

# KDIH's European Hotel Guidelines

One of KDIH's four philosophies is bridging cultures. Therefore, we try to select well-rated European family-owned, three-star hotel/restaurants and not American chain hotels. However, we have prepared this sheet in order to alert American travelers to the differences in hotels. **Don't be alarmed by the number of differences outlined. Millions of people stay in European-style hotels every year and have wonderful travel experiences.**

- 1. Hotel rooms are smaller.** European hotel rooms are generally one-half to two-thirds the size of an American room.
- 2. Beds are smaller.** You won't find two queen-size beds in a European hotel room. Most rooms are equipped with either two twin beds (separated or pushed together) or one double bed.
- 3. Talking beds, Europeans use a bottom sheet (fitted or flat) covered with an all-season duvet, not multiple layers of sheets and blankets.** From an American standpoint, this can make it difficult to regulate temperature overnight, but the Europeans have slept this way for decades and they are not about to change. You might also find a blanket or "throw" in the room to layer on top of the duvet.
- 4. Few European hotels have air conditioning.** Most hotels have windows that open, but you rarely find screens.
- 5. European hotel rooms have fewer electrical outlets.** Generally, there is one outlet on each bedside.
- 6. There are few rooms, if any, on the ground floor.** European travel as a whole is difficult for people with disabilities. Talking about floors, the ground floor is level "0", first floor is "1" and so on.
- 7. An elevator is the exception, not the rule.** Because there are few rooms, if any, on the ground floor, few European hotels are equipped with elevators, participants should be prepared to carry their luggage up a few flights of narrow stairs. The best strategy is to pack lightly!





- 8. European hotel bathrooms are smaller too.** Shower and tub sizes are generally tighter than in the USA.
- 9. European bathtubs (with showers) can be slippery.** Many European hotel rooms still have bathtub/shower combinations, but the tubs are much taller and narrower than American tubs, without any grab bars or anti-slip coating on the base. Some have walk-in shower areas.
- 10. The bathroom light switch is usually outside the bathroom.** This custom dates back to the early days of electricity when it was considered unsafe to run electrical wiring near water.
- 11. European hotels give you fewer towels.** Water and energy conservation are stressed in Europe. Guests are expected to hang up their towels and use them multiple days.
- 12. The towels will likely be smaller and less fluffy than American hotel towels.**
- 13. European hotels won't give you a washcloth.** Europeans travel with their own washcloths. Pack one.
- 14. Don't expect the front desk to be manned 24 hours a day.** Generally speaking, the front desk closes late in the evening, leaving only a phone number to call in case of emergency. Be prepared to leave your key with the front desk when you go out for the day, especially if it is not an electronic key card. Metal room keys are often on large, clunky fobs that you wouldn't want in your pocket during the day anyway.
- 15. Most rooms have TVs, but few, if any, English-language channels.** Don't expect to receive a full range of international, English-language channels.
- 16. Kleenex and mini refrigerators are not found in most hotel rooms.** Be prepared with your own tissues and have a back-up plan if you have items (like medications) that need to be refrigerated.
- 17. Expect some noise.** Your hotel might not be equipped with noise-canceling windows and doors, and the walls and floors might be a little thin, so you will hear your neighbors above, below, and beside you. Pack some ear plugs just in case.
- 18. Always travel with a universal plug adapter.** Most hotels do not offer adapter plugs for your cell phone, laptop, and other devices. Best to bring one with you. (Most cell phone, table and laptop chargers have current converters built into to them, so you only need a plug adapter.)

*(The photos are from the Argonne Auberge, a high-quality two-star hotel with a fine restaurant that we use frequently in Apremont-sur-Aire, France.)*