

Travelers Steer Clear of Hotel Mini-Bar

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TripAdvisor Survey Reveals Mini-Bar Bills Cause Big Disputes

TripAdvisor(R), the world's largest travel community, today announced the results of its hotel mini-bar/fridge survey of more than 1,600 travelers worldwide. Price, not selection, is the most important factor when it comes to using the mini-bar, as 94 percent of all travelers surveyed would use the mini-bar more often, if the prices were more reasonable. Thirty-three percent of travelers said they never hit the mini-bar.

Mini-Bar Melee

One-quarter of survey respondents have had a dispute with a hotel over a mini-bar charge. Men are more likely to get into a dispute over a mini-bar bill (32 percent) than women (22 percent). Thirty-four percent of travelers feel they have been inaccurately charged for something in the mini-bar or fridge.

Innocent Until Proven Guilty

With the advent of motion and weight sensors, 16 percent of travelers have been billed for simply adding items to a hotel room mini-bar/fridge or for moving contents around. Seven percent have been charged for merely storing their own items in a mini-bar/fridge.

The Ol' Switcheroo

To avoid being charged at higher hotel prices, 20 percent of travelers have replaced an item in their hotel room mini-bar/fridge. Men were more likely (25 percent) to replace an item to avoid a charge than women (17 percent).

Mini Driver

The majority of travelers (51 percent) said convenience was the number one motivation for using the mini-bar. Forty-five percent of travelers have paid two-to-three times the amount they would regularly pay for a can of soda from a mini-bar. For nine percent of respondents, drinking alcohol leads to mini-bar raids.

Curious Contents

Hotels are diversifying their mini-bar selection; travelers reported finding pork rinds, bottled oxygen and jelly babies among the more common nuts and soda. Beef jerky and energy drinks were the least popular items travelers would purchase from a mini-bar.

Health Nuts

More than a half (52 percent) of travelers are most likely to purchase bottled water from a mini-bar, while only two percent are likely to purchase energy drinks. Nuts are the snack of choice, with 17 percent of travelers likely to purchase them. Items travelers would like to see more of include fruit, healthy snacks, and sandwiches.

Top 5 Edibles/Drinkables Travelers Buy from a Mini-Bar:

Top 5 Snack Choices:

1. Nuts
2. Chocolate bar
3. Peanut M&M's
4. Pringles
5. Toblerone chocolate

Top 5 Beverage Choices:

1. Bottled water
2. Soda/soft drink
3. Beer
4. Wine

5. Liquor

"Travelers are scared of hotel mini-bars because of sky-high prices," said Michele Perry, director of communications for TripAdvisor. "By lowering prices and double-checking bill charges, hotels could provide a mini-bar service that travelers would embrace."

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