

Hotels slash prices as Beijing tourist numbers drop

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Hotels in Beijing are slashing room prices for the Olympics by as much as half because reservations have fallen well short of expectations.

Hoteliers had hoped for a bonanza from the Games, which open on Friday, but have been disappointed by low visitor numbers, as people have shied away because of visa restrictions and bad publicity about China.

Asked on Monday whether they could take a 10-room booking for the coming weekend, including the night of the much-hyped opening ceremony, a series of four- and three-star hotels said they had plenty of availability and were willing to give big discounts.

The Bamboo Garden Hotel started by offering rooms with a view of its courtyard and bamboo groves for 3,000 yuan (\$438.5) per night but quickly agreed to cut the rate in half.

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