

WORLD CUP: FOOTBALL FANS TO PAY OVER THE ODDS FOR ROOMS



South African hotels and hostels are set to raise their prices by as much as 300% during the World Cup. They see the world's biggest sporting event to be a great opportunity to rake in massive amounts of cash at the expense of those visiting their country to support their team.

It is not unusual for the hosts and organizers of major sporting events to try to make money out of those, who would otherwise not be visiting the location involved. This is particularly true if the visitors happen to be coming from much richer countries with wallets laden with cash. **This is the case for this year's World Cup in South Africa, yet with one crucial difference: prices will not be slightly higher for accommodation, yet will be sometimes three times as much.**

Experts have not blamed South African hoteliers. Instead, the blame has been firmly placed on a British-based company, which has struck up an exclusive deal with FIFA to arrange hospitality packages. This not only means that the average football fan will not be in South Africa, leaving random competition winners to watch their teams, if they have one, yet also means that most available rooms have already been snapped up. **It has been estimated that the deal accounts for 80% of rooms around the venues, leading to extortionate price rises in the remaining 20%.**

Taking England as an example, it is thought that the mad prices are putting English fans from traveling to South Africa. There were 200,000 English fans at the last World Cup, whereas 25,000 are expected to turn up this time. There are, naturally, other factors such as safety, distance, traveling expenses and uncertainty, yet accommodation prices are at the forefront of many English fans' decisions to stay at home.

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