

SAVVY TRAVELERS

Guide to Deep Discount Hotel Accommodations

*Real Advice for Sleeping Well
Without Breaking the Bank*



MICHAEL MIDKIFF

Welcome, Fellow Traveler!

If you've ever paid full price for a hotel room and thought, “*There’s no way this is the best deal,*” — you're not alone.

Traveling can be magical, but shelling out hundreds of dollars for a bed and four walls? Not so much. The good news? You don’t have to settle for those high prices.

Welcome to your new hotel discount travel guide. This guide is your roadmap to smarter booking. Whether you’re a world traveler, a weekend warrior, or just trying to plan a stress-free vacation without burning your budget, I’ve got your back.

In this guide you’ll learn how to:

- Spot the right time to book
- Use booking sites (without getting played by them)
- Score deals through apps, loyalty programs, and even a good old-fashioned phone call
- Get upgrades, bonuses, and even cash back

However, if you want to know my absolute biggest secret, one which will offer you dramatic savings on all your hotel bookings, then go straight to the last page of this guide as I saved the absolute “best for last”! 😊

If you don’t wish to reserve on the platform I suggest described on the last page, then the following will also be extremely helpful for all your future reservations!

Let’s jump into the best ways to get the most out of your stay — and keep the most in your wallet!

The Art of Timing – When to Book for the Best Rate



There's a reason seasoned travelers obsess over booking windows. Hotels, like airlines, rely on dynamic pricing – meaning rates change constantly based on demand. So when is the right time to book?

For most U.S. travel, 15–21 days before your stay is ideal. Internationally, aim for 30–60 days ahead.

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Hotels tend to release unsold inventory at discounted rates closer to the date, but if you wait too long, you risk missing out entirely – or paying premium prices because there's a conference in town and suddenly everyone needs a room.

Here's how to play it smart:

- Use fare prediction tools (like Hopper or Google Hotels) to track price trends.
- Avoid major holidays and events unless absolutely necessary – these inflate rates.
- Try mid-week stays – Sunday through Thursday nights are almost always cheaper than Friday and Saturday.

 Pro tip: Set up alerts on multiple platforms for the same property. Some sites notify you the moment a rate drops.

Master the Comparison Game (But Don't Stop There)

Third-party booking platforms – like Booking.com, Expedia, Kayak, and Trivago – are fantastic for researching options. They give you a quick glance at what's out there and help compare prices, amenities, and guest reviews.

But once you find a hotel that catches your eye, don't book it just yet.

Always visit the hotel's official website before pulling the trigger. Many hotels offer better prices or added perks when you book direct – think:

- Complimentary breakfast
- Waived resort fees
- Free upgrades or parking
- Flexible cancellation policies

Why? Because when you book directly, the hotel avoids paying a commission to the third-party site – and they're often happy to pass that savings on to you in some form.

💡 Example: I once found a hotel on Expedia for \$180 a night. Went to the hotel's site – same room was \$169 and included free breakfast. Ten minutes of effort = saved \$50 over my 3-night stay.



Use Best Rate Guarantees to Your Advantage

Here's a move most travelers skip – but it's pure gold. Major hotel chains like Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, and IHG offer Best Rate Guarantee (BRG) programs. These say, in a nutshell: "If you find our room cheaper somewhere else, tell us. We'll match it. Maybe even beat it."



To take advantage:

1. Book your room on the official site.
2. If you find a lower publicly available rate elsewhere for the same room, same dates, and conditions – submit a claim (usually online).
3. If approved, the hotel adjusts your rate and may offer a further discount (often 10–25%).

Example: Hilton's BRG offers 25% off your first night in addition to matching the lower price. Marriott might give you an extra 25% discount or 5,000 Bonvoy points. It takes a few screenshots and 5 minutes of form-filling. Totally worth it.

Your App Arsenal – Tools That Actually Save You Money



Your phone is more than a GPS and selfie machine – it's a hotel deal finder. Some of the best apps for scoring discounted rooms:

1

HotelTonight – Specializes in last-minute deals (same day or next). Often up to 50% off.

Hopper – Analyzes historical pricing trends to recommend when to book.

2

3

Priceline Express Deals – Blind-booking (hotel name hidden), but with serious discounts.

Booking.com – Its Genius program offers tiered perks like 10–15% discounts and free breakfasts.

4

5

Hotels.com – Stay 10 nights, get 1 free – and they often have hidden member pricing.

Flexibility Is the Name of the Game.

If you're tied to specific dates and a specific city center location, your options will be limited. But if you can be a little flexible – even by a day or a few blocks – the savings can be massive.

Try these tips:

Stay mid-week: Weekday stays are usually cheaper in tourist-heavy cities.

Move one neighborhood over: City center hotels are often double the price of those just 1–2 subway stops away.

- Split your stay: Sometimes moving hotels mid-trip (even within the same brand) saves a lot.
- Avoid major event weekends: If you're not in town for the marathon or Comic-Con, don't book during it.



Example: I once shifted a stay in Boston by one day – same hotel dropped from \$229 to \$149 just because it was after a Celtics game weekend.

LOYALTY PROGRAMS – YOUR FREE SHORTCUT TO BETTER RATES

Even if you're not a frequent flyer, joining hotel loyalty programs is a no-brainer. They're free, and they often unlock:

- Discounted member-only rates
- Free Wi-Fi and breakfast
- Room upgrades (especially during low occupancy)
- Early check-in and late check-out
- Points you can redeem for free nights

Programs worth checking out:

- Hilton Honors
- Marriott Bonvoy

Flash Sale Sites — Limited-Time Goldmines

Flash deal sites offer hand-picked hotel deals at massive discounts — sometimes up to 70% off. They're limited-time, but worth watching.

Check out:

secret Escapes

Secret Escapes

TRAVELZOO®

Travelzoo



Luxury Escapes

JETSETTER

Jetsetter

Deals might only last 72 hours, but if your travel dates are flexible, you can find luxury rooms at budget prices.

💰💰💰 Insider trick: Sign up for newsletters. These sites often email private deals not listed publicly.



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Cashback & Discount Portals – Stack the Savings

Why stop at just a discount when you can earn cash back too?
Before booking, go through cashback sites like:

Rakuten

Rakuten (formerly Ebates)



BeFrugal

Rakuten (formerly Ebates)



TopCashback

Rakuten (formerly Ebates)

Search for the hotel booking site (like Expedia or Hotels.com), click through, and book as normal. You'll get a percentage back – often 3–10% – just for using their link.



Double dip: Combine cashback with promo codes and loyalty points. Triple win!

Haggling – When It's Totally Okay to Bargain

In many countries, especially outside North America and Western Europe, haggling isn't just allowed – it's expected.

This will only work with smaller, locally owned hotels, where it's absolutely acceptable to negotiate. This doesn't work with larger chains or hotels on the major booking platforms as they are subject to something call the "rate parity law", but small local hotels are not and in these you can negotiate pricing!

Example: In Southeast Asia or parts of Latin America, I've negotiated 20–30% off just by asking nicely. It helps if you're booking for multiple nights or with a group. Just say: "Is this your best price?" or "Can you do a better rate if I stay 3 nights?" Always ask with a smile. The worst they can say is no.





Book With Free Cancellation – Then Watch the Price

When booking in advance, choose the free cancellation option, even if it's slightly more expensive up front. Then keep checking back every few days. If the price drops – and it often does – cancel and rebook at the lower rate. No penalties. Instant savings.

👉 Tools like Pruvo and Rebookee even monitor your reservations and alert you when there's a lower price available for the same hotel.





Look Just Outside Tourist Zones

Staying right in the center of everything is convenient – and expensive.

Try searching just outside the main tourist hubs – 10–15 minutes away by transit or foot.

You'll often save 30–50%, get more space, and avoid noisy crowds.

🎯 Use map view when booking and zoom out slightly. Look for areas near public transport and good reviews, even if they're not in the heart of the city.

Bundle Flights + Hotels — But Do the Math

Sites like Expedia, Travelocity, and Priceline offer flight+hotel packages. Sometimes, bundling saves you – but not always.

The key? Always price each item separately first. If the total of individual bookings is less than the “deal,” skip the bundle.

📋 Watch for inflated prices or loss of flexibility with changes and cancellations when bundling.

Alternative Stays – Think Outside the Hotel

Hotels aren't your only option. Depending on where you're going, alternatives like:



Airbnb
(entire apartments or rooms)



Hostels
(many now have private rooms with ensuite bathrooms)



University dorms
(cheap and clean during school breaks)



Farm stays or homestays
(especially in Europe or Asia).

💡 These can be cheaper, more unique, and often include kitchens – saving you money on food, too.

Shoulder Seasons – Luxury for Less

Traveling just outside peak season (the “shoulder season”) means fewer crowds and better prices.

Examples:

- Italy in April or October
- Caribbean in early December
- Japan in late May

Hotels are more likely to offer deals, upgrades, and flexible perks during these quieter times. Your trip will also feel more relaxed and authentic.

Credit Card Perks – Travel Like a VIP

Certain credit cards offer benefits that can dramatically lower hotel costs or boost your experience.

Look for:

- Cards with free hotel nights (like Marriott or Hilton Amex)
- Annual travel credits (Chase Sapphire Reserve, Amex Gold)
- Automatic elite status with hotel chains
- Purchase protection and trip insurance

💳 If you travel even a few times a year, the perks often outweigh the annual fee.

STACK YOUR STRATEGIES — BECOME A BOOKING NINJA

The real magic happens when you combine these tactics:

- Loyalty program ✓
- Cashback site ✓
- Best Rate Guarantee ✓
- Promo code ✓
- Rewards credit card ✓
- Free cancelation + rebooking if price drops ✓

Do that, and you're not just saving money — you're playing the hotel game like a seasoned traveler.

FINAL THOUGHTS — Travel Smarter, Not Poorer

You don't need to sacrifice quality or convenience to save money on hotels. A little strategy goes a long way. Whether you're booking a weekend getaway or a month-long adventure, these tools and tips will help you stretch your travel budget further — and maybe even enjoy the process.

So go on, start planning that next trip. You've got the knowledge, the power, and the playbook. Sleep well, spend less, and travel smart.

I actually do almost all of the above. Book at the right times, have all the loyalty programs and all the correct travel credit cards and work all of them to my advantage.

But I take things a step further, and this is probably my BIGGEST secret weapon.

I have access to a wholesale (deep discount) reservation platform that I always book my hotel through.

So regardless of any promos or best booking time ect, I am also getting usually a 30%-70% discount based on eliminating the mark-up that the public retail booking platforms like Booking.com, Expedia, Priceline etc charge before

selling the travel reservation to you!

I then combine that with my deep discount flight I secured either through a couple of secret sites I use OR through loyalty points I've acquired and voila, I have a beautiful deep discount trip planned!

The platform offers a free trial so there's NO CHARGE to sign up and check it out! I honestly believe if you check it out and see the kind of savings you can obtain, you won't want to give up your access to it.

A word of advice though.. if you're the type of person who'll only stay in one particular hotel on one certain date, then I'll save you some time and just let you know it's not for you.

However if you are a bit flexible either on which hotel you stay in or the date that you go, and choose a hotel off the first page of results, you will be thrilled as you will almost always get somewhere between a 30%-70% savings under normal retail reservation sites like Booking.com, Expedia, Priceline, Hotels.com etc!

You can check it out here for free:

Use coupon code VIPHP when signing up!

<https://hotelbookingsecrets.vip/free-trial>

I LOVE this reservation platform and because of it I actually travel much more than if I were stuck paying normal retail rates.

Combining this platform with my discount airfare tactics has literally been a life changing event for me.

So if you really want to save big with your hotel stays, check it out. It's FREE to take a look!

And...It may just change your life for the better!

Save and happy travels to you,

MICHAEL MIDKIFF
THE TRAVEL INSIDER