

Hotels.com reports Brits rack up £526m a year on minibars

Submitted by: pr-sending-enterprises

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British travellers are unable to resist the lure of the hotel minibar, according to new research* by leading hotel booking website Hotels.com. 46% of those surveyed regularly give into temptation whilst on their travels, and spent an average of £15.44 on minibar treats every time they go away. When totalled up for the whole nation, the Great British Minibar Bill quickly adds up to a staggering £526 million a year**.

However, the economic downturn is clearly making thirsty Brits think twice before reaching for that beer: Hotels.com (<http://www.hotels.co.uk/>) found the average spend on minibars was nearly £2 higher in 2007***, averaging £17.29 per person.

In fact, 84% of cash-conscious Brits surveyed feel that hotel minibars are too expensive, and are so keen to cut costs that one in ten admit to 'minibar meddling' by replacing what they've used with cheaper alternatives bought from a local shop. 60% avoided the minibar altogether by buying snacks and drinks from outside the hotel to consume in their room.

British minibar spending is fairly restrained compared to other European travellers. Hotels.com found the Irish to be the biggest minibar spenders, forking out almost £22 each time they stay at a hotel. At the other end of the scale, the French and Norwegians appear the most frugal, spending under £12 and £10 respectively.

Many hotels have started to cater for the growing demand for more quirky and extravagant minibar offerings. For example, guests at the five-star Dylan Hotel (<http://www.hotels.co.uk/hotel-ireland/hotel-dublin/dylan-hotel/>) in Dublin will open their minibar to find a 'Kama Sutra Kit' which includes a feather, a frilly pink blindfold and a range of scented oils. Similarly, the 'pimp my fridge' service at the three-star Catalina Hotel and Beach Club (<http://www.hotels.co.uk/hotel-florida/hotel-miami-beach/catalina-hotel/>) in Miami enables guests to order a number of personalised minibars, including the "Get It On Minibar" which includes a Barry White CD for setting the mood, edible body paint, Champagne and whipped cream.

The Hotels.com research found that 58% of Brits are most likely to use the minibar last thing at night when the urge for a late night snack proves too strong. The five-star Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel (<http://www.hotels.co.uk/hotel-united-kingdom/hotel-london/jumeirah-lowndes-hotel/>) in Knightsbridge has responded to this by introducing a minibar 'happy hour' between 10pm and midnight, when guests receive a 30% discount on all purchases.

The survey also revealed that 32% of Brits felt that minibars didn't offer what they really wanted, with healthy snacks and drinks topping the minibar wish-list for both sexes. However, there were some significant differences between the sexes. Whilst 60% of men chose beer and 25% opted for massage oil to feature in their perfect minibar, women were more concerned about finding chocolate (43%) and a good book or magazine (38%).

Alison Couper, Director of Communications for Hotels.com, said: "British travellers are clearly unable to

resist the temptations of the hotel minibar; however, our research shows they are becoming incredibly savvy in terms of how they spend their holiday money."

- ENDS -

Notes to editors

* Hotels.com research carried out amongst 850 adults across Europe in March 2009.

** According to the latest Office of National Statistics Social Trends Report, Britons make 69.5 million trips abroad each year. Hotels.com found that 49% of Britons use mini-bars, spending an average of £15.44 per trip, making £526 million per year.

*** YouGov research commissioned by Hotels.com in June 2007.

Currency conversions were calculated using exchange rates as of 16 March 2009.

About Hotels.com

Hotels.com is part of the Expedia group which operates in all major markets with dedicated staff, offering more than 99,000 quality hotels worldwide. If a customer can find the same deal for less on a prepaid hotel, Hotels.com will match it. Hotels.com benefits from one of the largest hotel contracting teams in the industry negotiating the best rates for its users, plus user-contributed reviews of its properties.

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