resort Britannia Country House Hotel** in England are among those with rather bad reputation.

Photo: TR archive, Kempinski Hotel Airport Munich

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