



Record Number Of Hotels Across The Globe Go Non-Smoking

Date: 2006-12-19

The FreshStay.com online directory/network of smoke-free lodging properties connects a growing number of owner/operators with travelers from across the globe

FreshStay(TM), an online directory/network of hundreds of non-smoking lodging properties, continues to attract an ever-growing base of owner/operators and loyal travelers from around the globe.

'We were the first resort to go non-smoking on the Cayman Islands,' said Tom McCallum, director of The Reef Resort, located on the eastern end of Grand Cayman Island, Cayman Islands. 'Before we made the move on August 1st, 2003, our 110 guestrooms were not designated as smoking or non-smoking. While that kept our rooms inventory simple, it led to problems, particularly with our non-smoking guests.'

Nearly three-and-a-half years later, the majority of other resorts on the island have followed suit, McCallum said, to the point where most properties, including all Westins and Marriotts, now are smoke-free.

'I think the rest of the world is going the way of the Cayman Islands,' McCallum added. 'Smoking is out. Fresh air is in.'

Lighting Up Occupancies

Connecting millions of travelers and thousands of groups to hotels committed to providing clean indoor air, www.FreshStay.com recognizes and promotes properties guaranteeing non-smoking rooms at the point of reservation as well as those that have taken extra measures to be 100-percent smoke-free. Properties offering enhanced accommodations - including being cleaned with Green Seal-certified products, having walls covered with low-odor, low-VOC paints, and providing improved air and water filtration and allergen-barrier products - also are touted online and offline by **FreshStay**(TM).

'It's not a big hardship to smoke outside, especially if you live in the Caribbean,' McCallum said. 'We've been encouraging other properties and business sectors here to go smoke free for years. It's good for people and environment, and it makes good business sense.'

McCallum said The Reef Resort promotes its fresh air/smoke-free environment on printed materials, online, through property signage, reservation agents, and front desk and guest service staff. He said being a part of the www.FreshStay.com network also helps drive recognition and business.

Snuffing Out Complaints

'We tell the world we're 100-percent smoke-free every chance we can,' adds Mike Reid, director of sales and marketing for the Historic Ramada Downtown Vancouver, Canada. 'Being smoke-free has helped us achieve A-grade guest satisfaction scores. Our room odor complaints are next to nil nowadays, and our average occupancy has jumped a few points, often to 97 percent or better.'

Reid said the demand for smoking rooms declined sharply the past decade, and that most of the 80-room property's loyal base of smoking guests not only understood the switch to non-smoking ... they embraced it.

'It's no secret that most smokers don't like to stay in smoking rooms - that's why in the past some would book non-smoking rooms and light up there,' he added. 'But at the point of a reservation, we inform all of our guests, and there are signs accordingly in each room, that there is a \$150 fee for disregarding our 100-percent smoke-free property policy. We have had very few issues, and only positive comments by guests and groups, since going completely non-smoking in November 2005.'

Reid noted that the move to smoke free has helped decrease housekeeping labor and cleaning material costs, while protecting carpeting, bedding and other soft and hard goods. Having learned about **FreshStay**(TM) half a year ago through media coverage, industry e-newsletters and press releases, Reid said being listed on the www.FreshStay.com Web site also helps put heads in beds.

Breath of Fresh Air

Leigh Roszell, director of sales and marketing for the 205-room Four Points by Sheraton in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Said the property underwent a multi million-dollar renovation in 2005, converting from a Sheraton, and went smoke-free in June 2006.

'We invested in new drywall, drapes, carpeting, and practically everything in-between, so going smoke free helps us protect that significant investment, along with our good people and guests,' Roszell said.

A local ordinance banning smoking inside many public establishments was passed several years back, so guests not

only expected the property's upgrade to smoke free - they truly appreciated it.

'Of course, it helped that our sister brand, Westin, has had so much success with its smoke-free initiative,' she said. 'We give every guests one free bottle of water and work hard to position and promote our property as 'Our air is fresh ... and our water is free.'"

About Pineapple Hospitality

Headquartered in Saint Charles, Mo., Pineapple Hospitality(TM) is an EPA Energy Star(TM) partner bringing fresh ideas to hospitality guests' doors and owner/operators' bottom lines - including FreshStay(R) (www.FreshStay.com), Environmentally Sensitive Amenities, the greenSPA luxury amenity and dispenser system, energy-efficient lighting, Guestat programmable thermostats, Oxygenic water-efficient showerheads, the Nature's Mist deodorization system, and dozens of other products/programs and ZAPLEXTM remote control protectors. To get a taste of Pineapple's sweet solutions helping thousands of hotels bolster business and cut costs, visit www.pineapplehospitality.net or call Ray Burger at 636-922-2285.

The Accidental Smoker

You don't smoke. But if you're sitting near someone who does, you're still breathing the cancer-causing chemicals. A study conducted by Katherine Hammond, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, explored how much a non-smoker might inhale in a variety of situations.

Here are the study's startling results:

- Sitting behind someone smoking in an open-air stadium for 3 hours for 81 baseball games a year is comparable to smoking 4 packs of cigarettes per year.
- Sitting in the so-called 'non-smoking' section of restaurants twice a week for 2 hours at a time is comparable to smoking 8 packs per year.
- Sitting behind someone smoking in an indoor bar for 2 hours once a week is comparable to smoking 10 packs per year.
- Living in a two-pack-a-day smoker's home is comparable to smoking 55 packs per year.
- Riding in a car 1 hour a day, five days a week, with someone smoking with the windows, is comparable to smoking 73 packs of cigarettes per year.
- Working in a smoker-friendly office for 8 hours a day, five days a week, 50 weeks a year, is comparable to smoking 75 packs per year.

If you did all of these, as a non-smoker, the secondhand smoke you expose yourself to would be comparable to smoking 225 packs of cigarettes per year, or 1,125 cartons over a 50-year span!

Source: FreshStay.com.

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