

AAA's Updated Diamond Rating Guidelines Reflect Industry Trends

2007-12-05

AAA has updated its Diamond Rating Guidelines, the blueprint for assigning Diamond Ratings to more than 32,000 lodgings throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean, to reflect current trends in the industry.

The new guidelines, which are effective immediately, were created with input from AAA's 65 fulltime hotel inspectors, along with key industry representatives. The guidelines incorporate changes in the tourism industry since the last revision in 2001 and reflect the expectations of both business and leisure travelers. The most notable trend represented is the industry-wide shift to residential-inspired design and amenities in response to guests' desire for a lodging experience more reminiscent of home.

'The travel industry is constantly changing,' said Michael Petrone, director of AAA Tourism Information Development. 'AAA inspectors evaluate more than 60,000 lodgings and restaurants each year and are in a unique position to recognize and validate trends as they occur. They use both established standards and subjective elements in assigning ratings. The revised Diamond Rating Guidelines reflect the current standards at each rating level - from the economy to luxury segments.'

The new focus, although still highly comfort-oriented, has expanded to include entertainment, experience and environment. Some of the comforts of home that inspectors say travelers seek are improved beds and bedding, the latest technology (flat-screen televisions, WiFi, MP3 connectivity) and brighter, more stylish bathrooms with designer-style amenities. Inspectors report that new and renovated guestrooms are becoming more spacious with finer touches such as millwork, built-in closets and furniture finish treatments. Some brands are providing increased flooring options such as custom tile work, wood or laminate flooring with a wood-grain look, all with area rugs.

While the overall Diamond Rating description of properties remains the same, individual inspection criteria has been updated. Outdated elements such as armoires and public telephones have been removed. In addition, the guidelines reflect broader allowances for properties with exterior corridors, shower-only bathrooms and boutique-design concepts.

Additionally, the updated Diamond Rating Guidelines provide increased descriptions that will aid inspectors and property owners in determining qualifications for each Diamond Rating. Vague terms such as 'quality,' 'good' and 'very good' have been replaced with examples that provide properties greater flexibility to achieve their goals. 'The last thing we want is homogeneous results,' said Petrone. 'Properties should continue to look foremost to their guests and satisfy their needs. The AAA Diamond Rating Guidelines will continue to be a mirror of the most recent hospitality trends.' To view the new Diamond Rating Guidelines [click here](#).

The assignment of a AAA rating of One to Five Diamonds marks the completion of a successful annual evaluation. The first step is to become AAA Approved, when properties must meet AAA's rigorous initial requirements. Consumers can access complete Five and Four Diamond Award lists and information at AAA.com/Diamonds.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

The URL for this story is:

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article30376.html>

© 1998 - 2007 Nevistas and the author.

Brought to you by Hotel News Resource

Distribute your news on our Network

See what all the buzz is about at:

http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/Info-news_account_info.html