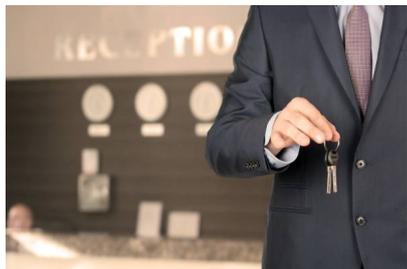


WHEN SHOULD I BOOK MY HOTEL?: FINDING THE BEST RATES



Hotels often account for the largest portion of your travel budget, leaving you with less funds to explore a new locale and culture. However, many travelers spend far more than necessary on their accommodations due to inadequate planning. Booking far in advance has a number of advantages from guaranteed availability to greater choice in rooms, and can even deliver significant savings compared to traditional booking methods.

Advance Booking

Hotels typically offer their best pricing to those who book rooms far in advance, but their rates are notorious for their fluctuations, as the more rooms that are booked on a given night, the more that a hotelier can charge for the remaining rooms.

This means that rates can even change on a minute by minute basis, and so a good way to ensure the best possible price is to book a cancellable rate in advance, then change your booking to take advantage of better rates as they become available.

Travelers who may have their minds set on a particular hotel can also find preferable rates by calling the hotel directly, as onsite staff will have a knowledge of unadvertised rates as well as any events in town that may affect room pricing during your stay.

In the event of a major event such as a conference or large concert, booking rooms away from the city center or point of interest can yield savings of hundreds of dollars over a few days' stay. Comparing hotel rates to find the best price is also an effective way to secure savings, and you can read more about finding premium hotel stays at [Hotels Combined](#).

Last Minute Booking

While advance booking usually offers better prices as the dates get further into the future, last minute booking can offer its own savings. Hoteliers operate on the premise that each of their available rooms must be filled every night, and every empty room represents lost profits for the hotel. This means that hotels are sometimes willing to offer their rooms at deep discounts to last minute travelers.

There are several apps and websites that specialize in same-day bookings, and these resources negotiate directly with the hotels to deliver the best possible rate. Last minute booking availability isn't guaranteed, so it's a less than preferable solution for major events and international travel, but it can offer the flexible traveler access to discounts that would otherwise be totally unavailable.

Regardless of timeframe, the key to getting the best deal on a hotel deal is to shop around. While it is generally a good idea to make all travel reservations as far in advance as possible, last minute booking can net big savings for those willing to roll the dice.

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