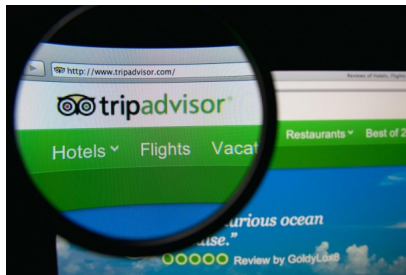


TOP 5 TIPS FOR FINDING THE MOST RELIABLE TRIPADVISOR REVIEWS



A TripAdvisor review is not just seen as a helpful tool, it is often heavily relied upon by many travellers choosing between hotels, attractions and other businesses that are lucky enough - or in many cases unlucky enough - to receive an entry. The problem is that these reviews can be easily misinterpreted, because of the purpose behind them, and they aren't always designed to be helpful: many are spiteful and deliberately negative, some are overly positive to

the point of fallacy and many are much more self-serving than they are useful for the general public. The following five tips will hopefully help travellers understand the language of these reviews and distinguish between the five different types of reviewer.

#1 - Avoid the ones who are overly negative about everything

Some people can find fault with anything if they try hard enough and they are ones that write an unfairly negative TripAdvisor review; the kind filled with harsh commandments - where travellers are ordered to stay away, as if to punish the business for one single bad experience - and petty complaints about aspects that are beyond their target's control. This inability to find anything constructive to say becomes less about writing a critique and more about venting frustrations in some sort of psychological exercise - it might make them feel better but it doesn't help the reader. On top of this, their objectivity also comes into question, hindering their overall reliability.

#2 - Don't get sucked in by the ones who are overly positive either

Unfortunately, this question of objectivity is also raised with those that take the opposite approach to their reviews and say nothing but positive things to the point where it reeks of insincerity. This TripAdvisor review does not just heap excessive praise on one aspect, for example, the unbelievably delicious free snacks in the ginormous mini-bar, it can do so on the most irrelevant of subjects and fill a review with exaggerated claims of five-star experiences that the average holidaymaker can never really expect to enjoy. Positivity may seem preferable to negativity but a reliable review needs to be able to see the pros and cons.

#3 - Steer clear of the ones with delusions of grandeur about their opinions

When talking about the angry one-star reviewers, the idea of commandments was mentioned and this could also be a signal of the deluded reviewer. These individuals expect people to listen and feel as though their online pseudonym actually has some sort of commanding internet presence, or that visitors must be keenly expecting their latest review because they have undoubtedly read their previous posts. This TripAdvisor review is often a self-absorbed personal story, with a touch of questionable humour, that talks about details with no consequence and highlights a false sense of entitlement. Most of the time these posts offer no real purpose but to be self-serving for the reviewer.

#4 - Beware of the ones that may not have even stayed there at all

So far, three types of review have been re-evaluated and even though the results are discouraging, at least these reviewers were creatively writing about actual experiences. Some people write a TripAdvisor review for profit and while a small minority will admit to being rewarded for their positive endorsement, most blend in with the crowd. These phonies can sometimes be spotted via two important details: if they use excessive punctuation and vocabulary in the familiar, sycophantic style, but it doesn't sound natural, it could be the work of a hired writer; secondly, if it is the only entry that the contributor has ever made then alarm bells should ring.

#5 - Stick to the ones that are open and balanced for the most reliable opinions

Thankfully, there is a fifth type of TripAdvisor review that is more welcome, the one where the reviewer has the good nature to compliment and criticise where it is relevant - without delving into hyperbole or losing track of the subject through pointless personal stories - and understands that while their personal situation led to one result, others may have different views. If 5-star reviews should be read with caution over their legitimacy and 1-star reviews are to be avoided because of hidden agendas, these 3 and 4-star reviews are the best place to look for honest advice that could actually be of use.

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