

**Travel Via the Moon**  
**August 2017**

**Making Reservations Stateside, and Abroad at Small Hotels; Tipping**

We've done our early planning and decided where we will be going this year on our vacation aboard; and now it's time to make the reservations for the hotels we plan on staying at in those countries. One way to make those reservations is by calling the 800 number (you can look up that number on "Google") or the yellow pages in your local phone book, or advertisements found quite often on a Sunday in your paper's travel section. But for those small cities in Europe, Asia or S. America without that familiar US-chained hotel, what is the best way to make that first night's reservation? Well, getting the right number for the country can be done, but the city and actual phone number for a hotel is going to be harder, and almost impossible since you don't know the name of the hotels in those small cities if they are not US-chained.

So, don't let it worry you. Get on the plane, fly to the country and then get yourself to that first small city you were planning on. Airports, train stations, and car rental people will all have advertisements or people that can tell you hotel names/numbers/locations and taxi drivers too know which are more costly or present a better outside appearance. When there are more than one hotel to choose from and you want to decide, go in to the front desk, tell them what you're looking for in bed(s) and find out the price...often you will be shown one or two rooms and you can decide really quick...and don't be afraid to say "no thank you" if you don't like room/beds. Try another hotel if there are others in town.

How about tipping in a foreign country? Gratuities are thanks for good service/info and quite often better service in the future. Tips in the foreign currency are preferable but US dollars are also acceptable if you haven't converted yet to the foreign currency. Hotels will often convert US bucks to their currency and give you a good rate of exchange. However, currency exchanges at the airport will always give you the current rate. ***Do NOT try to use US coins!***

Taxis, tour guides, bellhops are all familiar people you may want to tip, but don't forget the hotel personnel that make up your room every day...a couple of dollars EACH morning when you leave the room, left on the pillow, will get you a little extra attention and show appreciation for their doing a better job...you can also say hello or thanks if you see them working in your part of the hotel.

It's going to be a great vacation – *enjoy...you deserve it...*

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