

HOTEL

RESTAURANT
PARKING GARDE

WORKBOOK

Finding Affordable
Accommodation in 2025

Travel-Wise Pixie

FINDING AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION - THE WORKBOOK

I'VE HAD SOME OF MY BEST TRAVEL EXPERIENCES STAYING IN CHEAP ACCOMMODATION...

Whether it's the thrill of finding a gorgeous backyard homestay (with private garden + bath!), or stumbling upon a hugely discounted gem tucked away in the jungle on a last-minute excursion... if you're open to exploring cheap accommodation, I promise there's an adventure waiting for you!

Renee | May 2025

how to use this workbook

- Read [How To Find Affordable Accommodation](#).
- Print as many copies of each page as you need and label them to compare options.
- Do your due diligence; this workbook is meant only as a helpful guide.
- By using this workbook you agree to the [Terms & Conditions of travelwisepixie.com](#)

DESTINATION COUNTRY: _____

CITY OR TOWN NAME: _____

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE: _____ / _____

NUMBER OF NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION NEEDED: _____

BUDGET PER NIGHT FOR ACCOMMODATION: _____

AVERAGE RATE OF A STANDARD HOTEL ROOM: _____

HOSTELS

Start by downloading a highly-reviewed hostel app, or do a Google search for hostels. Read the hostel website and recent traveller reviews, then fill out the table below to compare your findings.

Hostel Name & Address	Nightly Rate single / shared	Cleanliness	Bathroom Shared / Private	Proximity to attractions walkable / not	Luggage Storage Y / N
	 _____  _____	  	S P	W N	Y N
	 _____  _____	  	S P	W N	Y N
	 _____  _____	  	S P	W N	Y N
	 _____  _____	  	S P	W N	Y N



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HOUSE SWAPS & PET SITTING



DESTINATION COUNTRY: _____

NUMBER OF NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION NEEDED: _____

CITY OR TOWN NAME: _____

BUDGET PER NIGHT FOR ACCOMMODATION: _____

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE: _____ / _____

AVERAGE RATE OF A STANDARD HOTEL ROOM: _____

Start by downloading or bookmarking highly-reviewed house-swap / pet-sitting apps and websites. Read recent traveller reviews for swaps you're considering, then fill out the table below to compare your findings. Remember to consider your personal preferences when choosing the best hostel for your travel needs. Download my **List of Considerations for House Swapping** to help get you started.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host Name Address App or Website 	Rate per Night	Pros	Cons
	Car Included?		
	\$		
	Y N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> insurance		
	\$		
	Y N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> insurance		
	\$		
	Y N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> insurance		
	\$		
	Y N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> insurance		
	\$		
	Y N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> insurance		



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NEGOTIATING RATES FOR AIRBNB & VRBO

DESTINATION COUNTRY: _____	NUMBER OF NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION NEEDED: _____
CITY OR TOWN NAME: _____	BUDGET PER NIGHT FOR ACCOMMODATION: _____
CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE: _____ / _____	AVERAGE RATE OF A STANDARD HOTEL ROOM: _____

Start by reading recent traveller reviews for the Airbnb or VRBO you want to rent. Then message the owner and build up a rapport that makes them want to rent to you. Ask if the rate is negotiable, or simply make an offer and see what they say. Consider bringing them a small thank-you gift, and stay in contact while you're there. If both parties are happy at the end of the stay make sure to swap good reviews.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Name • Address • Airbnb or VRBO 	Advertised Rate	Total for all nights (incl. fees & taxes)	Amenities, proximity to attractions, pros, cons, etc.
	Negotiated Rate		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		
	\$		



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✧ BOOK LAST-MINUTE ✧

Book your first two or three nights in advance, then shop around for last-minute deals once you're there. Do a practice run before your trip just to get a feel for it. Two weeks before your trip, start a new copy of this page and take it with you on vacation. Follow the steps and fill out the chart as you go.

DESTINATION COUNTRY: _____

CITY OR TOWN NAME: _____

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NUMBER OF NIGHTS ACCOMMODATION NEEDED: _____

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AVERAGE RATE OF A STANDARD HOTEL ROOM: _____

STEP 1: Visit the tourism website for the area you're planning to travel. Major sporting events and concerts will snap up a lot of rooms, so look for these at your destination before you consider booking last-minute.

STEP 2: Find 3 - 4 places you'd like to stay that are near the top end of your budget.

STEP 3: Two weeks before you depart for your trip, look up the total cost of accommodation for each of your 3-4 options in Step 2 (remember to include taxes & fees).

STEP 4: The day before you want to check-in to your accommodation, look up the total cost of accommodation for each option (incl. taxes & fees).

STEP 5: Compare the rates from Steps 3 + 4 for each option and book the one that brings you the most joy!

Accomm. Name / Type	Today's Date	Total Cost (STEP 3)	Amenities, inclusions, pros, cons, etc.
Check-in to Check-out Dates	Date the day before check-in	Total Cost (STEP 4)	
Hotel Okaan / Resort	Aug 22, 2024	\$710 CAD	Hot served breakfast included. Free access to pool & fire pit. Airport shuttle for \$. Spa onsite \$\$. Close driving distance to Chichen Itza.
Sep 6 - 9, 2024	Sep 5, 2024	\$515 CAD	

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MEET THE LOCALS

After you arrive, spend some time walking around to discover hidden gems. Ask your server or bartender if they know anyone who owns property and get them to introduce you. Or just walk up to a hotel and ask the front desk for a reduced rate. It never hurts to ask, and I've scored some great accommodation this way! And: *always* tour the accommodation before booking.

- Things to consider:
- secure parking + proximity to public transit
 - proximity to attractions + beaches
 - proximity to amenities + restaurants
 - potential street noise or interrupted sleep
 - safety (lighting after dark, areas to avoid)

- Here are the details to nail down before paying:
- nightly rate + taxes & fees
 - weekly rate + taxes & fees
 - check-in and check-out time
 - is Wifi included? AC? breakfast? parking?
 - if paying cash, can you get a receipt?

HOMESTAY

You can find homestays by chatting up the locals and fellow tourists, or by hopping on *Homestay.com*. Similar to hostels, you'll want to read recent traveller reviews about cleanliness, safety, shared or private bathroom and availability of amenities like Wifi, AC, kitchen and laundry. Discuss your privacy needs with your host and make sure both sides are agreed before booking. Adhere to house rules and quiet hours.

Host Name & Address ----- House Rules / Quiet Hours	Nightly Rate	Cleanliness	Bathroom Shared / Private	Wifi ----- AC	Amenities
		 	S P	Y N ----- Y N	<input type="checkbox"/> kitchen <input type="checkbox"/> laundry
		 	S P	Y N ----- Y N	<input type="checkbox"/> kitchen <input type="checkbox"/> laundry
		 	S P	Y N ----- Y N	<input type="checkbox"/> kitchen <input type="checkbox"/> laundry

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STAY OFF-THE-BEATEN PATH (PAGE 1 OF 2)

The best type of cheap accommodation for this option is house-swapping or pet-sitting. Since your accommodation is basically, free you have more money to spend on getting around. The tables below will help you triangulate your accommodation and activities, and will also help you decide on the best mode of transportation to make it all worthwhile.

Table 1: Find A Town With Cheap Accommodation Close To The Attractions You Came To See

Do a Google search to find less tourist-y areas close to the attractions you came to see. Use the different sections in this workbook to find the average rates for your top 3 preferred cheap accommodation types (hostel, Airbnb, etc.)

Town or Suburb	Public Transit Travel Time to Attractions	Vehicle Travel Time to Attractions	Average Nightly Rate Accom. Type 1	Average Nightly Rate Accom. Type 2	Average Nightly Rate Accom. Type 3

Table 2: Compare Rental Vehicle Rates

Since the idea here is to keep costs low, make sure you read all the fine print and understand what's included in the rental. Most importantly: find out what could end up costing you extra.

NOTE: This table is not comprehensive. It's meant to be a guide. Make sure you do your due diligence.

Additional Considerations: secure parking, toll roads / bridges, ferry fees, etc.

Vehicle Rental Company Name Address	Daily Rate Mileage	Pickup / Drop-off Fee	Additional Driver	Fuel Cost /gal or /L	Total + Taxes

STAY OFF-THE-BEATEN PATH (PAGE 2 OF 2)

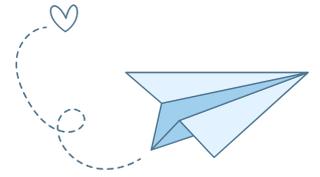


Table 3: Find Public Transportation

If you're at all considering staying off-the-beaten path then public transit should be carefully scrutinised *before* booking your accommodation. Take the time to carefully plan all of your routes so that you don't end up stranded - or worse... blowing your budget on taxis and Ubers.

A word to the wise: Google Maps can't always be trusted to give you the best route. It's worth taking the time to review transit schedules and maps.

As always: be mindful of your safety when travelling, especially at night or if you're travelling alone.

Town or Suburb Name	Route Start Time	Walk-on rate	Method of Payment	Walkable to attractions?	Walkable to accommodation?
Transportation Name	Route End Time	Daily rate			



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CREDIT CARD POINTS & HOTEL LOYALTY PROGRAMS



If you already use travel rewards and hotel loyalty programs - great! If not, then read [A Beginner's Guide To Travelling On Credit Card Points](#). It comes with a [free workbook](#) that'll walk you through the steps to find the best travel rewards credit card for your travel needs and based on your spending habits. The entire workbook is basically a points calculator for all things travel-related, including accommodation and hotel loyalty programs.