

Mini-Bars Big Prices Say Travellers Bar Bill Bickers and Beefs Beer and Nuts Among Favourites; Caviar and Condoms Among Surprises

London, May 22, 2007: TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel community, today announced the results of its hotel mini-bar/fridge survey of more than 1,600 travellers worldwide. The survey revealed that most travellers think that mini-bars are a swindle. Eighty-six percent of all travellers and 90 percent of British said that prices were just too expensive and 45 percent claimed to have been charged two-to-three times the amount they would normally pay. Ninety four percent of travellers surveyed would use the mini-bar more often, if the prices were more reasonable.

It would also appear that mini-bar bills are a major cause of aggravation for guests.

One-quarter of survey respondents reported having a dispute with a hotel over a mini-bar charge. Men are more likely to get into a row over a mini-bar bill (32 percent) than women (22 percent).

Thirty-four percent of travellers feel they have been inaccurately charged for something in the mini-bar or fridge. The introduction of motion and weight sensors appears to have exacerbated the situation. Sixteen percent of travellers said they had been billed for simply putting extra items in the room mini-bar/fridge or for moving contents around.

Travellers do however try to beat hotels at their own game. Twenty percent of TripAdvisor respondents admitted to having consumed and then replaced an item in their hotel room mini-bar/fridge. Australians are the most likely (59 percent), with a third of Irish travellers and 21 percent of Brits admitting to swapping mini bar contents. Men were more likely (25 percent) to replace an item to avoid a charge than women (17 percent).

Just over half (51 percent) of all travellers said convenience was the main reason for using the mini-bar. Nine percent admitted that having a few drinks beforehand was more likely to lead to a mini-bar raid later.

Meanwhile, it appears that some hotels are diversifying their mini-bar selection. Among the more unexpected items that travellers reported finding in their room fridges and bars were bottled oxygen, sex kits, condoms, caviar and perfume. Beef jerky and energy drinks were the least popular items travellers would purchase from a mini-bar.

More than a half (52 percent) of travellers are most likely to opt for bottled water. Nuts are the snack of choice, with 17 percent of travellers likely to buy them. Travellers would like to see more fruit, healthy snacks, and sandwiches in their room mini-bar/fridge.

Travellers' Top Mini-Bar Choices

Top Snacks

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

Top Drinks

1. Bottled water
2. Fizzy/soft drink
3. Beer
4. Wine
5. Liquor

"Travellers are not at all satisfied with hotel mini-bars,