



## Review: Online hostel-booking engines

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Craig: Hi, I'm Craig.

Linda: And I'm Linda.

Craig: And this is the Indie Travel Podcast, episode 18 at [www.indietravelpodcast.com](http://www.indietravelpodcast.com).

Linda: This week's show was recorded in Bruges, Belgium, where we're on holiday. Yay for holidays.

Craig: It's the second week of the month, so time for a review. This week we thought we'd review some of the hostel-booking websites out there.

Linda: We mainly use [www.hostelbookers.com](http://www.hostelbookers.com), so that is the one we're most familiar with, and also the one we'd recommend. But we'll also talk about [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com), [www.gomio.com](http://www.gomio.com), and the [HI hostel-booking site](#).

Craig: A quick search on Google reveals a heck of a lot of hostel-booking websites out there. Of the top five or so, we wouldn't use [www.hostels.com](http://www.hostels.com), just cause it's so ugly, and [www.hostelbeds.com](http://www.hostelbeds.com) seems to be modelled on [www.hostelbookers.com](http://www.hostelbookers.com), as well as using their ratings.

Linda: The [Hostelling International](#) hostel-booking system is fine, but of course it only searches for HI hostels - that's Europe's YHA. I found the confirmation screen a bit cluttered and confusing, and you have to enter a lot of details before you can run a search. There's a booking fee of about 2 euros, plus you pay 5% of the total as a deposit.

Craig: [www.gomio.com](http://www.gomio.com) seems quite good, they're hostels for Europe. They have a clear availability indicator, including two days on either side of your search. I don't like their ratings indicator though. The booking fee for our test booking was four euros, which is quite high, but you don't have to pay a deposit on the site.

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- Linda: Probably the two biggest players though, are [Hostelworld](#) and [Hostelbookers](#). On both, you have to pay a 10% deposit - the rest is paid at the hostel on arrival, but [Hostelworld](#) also charges a booking fee, and [Hostelbookers](#) doesn't. For my test booking the fee was 1 euro 50 - not too much, but enough to make me check [Hostelbookers](#) first.
- Craig: Both of them are easy to use, and highly useful for a budget traveller. Both generally have the same features - which are ratings, availability and price per person - and both come up with the same hostels at the same prices, though we did find their definition of "Venice" differed markedly - [Hostelworld](#) included hostels quite a long way from Venice in that search.
- Linda: I like [Hostelworld's](#) availability indicator, it's really clear to see which hostels in your area have beds available on the days you want to go. But on the whole, I prefer [Hostelbookers](#) - it's cheaper - it doesn't have a fee to use the site, that's a big point, the site is brighter and a little nicer to use. I also like their extra feature on the search results page of showing the cheapest price both per bed and per private room - some hostels might have cheap dorm beds and expensive doubles, and I always like to see both prices.
- Craig: Well, that wraps up our review. Cheers to Matt who emailed us and said that although he's not a traveller, having listened to our podcast he's considering it. Everyone, have a look at some of the websites we've talked about - there are links on [www.indietravelpodcast.com](http://www.indietravelpodcast.com), and tell us which ones you prefer or if we missed out one of your favourites.
- Linda: Better yet, book a hostel on one of the sites and have a good trip. And until next week, travel well.

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