

TOP 5 TIPS TO AVOID SCAMS FOR VACATION RENTALS



Travelers looking for their dream home this summer should be aware of various scams that can circulate when ordering vacation rental online. Tourism Review brings some smart tips to avoid unpleasant surprises.

Last minute, beware

Are you still searching for the ideal vacation rental? Perhaps your initial plans fell through, leaving you scrambling to find the perfect spot for your August getaway. Unfortunately, scammers know your urgency and may try to exploit you. Stay alert and avoid falling victim to their deceitful tactics.

If it's too good to be true, it's fishy

This is the rule to keep in mind on the Internet. This magnificent house with a swimming pool in the heart of Provence is still available at the end of June. At a particularly attractive price? Unless there is a huge stroke of luck, there is probably a wolf. To be sure, copy and paste the ad text into your search engine to ensure it doesn't get lost in the shuffle. Type in the landlord's name + notice or + scam. If so, flee and report it to the platform or site that hosts the ad of the vacation rental.

Check the photos of the rental and geolocate

This is a good test to eliminate the risk of ghost vocational rentals... Does the house exist? Download the ad photo to your computer and then go to Google Images. Go to the "Search by Image" camera icon to the right of the search tab and import the photo. If the photo is used to illustrate other listings or does not match your rental, run away!

Do the same for the rental address. Go to Google Maps, type in the address, and look at the photos. That is an excellent sign if you are by the sea and the house is visible. Do not hesitate to geolocate the property with these tools. The vacation rental may be close to the sea, as stated in the ad. However, you may discover three bars just downstairs that will force you to live with the windows closed at night.

Check reviews... but contact the owner

This is a good benchmark on rental sites. Did it get an excellent rating? Did previous customers leave very good reviews? They mention that they met the owner, that he helped them... You have a good chance that he/she exists.

It's time to contact them with questions. It always starts with a message on the big platforms (Airbnb, ...). Some vacation rental sites have cells in charge of filtering and identifying fraudulent ads, but be vigilant if you have any doubts. Look for spelling mistakes and strange syntax.

In order to continue your investigation, it is best to call. Ask the landlord, and he will have to answer

you: on which floor is the apartment? How big is it? What year was the building constructed? These questions will assure you that he is who he says he/she is. Also, ask about the area and tourist attractions in the rental sector. If it's dry, that's a bad sign. Also, ask for additional photos of the property.

Payment... Danger warning

If you come across a scam, it will materialize at the time of payment. Never pay more than 30% of the total amount, and never send money to a foreign account by money order, Western Union, or Moneygram. These transfers are impossible to trace.

Airbnb and Co. stay within the platform's secure online payment framework to complete the transaction. Do not respond to an invitation to trade live, especially if you are promised a discount. If you deal directly with a landlord, do not pay anything without having signed a contract in duplicate by both parties with the rental dates. Detail all the property's equipment on the contract and have everything on the ad, for example, the distance from the sea, if there is a swimming pool, etc.

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