

CAPSULE STYLE HOTELS COME TO EUROPE



Capsule style low-cost hotels have existed in Japan since the 1980's. They offer very small spaces, just big enough to sleep a person and are available at a very low price. Such establishments work on the same principle as the low-cost airlines, i.e. the profit comes from quantity and not necessarily quality. This type of hotel has now arrived to Europe, the first having opened in Gatwick last year. The chain is called Yotel and is now expanding to Heathrow and then to Amsterdam's Schipol airport next year. Based on the success of the Gatwick Yotel, this type of asylum could become a regular feature of European airports in the years to come.

The world's busiest airport, London's Heathrow, has just been equipped with a Yotel. It is aimed mainly at business travellers who are tired of arriving at the crack of dawn to catch an early flight or at travellers burdened by cancellations or delays. Now, it is possible to stay at the airport without having to break the bank or sleep on a bench in a designated waiting area. All 32 cabins have been equipped with desks, wired internet, have 24-hour room service available and some even have en suite bathroom facilities. However, given the nature of delays, it is not necessary to stay overnight in one of the cabins. Yotel offers the opportunity to stay just for a couple of hours. This opportunity is most likely to be taken advantage of by those who wish to use the internet in privacy.

Pricewise, Yotel is slightly more expensive than its Japanese counterparts. Whereas a less luxurious space would coat around L9 in Japan, a Heathrow cabin shall be available for L25 for four hours or L56 for an overnight stay. The price difference is to be expected considering the location. A double cabin would set the delayed or non-early rising passenger back around L82 for an overnight stay.

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