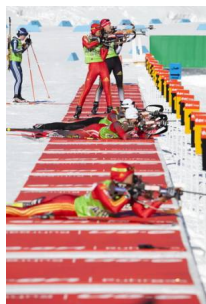


HOTELS IN LAST-MINUTE PREPARATIONS FOR WINTER OLYMPICS



Hotels in Vancouver are preparing for the winter Olympics by resorting to frantic last minute measures to look for extra staff, make the most out of the opportunity and make sure that no gatecrashers are welcome.

Between the 12th and 28th of the next month, around 250.000 people are expected to flood to the Canadian city of Vancouver to bear witness to the winter Olympic games. This does not only mean a massive amount of publicity for Vancouver, yet also a great opportunity to make a load of dollars.

At the time of the year when most hotel owners in Vancouver are usually scraping the bottom of their pockets and desperately watching for tourists of any description to turn up, this February promises to bring challenges of the opposite nature.

Most people involved in the Vancouver hotel industry are guaranteed periods of little sleep as 24-hour operations are going to be necessary to help maintain the influx of extra guests. The winter Olympics are of course not the darts championship and tend to attract a high spending clientele and high class of guests. The hotels will have to put up with the demands and complaints of foreign dignitaries and the international specialist media for over a fortnight.

Some hotels have already achieved their goal of attracting new temporary workers. **Some hotels have been forced to find around 150 extra aides.** People planning to come to Vancouver for the winter spectacle need not worry about accommodation, as long as they are not planning on saving. The only available hotel rooms at the moment would set the visitor back by 3,000 to 8,000 US dollars per night. Such prices, it is hoped, will keep away gatecrashers and those intending to travel without tickets or booked accommodation. Vancouver in February is not the best place to be without roof and heating.

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