

Stubbed out

Smoking rooms are disappearing from hotels

That is particularly the case in upmarket establishments



TO THE list of endangered travel facilities—which includes pay phones, communal aeroplane screens and concierges

(<https://www.economist.com/blogs/gulliver/2017/10/help-unwanted-o>) —there is one more to add: smoking rooms. Even a few years ago, guests were routinely asked whether they would prefer a smoking room or not. But today fewer hotels are offering smoking rooms and those that do have a vanishingly small supply.

Upgrade your inbox

Receive our Daily Dispatch and Editors' Picks newsletters.

Latest updates

Why Northern Ireland's parliament lies empty

THE ECONOMIST EXPLAINS

An unexpected result moves Chile into uncharted political territory

AMERICAS

America's culture wars are spreading to hotels

GULLIVER

For a business traveller with a tobacco habit, then, there are few options. Those seeking a dash of glamour will struggle, as 97% of luxury hotels do not have smoking rooms. Only among budget-hotel category—the lowest price segment of five listed in the survey—do the majority of establishments have any smoking rooms on offer. Small hotels are more likely to

have smoking rooms than larger ones. Older hotels are a slightly better bet than

Sign up or subscribe to read more

NON-SMOKERS may want to avoid these cheaper, budget haunts. Even if they find a non-smoking room in a hotel with smoking options, they are still subject to second-hand smoke. A study ([Subscribe: 12 weeks for \\$12 com/2013/05/17/smoke-permeates-nonsmoking-hotel-rooms/?_r=0](http://www.economist.com/2013/05/17/smoke-permeates-nonsmoking-hotel-rooms/?_r=0)) in 2013 found that the levels of tobacco air pollutants in non-smoking rooms were 25 times as high as in non-smoking hotels. And levels of surface pollution, such as cigarette ash, were 25 times higher.

Smokers can, of course, stay in non-smoking rooms and use a variety of strategies to get their fix. The most obvious of which is to brave the elements for a puff outside. But many opt for more devious approaches. Internet forums are full of advice for people who want to smoke in non-smoking rooms (and dodge the often-hefty fines for the hotel to decontaminate the room). The least obnoxious of these

[\(https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/roadwarriorvoices/2017/02/13/non-smoking-hotels-north-america/97735844/\)](https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/roadwarriorvoices/2017/02/13/non-smoking-hotels-north-america/97735844/) owned by Marriott International allow smoking, nor do Wyndham Hotel Group's lifestyle and full-service brands. Two new Hilton brands, Canopy and Tru, will not allow smoking in any of their hotels in the world. Outside of America, there are usually more smoking options, although Europe is also increasingly going smoke-free. Smokers who do not want to mess around with wet towels and steam baths, should prepare for a future in which having a cigarette in a hotel room is no longer an option.

[Previous](#)

Southwest Airlines tries to bring music concerts to the skies

[Next](#)

A black-rights group warns would-be passengers about American Airlines

About The Economist

You've seen the news, now discover the story

Get incisive analysis on the issues that matter. Whether you read each issue cover to cover, listen to the audio edition, or scan the headlines on your phone, time with *The Economist* is always well spent.

Enjoy 12 weeks' access for \$12



