

A surprise fee for my hotel room

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Ilene Coffey's room at an Orlando hotel comes with an unexpected surprise: a \$50 fee for a 'short stay.'

When she protests, her hotel and online travel agency tell her she must pay. What's worse, she can't back out -- if she does, her credit card will be charged for the stay. Is there a way out of this mess?

Q: I recently found a surprise fee on my hotel bill, and I'm having absolutely no success in getting it removed. Maybe you can help me.

I booked a room at the Blue Heron Beach Resort in Orlando through Orbitz. When I checked in, I was told there would be a \$50 surcharge because of my short stay.

I showed the hotel my confirmation, which only said I would have to pay a \$5-a-day resort fee. That didn't work. I phoned Orbitz, and it insisted the fee had been revealed on its site -- all I needed to do was "right-click several times."

So I said fine, just cancel the reservation. But it was too late -- an Orbitz representative said I would be charged for the rooms even if I didn't stay at the Blue Heron. I wrote to Orbitz after I got back home, but have heard nothing. Is there anything you can do?

-- Ilene Coffey, Lake Worth, Florida

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