

## FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL ENTHUSIASTS: A REVIEW OF TVTRIP.COM

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Adrian Keys in Technology, All Categories, Online Video/Internet TV News, TV/Video Sites, Videos

For U.S. travelers, it's always been difficult to arrange a trip to Europe without the assistance of a travel agent to advise us concerning the best hotels and areas of interest near the hotel. But, now there is a website, **TVTrip.com**, which can provide us with videos and a plethora of information on hotels in major cities in Europe. They currently offer hotel information on thirteen major European cities; three U. S. cities (Miami, New York and Chicago) and Asian-Pacific cities (marked "Coming Soon") are not specified.



TVTrip.com is not a travel agency or booking agent. It's more an information site designed to give travelers an in-depth look at popular hotels in popular destinations while providing them with third-party sites, such as **Expedia** and others, which actually compete for booking the hotel. TVTrip.com provides an average hotel rate on its site to give the viewer an idea of what the average rates will be, but the actual payment and booking will be through third-party sites when you click on "Check Rates."

TVTrip.com was founded in 2007 by **Mark Ruff**, who was previously involved with **Expedia.com**. In fact, the majority of people who are now involved with TVTrip.com were also Internet and travel experts from Expedia, Air France, Lufthansa, Microsoft and Lycos. TVTrip.com is headquartered in Paris, Munich and Brussels and their website can be accessed in five different languages.

What makes this site so beneficial to travelers is the abundance of hotel information, videos and photos that are provided, as well as information on

restaurants and sites of interest near the hotel you choose. Because the site is new, there are many hotels which do not have videos, but photos are provided. TVTrip.com uses its own photographers and videographers, so many hotels will be available for video viewing on an ongoing basis.

So, let's say you want to take a trip to Paris. You would click on "Paris," and it brings up a list of hotels. You have the option of searching by Price, Stars, Style or Amenities. When you click on a particular hotel, another window opens for that particular hotel with four tabs to select from:

"Overview" tab provides a video (if available), a description of the hotel; its street address; overall rating and patron reviews (if there are any); a local map of the area; and a list of areas of interest, transportation facilities, landmarks and similar hotels in the area, together with their proximity (in kilometers) to your hotel.

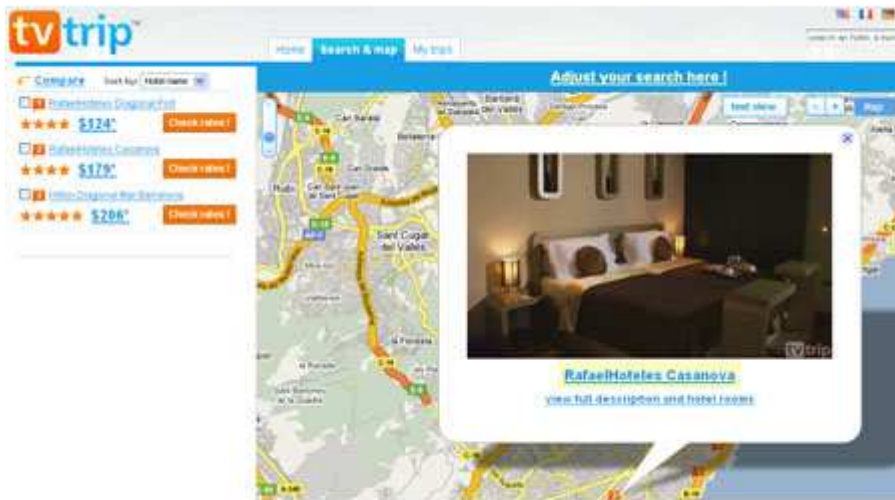
"Details" tab gives you a little more information on the hotel and where it is located, together with all the information previously set forth in the "Overview."

"Rooms" tab gives you a description of each type of room and the amenities within that type of room, as well as room rates from various third-party booking agents.

"Reviews" tab gives you an overall star rating for the hotel, as well as patron reviews. On the few hotels I clicked on, there were at least 20-30 patron reviews provided.

You can also do a search by a particular amenity you're looking for. If you have pets and you want to find a hotel in Paris that allows pets, you have the option of clicking on "Pets," and it will bring up all hotels which allow pets. If you want a hotel that has Internet connections, you can click on that and it will bring up all hotels that have that feature. They also have a "Hot Deals" tab that will bring up all the hotels that are offering special deals.

Overall, I think this site is extremely helpful and informative, especially to U. S. citizens traveling abroad, who want to handle their own itinerary. The site is easy to navigate; and considering that it's only been up for less than a year, I anticipate many more cities and hotels being added in the future.



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