

Shmanners 16: Hotels and B&Bs

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Travis:

Did you request turn down service?

Teresa:

Turn down for what?

Travis:

For Shmanners!

[theme music plays]

Travis:

Hello internet. I am your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa:

And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis:

And you're listening to Shmanners.

Teresa:

It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis:

...for ordinary occasions. Welcome to another episode, folks. We've got a good one for ya. A highly requested one, I would say.

Teresa:

Well, they're all good.

Travis:

They're all good. Okay, yes, you win.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

All episodes are equally good. We maintain a powerful plateau, I would say.

Teresa:

[Laughs] Well, with this one, I'm going to say it's topical because it is. Because people are starting to think about their summer vacations.

Travis:

Well, well. Aw, man, I need to learn so much more. I was about to say "just American people." But does everyone... I know that it's not summer in other countries, in other hemispheres, in other locations, but then do they go on vacations in winter? Oh my God. How does it all sync up? [Laughs] I have no idea what's happening. We're going to have to do a whole episode just on seasons that has nothing to do with manners.

Teresa:

So if you are going to a summery location...

Travis:

Okay, yes perfect.

Teresa:

... in this hemisphere...

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Teresa:

... you are beginning to think about it now.

Travis:

Now, hotels, uh, which is what we are talking about, and bed and breakfasts, are very interesting to me because, much like planes, I think that it's an idea that has developed uh, from a very luxury thing to a, like, necessity thing. And I know there are still luxury hotels in the world but, like, I picture... There was this beautiful hotel in Huntington, um, called the Frederick.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

And now, it's like, offices and like, abandoned hotel rooms on the top floors and everything. But there was a time where people were, like, traveling down the Ohio River, like, movies stars and like, super rich were staying there because it was a huge luxury hotel in, like, the 1900s.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

And now when I think of hotels, I think of like, a Holiday Inn Express. Or like, a Motel 6. Or like, "Where can we stay for, like, 50 bucks because we just need a bed to sleep in while we go do all this other stuff?"

Teresa:

Well, I do agree that hotels have become a little more utilitarian. Um, I do think that it really all started with disposable income.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

So once you were into the middle and the upper middle class and obviously...

Travis:

And the middle middle class.

Teresa:

Right. Mm-hmm. Obviously, the upper class, I mean if you were upper class enough, you could afford to live in hotels and a lot of people did. Um, and you also might not go to a hotel. You might have a summer home that was fully staffed, you know, even without you there. So I think that the idea of a short holiday either in the summer or sometimes a winter holiday is largely a middle class idea.

Travis:

Okay. Can you maybe give me a little history on, like, hotels?

Teresa:

Well, most of the history that I have is kind of an atmosphere.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

And I want to place it right after World War II.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

I got this brand new book. Well, it's not brand new.

Travis:

It's new to you.

Teresa:

New to me. It's called Manners Made Easy and it was written by a woman named Mary Beery who was the director of social conduct at South High School in Lima, Ohio.

Travis:

Oh. I know Ohio. I've heard of that.

Teresa:

[Laughs] Yeah, me too. Um, this book was first published in 1949.

Travis:

Wow. That's old.

Teresa:

It is old. And this is the third edition, which was published in 1966.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

Um, she describes these hotels uh, in the late '40s, early '50s, as a luxurious endeavor that may have things such as a porter's desk or a bell captain, that may include a doorman with a newsstand. Uh, there may be an... A valet. Um, also she says that most luxury hotels have on-call doctors.

Travis:

Wow. Also, hotel detectives.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

No, that's a real thing that you hear joked about but, like, if something got stolen from you, or like if you had, like, money in your hotel room and somebody broke into your hotel room, there was somebody at the hotel that was like, paid by the hotel to investigate crimes that happened in the hotel. How cool is that?

Teresa:

That is very cool. She doesn't... She didn't, um, say that in here specifically but maybe in Lima, Ohio, she didn't have need of a hotel detective.

Travis:

It's also possible, I have not done research on the hotel detective, I'm not the educated one, you are, that this is all based on what I know from TV shows and movies and that there was never such a thing as a hotel detective. But please, oh please, don't take this away from me.

Teresa:

Um, I would like to talk about the two separate types of hotels that were available, according to Mary Berry. I keep saying Mary Beery, but I want to say Mary Berry.

Travis:

[Laughs]

Teresa:

From the Great British Baking Show.

Travis:

And countless baking cookbooks and...

Teresa:

Countless cookbooks and stuff. But she is a British home cook chef person.

Travis:

Yes, and Mary Beery is a lady who lived in Lima, Ohio and wrote this book and taught stuff.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Although I've never seen them in the same room, so...

Teresa:

Oh, no. Um, she talks about that certain hotels are labeled "European Plan" or "American Plan."

Travis:

And what is the difference?

Teresa:

So, on the European Plan, which she says is strangely enough more usual in America, perhaps they are trying to seem...

Travis:

Continental.

Teresa:

... continental, Um, covers your room rate only. So the European Plan, which is common in America...

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Teresa:

... is pretty much just your room.

Travis:

I guarantee that that came from, like, somebody who was, like, "Listen, we need to make our American hotels seem fancier. Ah, we'll say 'the European Plan' which is actually they get less for their money but it'll make it seem classier."

Teresa:

Well, so I would say that on this model, most of our, you know, your Holiday Inn Expresses and such...

Travis:

Gotcha.

Teresa:

... are the European Plan because sometimes you do pay for a continental breakfast.

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Teresa:

But mostly it's just for your room.

Travis:

Is that where the continental in continental breakfast came from? That it's, like, you're paying, you know, the European Plan, the American Plan, and you get a continental breakfast. It just all seems very like, classy terms for very simple things, you know? I don't know.

Teresa:

I have no idea about that. On the American Plan, which was often found at resorts and European hotels, the rate includes your room and meals for a 24 hour period.

Travis:

Now, this isn't, like, all-inclusive. This is more, like, just the meals. This isn't like, your drinks and activities and whatever else you need, massages, and that kind of thing.

Teresa:

Uh, no. I don't think that it's all-inclusive.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

I think it's just room and food.

Travis:

That's interesting. Aside from B&B's, I don't know that I've ever stayed somewhere where meals were included.

Teresa:

Well, and even at B&B's, it's mostly just breakfast.

Travis:

That's true. I wonder if that's like, has fallen out of favor as people, much like, you know, the classy, um, jet airliners where it's like, "Well, we need to like, cut corners so that we can make a profit and charge people less while still charging them more and all that stuff."

Teresa:

I suppose it's possible but you know, we've never stayed in a European hotel.

Travis:

This is true. This is true.

Teresa:

Um, so then I would like to also give you... Uh, we had a couple questions about tipping.

Travis:

Yes.

Teresa:

Which we did cover a few tipping things in our tipping episode in regards to hotels.

Travis:

But I will say that a hotel is probably the scenario in which you will find the most, like, wide array of varied tipping scenarios.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

Like, start to finish, it's kind of a minefield, you know?

Teresa:

Um, the rule of thumb is, anyone who touches your bags, be it the doorman, the bellhop, or the desk staff, if they hold your baggage, anybody who touches your bags gets tipped. And then anyone who goes above and beyond for your reservation. So like if they make dinner reservations for you or play reservations...

Travis:

So like a concierge?

Teresa:

Right, yeah. If they provide any concierge service, then they get tipped. Also, the cleaning staff...

Travis:

Yes.

Teresa:

... gets tipped and it should be tipped nightly because you don't know if the person who is cleaning your room for most of your stay is going to be staying the whole time or if the shifts change or whatever so just to be safe you should leave a small tip every night instead of a large tip.

Travis:

How small? What, what amount would you say is appropriate for a nightly tip for a cleaning staff?

Teresa:

Probably one to two dollars.

Travis:

Really? I was going to say five.

Teresa:

Well, but think about if you were to stay several nights, five dollars a night...

Travis:

That's true. I guess it depends on, like, how bad the room is, you know what I mean?

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

I could see a scenario in which you have like three kids traveling with you...

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

... and it's like you leave the room and it's like a war zone and you come back and it's pristine, that's probably worth five dollars a day. If you're staying there by yourself, you sleep in one bed, you use one glass, and maybe there's a little toothpaste in the sink, that's probably one to two dollars.

Teresa:

I think that's a great idea.

Travis:

I also say to that point, on like, the bellhop, doorman, I understand a sensibility of people being like, "I'm not just going to give away my money to these... That's how they getcha with the grabbing your bags and..." Like, yeah, but, like, that's the job that they do.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

And I think it's one thing if you have, like, a bag with you, like maybe you have your like, your carry-on bag and that's it. Um, but if you've got, like, a taxi full of bags, and you're sitting there struggling with your own bags as you deny help from the people because you don't want to pay them one to two dollars, let them help you with your bags and just be ready, like have a pocket full of singles when you go to a luxury hotel, and be ready to tip people.

I always am. I am an adult. I have ones in my pocket, ready to tip someone who helps me out, especially because you don't want to look stupid like I did once, where you go to grab your own luggage cart, and they're like "Actually, we don't let guests use luggage carts. If you want to use the luggage cart, you have to let a bellhop help you."

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

I was like, "Oh, okay."

Teresa:

And I think that that also is the hotel kind of covering their bases there. They don't want damage on the walls from the carts and they don't want the carts broken.

Travis:

They don't want the carts to disappear in someone's room.

Teresa:

Disappear, yeah. All that stuff.

Travis:

It's part of the experience of going to one of these like, you know, I would say, mid to upper level hotels. Because you know, when you go to a hotel where you're paying like \$60 a night, you probably don't need to worry too much about it. You're going to carry your own bags and that's fine. But if you're staying at like a super fancy hotel and that's supposed to be the whole point of the experience, it's part of the experience to let people help you, you know?

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Like then you get to feel like you have a staff. You know, that you've got butlers and you know, cleaning services and...

Teresa:

You are the upstairs to the downstairs.

Travis:

Exactly.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

So, like embrace that mentality and be ready to tip.

Teresa:

So, speaking of tips, um, so I mentioned that this book was first published in 1949. For someone who has opened your car door or cab door, and taken out your luggage, and brought it into the hotel, how much do you think that you would owe him in 1949?

Travis:

A quarter.

Teresa:

Very good.

Travis:

Yeah.

Teresa:

20 to 25 cents.

Travis:

Okay. I just kind of scaled it back, divide it by four. I was like, "Okay, every like 15 years from then to now..." I don't know. It was a good guess.

Teresa:

It was a good guess. When I first read this, I was like, "A quarter? What?" And then I had to look at the copyright...

Travis:

Oh, yes.

Teresa:

... and I was like "Oh." Because inflation and other stuff.

Travis:

And once again, I think this also scales that, like, if they help you with like one or two bags, a dollar. If you have like a family of six, like, and everybody's got two bags, and you've got like a dog crate and you've got a bag of food and they're helping you balance all of it, maybe that's a five dollar trip, you know what I mean?

Teresa:

Well, and she suggests that you should tip someone according to the amount of baggage you have and the help they've given you. And she says 50 cents is a minimum for a cart full of bags.

Travis:

Okay, so let's scale that up, times four, that's like two dollars to five dollars, I would say is appropriate.

Teresa:

Right. Um, she also suggests that at one of these luxury hotels, that the bellhop, I'm going to say, because she says "bellboy."

Travis:

Yeah, that's very diminutive. That's not a very cool...

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

...but "bellhop," "bell captain," "bell..." I'm trying to think of a cool, like a cool...

Teresa:

Bell man.

Travis:

Bell man is pretty cool. I'm trying to think of, like, "bell lightning." You know, that doesn't make any sense or something like that. Bell specter. Let's go with bell specter because they're kind... Bell ninja. If the bell ninja helps you...

Teresa:

Um, she says that the room clerk will give you your room number and the key to the bellhop...

Travis:

And you do not tip the front desk. There's no reason to do that. Right?

Teresa:

Like I said, unless they make arrangements for you outside of your hotel stay.

Travis:

But like the check-in, somebody asked, like, "How much do I tip on check-in?" You don't.

Teresa:

You don't have to.

Travis:

That's not really the scenario there. I would say maybe if there is like, a tip jar, but that would be so weird. That's not really their job. They're not running around, think of it that way.

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

Is there any physical labor involved in the thing that they're doing? If not, they probably don't need a tip.

Teresa:

And if they've gone above and beyond during your stay, I would say that if you feel, uh, if you feel moved because of the amount of service they've provided you during your stay, to tip at the end.

Travis:

Yeah. I'll give you that. Like, if it's, like, they helped you move rooms because your neighbor was noisy or like, they helped you check in early or they went above and beyond.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

I'm not saying you shouldn't or that you're banned from tipping them, but you shouldn't feel obligated for, like, them doing their jobs.

Teresa:

Upon check-in.

Travis:

Yes.

Teresa:

Correct. Um, she says that he will be able to ask for mail for you if there's mail delivered to your hotel. That sounds so swanky.

Travis:

Doesn't it? It's very businessy. Very James Bondy.

Teresa:

Uh, you are to follow him as he carries your baggage to your room. He'll open the door, see that the heat and ventilation is to your liking. He'll tell you how to regulate the windows, the heat, the air conditioning, the television and the radio before he leaves.

Travis:

Also, um, don't make it weird when you tip him.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

Just like, hand him the thing. Don't be weird about it. Don't try to do the like, sneaky, like, ooh, or like hold it between two fingers. Just hand him, and say "Thank you."

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

Don't make it weird.

Teresa:

The sneaky handshake is, you know, not necessary.

Travis:

Completely unnecessary.

Teresa:

But, wow, that kind of service. I cannot recall a single time I have been ushered into a hotel room and described to me the thing... Oh, no. That's not true.

Travis:

I can. Yeah, our wedding night.

Teresa:

Our wedding night. We stayed at a very fancy hotel in Cincinnati.

Travis:

The Cincinnati.

Teresa:

That was lovely. Oh, and we did just go up to Big Bear, but that was more of like an Airbnb, right?

Travis:

Well, and also when we were touring in New York. We did a live show in New York, a My Brother, My Brother, and Me live show and we stayed at a very nice hotel where there was a very pleasant gentleman who brought us up and told us how the curtains worked so we could open our curtains to look out on the brick wall that was three inches away from the window.

Teresa:

[Laughs] I didn't recall that. But I do recall the Cincinnati and when we went up to Big Bear. Um, and I think that one of the reasons when we went up to Big Bear is because the television was one of those Apple TVs.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

And I bet that they get a lot of calls being, like, "How do you work this thing?"

Travis:

Yes. So let me ask you this. Do you have anything on, say, room service? And I worked room service at a hotel for a summer where I was delivering. Do you want to hear my favorite me working room service getting tipped thing?

Teresa:

Sure.

Travis:

This guy who was staying in a room, uh, with his lady friend, um, they ordered up, like, two glasses of orange juice, and I brought it to the dude and he very, like, flourishly, tipped me \$20 for two glasses of orange juice. And then they ordered lunch later, and when I brought it back, he leaned in to me at the door and he was like, "I don't have any more money to tip you."

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

And I was like, "That's fine. You tipped \$20 on two orange juice. You're fine." He was like, "Okay, thank you. I was just... I was showing off and I..." I was like, "It's cool, man. You're fine." Um, and that was, that was a very funny instance of tipping.

Teresa:

Um, Mary Beery suggests that when you order room service, your tip should be slightly higher than it would be in a dining room. Um, although frequently, there is a gratuity added to room service. And then she also suggests that once you are finished with your room service and you put the, uh, the empty trays back into the hallway, that you should call down to the front desk and let them know that you're finished.

Travis:

Oh, that's nice.

Teresa:

I think that is a good idea because all too often, I think that the staff might be stretched a little thin for them to just be walking up and down the halls looking for people to put their trays back out.

Travis:

Yeah, and also like, if you don't, it has the risk of sitting there for a while and then it looks gross for people coming in and it's just like sitting on the ground where it's a trip hazard. Yeah, be cool about that.

Teresa:

I think that that's a great idea to call the desk staff and let them know that you're finished.

Travis:

We'll be right back with some questions from you. More on staying in hotels and bed and breakfasts, but first here's a word from another Max Fun show.

[theme music plays]

Carrie:

Okay, I've got a list of things we can do for our podcast, Oh No, Ross and Carrie!

Ross:

You got some ideas?

Carrie:

Yeah, I think so. Okay, you ready?

Ross:

Yeah, yeah.

Carrie:

Okay, we could get ear candled.

Ross:

No, that was one of our first episodes.

Carrie:

Oh, right, okay. We could get hypnotherapy.

Ross:

No, we went to, like, a school for it.

Carrie:

Oh. Okay. We could join the Mormons.

Ross:

We got baptized, don't you remember?

Carrie:

Okay, well what if we went to an occult meeting or cryotherapy or took a juice cleanse or ate only Soylent for a month?

Ross:

Yeah, we did 'em.

Carrie:

Reiki?

Ross:

You're a practitioner.

Carrie:

We could join Christian Science or we could go to pet psychics or do astrology or go to the Queen Mary where they have all those ghost hunts?

Ross:

Done 'em all.

Carrie:

That's my whole list.

Ross:

Well, what else can we do? I mean, this is Los Angeles.

Carrie:

Well, I guess we could do that one thing.

Ross:

Oh.

Carrie:

The scary thing.

Ross:

The one that everybody's asked us to do since we started the show?

Carrie:

Yeah. For like five years. Am I being clear?

Ross:

Yeah. Let's do it.

Carrie:

Okay. But if I die, you have to tell my family that I loved them and that they can hear the episode on iTunes or at maximumfun.org.

Ross:

I'll tell them.

Carrie:

Thanks Ross.

[ad break ends]

Travis:

Okay, we're back. Now, Teresa, what... Do you have any kind of— Before we head into audience questions, any kind of specific tips you would like to throw in about bed and breakfasts?

Teresa:

Um, bed and breakfasts. I think it's important to keep in mind that a lot of people, especially with Airbnb these days, they live in those homes. They live in the rooms that they are renting to you so it's important to be very respectful of their items.

If you find that you do require after hours service, I should say that you should really only call for emergencies or for mechanical failures. Like, if the toilet is not working and you are unable to plunge it yourself, then you might contact your host. Um, but other than that, just try and be really respectful of their things.

Travis:

You should also be prepared if you've never stayed in a B&B, like an actual, like bed and breakfast, B&B. There is a creepy element to it. Like, they're very nice. They're very lovely. I highly recommend it. We stayed at one in Scotland, though, it was the first B&B that I think we'd ever stayed at. And, or at least, me, first time I'd ever stayed at. And we came home—

Teresa:

And this was a legit B&B, not an Airbnb.

Travis:

Yeah, this was like a bed and breakfast. And it was very lovely and very nice and we came home on the first night of, like, you know, like walking around the, uh, the town we were staying in. And just like, walked in to find the old lady that, like, ran

the place, just like sitting in a room by herself watching TV very quietly. And as we came in, she just, like, turned and looked at us without saying anything and just smiled and went back to TV. And I was like, "We have to get upstairs now. Go to bed now. She's going to kill us."

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

Um, but I will say that they're very lovely. If you've never stayed in a B&B, one of my favorite things about them is that you don't run into, like, a... There's 100 guests here and they're all... Even if they're not being super loud, they're loud on some level and it all adds up together and there's so much humanity and there's people running down the hallways. Like, it's a very chill kind of hotel experience.

Teresa:

But there is a little bit of a community element to it because oftentimes you have to schedule your breakfast times so there's enough seats for everyone. Um, you are encouraged at most B&Bs to make your breakfast selection the night before.

Travis:

Because it's probably the owners and operators who are making breakfast for you so it's probably like a little old couple or like a... Maybe even just one person who's like making breakfast for everyone staying there. So the more information you can give them ahead of time, the better off you'll be in the morning.

Teresa:

Right. Um, and at some B&Bs, they even have communal activities. There are movie nights and wine tastings and uh, you know, things that you, if you are going for the full B&B experience, you may want to join in on.

Travis:

Um, and then be sure that if you have a very pleasant experience, that you, like, advertise for them and tell people that it was great. That's a very nice thing to do because they probably don't have a lot of... They're not big hotel chains.

Teresa:

Right. They're a small business, most likely.

Travis:

Yeah, so let's go through, um, some audience questions here. Um, well, this is a good one. This leads right into it, speaking of B&Bs, like, actual, factual B&Bs. This is from Kate on Twitter. "If you have a problem in the middle of the night at a B&B, wake up the owners or keep quiet and hope for the best?"

Teresa:

It depends on the problem. If it is a medical emergency, uh, you should probably wake up the owners because it is their property and they will want to be notified should an ambulance be required.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Um, if it is a mechanical emergency that you cannot fix yourself, say, like I said, a toilet malfunction, um, again, they'll want to be alerted. Um, because, you know, you never... If it's their property, they'll want to know about any possibility of damage.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Um.

Travis:

But like, I can't get the TV to turn on, or like, someone's being a little loud, like, is that worth it to wake them up for?

Teresa:

Um, I would say if they are on the property after 9:00, probably not.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

But, but before 9:00, which is most people's, you know, starting to wind down to bedtime, I think that that would be all right. They want to make your stay as, as comfortable as possible. And if you can't get your television to work, or you can't

get the AC to turn up or any of those sorts of things, before 9:00 if they're on the property, should be all right.

Travis:

Cool. Um, this question is, uh, more for hotels than B&Bs, uh, it's from Caitlin on Twitter. "What's the polite way to let the housekeepers know that you don't need them to come in if you're staying for multiple nights?"

Teresa:

They do... Most hotels provide a "Do Not Disturb." Um, and if you leave that on, they...

Travis:

That's what it's for.

Teresa:

They should not disturb your room. And nobody gets mad about that.

Travis:

Yeah.

Teresa:

Um, if you have certain valuables in your room or if you don't require any more towels or...

Travis:

Or maybe you just have stuff laid out all over the bed, like you're on a business conference and you have a whole bunch of samples or something and you have them all arranged and you don't want them to mess with them or like, they would be in the way of somebody cleaning up your room, great. Hang a Do Not Disturb sign.

Teresa:

Yeah. Hang that Do Not Disturb sign and they should leave your room alone, no questions asked.

Travis:

Um, speaking of, this is from Katherine on Twitter, "Should you make your bed in the morning or will it just slow things down for housekeeping when they have to remake it?"

Teresa:

Those housekeepers, whether they be male or female, and I have met a couple male, um, they are so good and so fast, if they got to make your bed, it doesn't really matter. They'll...

Travis:

But I would say don't make it. Like, if they're going to come in and clean the room, they're going to make the bed.

Teresa:

Well, if I want to hang out on my bed to watch some TV in the morning or whatever, I might make it just so that it's easier for me to stay on the bed.

Travis:

I guess I would say don't feel obligated to make but also don't feel like you making it is inconveniencing them in some way.

Teresa:

Exactly. If you want to make your bed, go ahead and do it, those housekeepers have got, you know, a ton of practice. They go through those rooms like machines so if you've made your bed, if you haven't made your bed, it's all the same.

Travis:

Um, this is from Liv on Twitter. "What is the universal time to start quieting down? I've heard it was 11:00 PM to 8:00 AM, but I've gotten told that that is not it."

Teresa:

Um, it depends on the day. Weekdays should be probably 9:00 PM to... I would say... I mean, people are getting ready in the morning, showering anyway, so like, 7:30 to 8:00.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Um, and then weekends, I would say 11:00 is probably a really great idea. Now, should you ever go screaming up and down the hallways...

Travis:

Wait, I can answer this one, no.

Teresa:

No. [Laughs]

Travis:

Okay. Yeah, nailed it.

Teresa:

But—

Travis:

Save your fights for the room and not in the hallway, everyone who's stayed at every hotel I've ever been at, ever.

Teresa:

And once people are quieting down on week nights around 9:00, turn your TV down a little bit, and same goes for any kind of guests you may have at 11:00. I would say that it is always safer to have your guests in the lobby. Um, and some of these nice hotels, ooh, the lobby is so luxurious.

Travis:

Ooh-la-la.

Teresa:

Why would you want to bring people up to your room where it's just usually a couple beds and maybe some chairs when you can have this beautiful lobby to hang out in and not disturb anybody?

Travis:

This question is from Mel on Twitter. "Is it wrong to take the hotel soap and things on the first day to see if they will replace it so that you can get max hotel soap?" And I think that this is a broader question of... We got this a lot. Is it okay to take, like, the soap and like, the shampoo and the lotion and stuff you don't use?

Teresa:

That stuff is there for you to use. So, um, if you open it, and use it, you can take it. I would suggest, you know, because we live in an environmentally conscious era, that if you don't need it, don't take it.

Travis:

It's just wasteful. And if you're saying, like, "Well, I'll use it at home," will you? Take a long, hard look in the mirror.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

Is it just going to go home with you and sit in the back of a bathroom closet forever until you throw it away? If so, don't get caught up in like the "I get to." Think about do you need to.

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

You know?

Teresa:

If it is unopened, a lot of hotels, because they are trying to reduce their waste, they'll let the next guest have it instead.

Travis:

And especially if it's sealed in some way.

Teresa:

Right, yes.

Travis:

You see a little sticker seal on, like, the lid or...

Teresa:

That's what I mean by unopened.

Travis:

Yeah. Um, this question comes from Twitter. "At a continental breakfast, how much food should one eat without being rude and eating too much?"

Teresa:

Now, this is difficult because I have on occasion taken more than I needed for breakfast. Um, if they had, like, I don't know, uh, breakfast bars, or little yogurts or

something that I might take for a later time. Um, I have taken those. And I don't think that it's a bad idea to take maybe one or two extra things that are sealed.

Travis:

Mm-hmm. Especially if... And okay, so this is where it gets a little bit tricky where this ideal and in practice...

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

... ideally you don't take food back to your room from a continental breakfast. A lot of places frown on that and in fact if there's someone, like, maintaining the area, they may be like, "Hey, don't do that."

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

But, if you like, woke up late, or you have someone back in the room who's still getting ready, and the continental breakfast is about to end in five minutes so you want to grab them a yogurt and like, a bowl of cereal or something, I think that's fine. What I will say about this question is, if you're going to sit down and eat in the continental breakfast area, don't load up your plate with a bunch of food and then end up throwing half of it away.

Teresa:

Right. You should be conscious about how much you are, um, realistically going to eat. And if you do want to take a small sealed item like a breakfast bar or a yogurt, I think that that's all right, as long as you don't load up your pockets with it. This is not, like, a grocery store. This is, you know, just a breakfast that they're offering uh, gratis.

Travis:

Um, this is from Rachel on Facebook. "Do I need to get properly dressed to go down to the hotel pool or can I just stroll around the hallway in my swimsuit?"

Teresa:

I suggest that you wear shoes.

Travis:

Def, yeah.

Teresa:

Yes. Uh, because it's more hygienic that you wear shoes. Now, we do... There are several hotels that have on-scene waterparks. Like, there's a really nice hotel in Cincinnati called The Great Wolf Lodge.

Travis:

Which is a chain, so there are a lot of places.

Teresa:

Oh, yeah.

Travis:

They also have MagiQuest. It's awesome, you guys.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

I highly recommend it. I've got my own wand.

Teresa:

But I'm talking about...

Travis:

Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah. Waterparks.

Teresa:

The waterpark. And in that instance, when it's kind of like you stay at the hotel for the waterpark, I think that's all right.

Travis:

I would encourage though, like, if you're going to a place to like, stay. You know, that you're, like, the pool. "I'm a pool baby and I'm going to hang out at the pool a lot." I don't know if anyone's ever described themselves as a "pool baby" but if you're like "I'm a pool person and I'm going to... We're pool people now and we're going to live at the pool," maybe think about like, either bringing a robe, or if the hotel has a robe, to bring the robe with you. Um, or a towel or something because you have to remember you're also going to walk back from the pool.

Teresa:

Yes. You are going to be cooler when you are wet walking back, so...

Travis:

And wet.

Teresa:

Yes. That is what I said.

Travis:

Well, so what I mean is dripping wet...

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

... as you walk through the hotel. So not only are you, it is colder, you also don't want to drip all over the hotel. That's rude.

Teresa:

Right. So, Rachel, I say you need to wear shoes because that's gross. And, um, I think that a cover up is a good idea. Do you need to put your clothes completely back on? No.

Travis:

No.

Teresa:

A towel, a robe...

Travis:

Sweatpants.

Teresa:

Sweatpants. Something that...

Travis:

Guys and girls, by the way.

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

I don't want dudes to be walking through the hotel shirtless in just their swim trunks or speedos either. I think that, like, everybody needs to have some kind of understanding of, like, "Is what I'm about to do weird?" And you can decide that in the moment.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

You know? I don't think that there's necessarily a hard and fast rule.

Teresa:

But there are locations that may be an exception as far as waterpark hotels where those rules are a little more lax.

Travis:

Um, this is from Alana. Um, "Asking for a room away from an elevator or ice machine, or just take what's offered?"

Teresa:

I think you're well within your rights to ask that sort of thing especially if you arrive on time for check-in or maybe even just a little early for check-in. A lot of hotel desk clerks want you to be happy with the room that you have.

Travis:

So they don't get calls from you later.

Teresa:

Exactly. Um, so if you want something away from an ice machine or, she said elevator?

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Then ask for it. The worst they can say is no.

Travis:

Yeah. And, um, just while I'm thinking about it, because it just popped into my head. Um, if you're going to be traveling with pets, and I hope this goes without saying, but you should find out ahead of time if the hotel is pet-friendly.

Teresa:

Of course.

Travis:

And also make sure that they know you will be traveling with pets because they may want to put you in a special, you know, maybe they have a block of rooms that they use as pet rooms so that they don't overlap with people who are allergic or that they want to keep them away from other people's rooms if they can so they don't... Whatever. But let them know ahead of time that you will be bringing a pet with you.

Teresa:

And it is important to always keep that pet on leash when you are outside of your room. Um, keep your pet in designated areas for relieving themselves. Um, and also if you need to leave your room, please crate your pet. They can become very anxious in a new place without you there.

Um, I know that there were several hotels that Travis and I stayed in on our way from Ohio to California that requested that we not leave our pets in the room. If we needed to go somewhere, we either had to stay in the room or take our pets with us.

Travis:

Um, this question comes from Mike. And it's definitely one that I have struggled with. "What's the limit of the amount of food you can bring into a hotel? Is it limited to snacks or can we get some sandwiches to save money?"

Teresa:

Um, I think it depends on if your room has a mini fridge.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

If the room has a mini fridge, bring what you need to bring. You can bring your takeout, order takeout. Some places have folders full of restaurants that deliver to the hotel or, you know, will provide takeout to the hotel. Um, and if you have a mini fridge to keep that good after you've finished, then go for it.

Travis:

I also think once again it's a context thing. Like, if you're going to be staying there for one night, don't go down to the Kroger's and just buy, like, \$200 worth of groceries 'cause I think the only downside is don't leave the room with a bunch of half eaten food in it for the housekeepers to clean up completely unnecessarily.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

You know what I mean?

Teresa:

If you have food that you have not finished, you need to throw it away before you leave and don't leave it in the refrigerator.

Travis:

And keep in mind, a lot of those hotels have very, very tiny trash cans so like, just don't go crazy. Be reasonable about it. But I've never once walked into a hotel with, like, a grocery bag and had them go, "Ah, ah, ah. You're going to have to throw that away before you head to your room."

Teresa:

So enjoy your sandwiches, sir.

Travis:

Yes. Go to town. And you know what? Don't be embarrassed if you've got a bag full of booze bottles clinking together when you walk through the hotel.

Teresa:

[Laughs]

Travis:

Never been judged for that either. Don't you worry about it. Um, so this is from Josh. "I used the hotel gym at 5:00 AM on a business trip. It was in a shared

hallway that also has guest rooms. Was I wrong or was this just a bad design on their part?"

Teresa:

Um, if it is labeled as a 24/7 gym, it's a 24/7 gym. The door is open. It's available. I would say 5:00 AM is a normal workout time for someone going to work. That is poor design if it's off of a busy hallway or if it's, you know, right next to other guest's rooms, that's unfortunate but if it's open and available, it's designed to be used.

Travis:

I have a question for you from me. When it comes... What's the difference between motel and hotel? Is the only difference like, one, you walk through a hallway to get to, and that's a hotel. And the other one you pull up to and park and go in an exterior door and that's a motel? Or are there other differences? Because you've got your hotel, motel, Holiday Inn.

Teresa:

[Laughs] How did I know this was coming? I believe, yes, that is the main difference or at least it started out that way, that a motel is short for "motor hotel" so it originated where it had an exterior door where you could drive right up to your hotel room.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Um, but I'm not sure that distinction still exists specifically.

Travis:

You can call it... I don't know that there's probably people who are like, "Wait. You said this was a motel?"

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Though I imagine most people probably stick to it.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

Um, so we have one more question. And this is from Dora, "When is it okay to complain about other extremely noisy guests?"

Teresa:

I believe it's okay to complain about them after sleeping hours. So, like I said, during the weekday after 9:00 PM, and then during the weekend, after 11:00.

Travis:

Okay. I mean, it makes sense. And you know, but keep in mind, I think at a certain point you have to remember that part and parcel with staying in a hotel and a motel is that there's other people there.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

And so, like, you got to, like kind of, grain of salt, what is a loud, noisy person? Like, if you can hear conversation, like okay, like if that's screaming—

Teresa:

Yeah, the walls may be thin.

Travis:

Yeah.

Teresa:

Walls may be thin and if they seem to be talking at a normal level, I think that the only thing that you can really do at that point is request for a room change...

Travis:

Yeah.

Teresa:

... instead of complaining about their noise level.

Travis:

Especially, once again, if we're talking, like, kids and baby, you know what I mean?

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Like, that's not wild, crazy party or a fight. Like, grain of salt. Just, like, use your best judgment.

Teresa:

That's just people being people.

Travis:

Yeah.

Teresa:

So if you need to request a room change, I also suggest that you do that, um, uh, as close to 9:00 or before 9:00 on a weekday as possible so as just to be able to settle in before you go to bed.

Travis:

And then once again, I think, as with all things, if you have to do that, or you have any complaints or you have any problems or anything you need to deal with, you know, honey versus vinegar, you know what I mean? Like, if you're going to talk to the front desk, if you're going to talk to you know, the restaurant or the bellhops or whatever, treat them as people.

Treat them with respect. Address the issue calmly. And you're way more likely to get, not just good help, but like they'd be happy to help you if you are reasonable. Man, I've been to too many hotels where I've seen people at the front desk just screaming at the front desk staff, and it's like, do you really think that this gets you better service?

Teresa:

Exactly.

Travis:

It doesn't. Like, I've worked customer service jobs. I've worked restaurant jobs. No one's ever screamed at me and I've thought, "They get special treatment so that they don't get mad at me again." Like, no.

Teresa:

Right. Right.

Travis:

I treat the people who treat me well, well.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

So, just keep that in mind when you're staying at a hotel. And once again, you may be one of hundreds of guests that they are trying to take care of.

Teresa:

But that doesn't make your needs any less valid, but we're saying to try and always be polite.

Travis:

Work together.

Teresa:

Yeah, let's work together about this. And they want... I'm not going to speak for everyone. But I would say that most people in the service industry want you to have a good experience so that A, you'll come back. And B, you'll tell your friends that you had a great time and they get more business.

Travis:

So I think that's going to do it for us this week. Thank you so much for joining us. Teresa, let's go over some thank you notes. What do you say?

Teresa:

Let's do it. I would like to make my special thank you note this week to Mary Beery of Lima, Ohio for her book Manners Made Easy. There are some lovely, well-dressed, '50s teenagers on the front. I enjoyed that very much.

Travis:

I would like to spend a special thank you note out to Brent Black, Brentalfloss, my co-host on Trends Like These and the composers of the Shmanners intro and outro theme, which you can find on your Apple devices and make it your ringtone. It's... I'll tell you what. It's not only a great podcast intro and outro, it's a pretty darn good ringtone.

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

So go check it out. If you have an Apple device, just go to, uh, iTunes on that device and in "Ringtones," search "Shmanners" and you'll find it. I want to thank everybody who's rated, reviewed, and subscribed on iTunes. We've had a lot of really, really great reviews lately and it means a lot to us.

Teresa:

And we had that very nice banner on iTunes for a while.

Travis:

Yes.

Teresa:

That was lovely.

Travis:

It made us feel very cool. Thank you, iTunes. And thank you to everybody who saw that on iTunes and clicked on it and wanted to check it out. Uh, we want to say thank you to maximumfun.org for hosting Shmanners as well as a bunch of other really awesome podcasts.

Teresa:

What about... Who was the name of the lady who did the awesome banner for us?

Travis:

Oh, that was Kayla M. Wasil.

Teresa: Kayla M. Wasil, thank you to her.

Travis:

It was incredible. Um, I would like to recommend a couple specific shows on Maximum Fun for you to check out this week. Sawbones, which was the inspiration for Shmanners, so if you like Shmanners, you'll love Sawbones. Um, Still Buffering, um, which, Sydnee, who hosts Sawbones does with her sister, Raleigh.

Um, and Can I Pet Your Dog? A podcast all about dogs and the cuteness that revolves around them which, um, I produce and semi-cohost. And it's hosted by Renee and Allegra and it's just a really cute show and I think you would like it.

That's going to do it for us this week. Thank you for listening. Join us again next week.

Teresa:

No RSVP required.

Travis:

You've been listening to Shmanners.

Teresa:

Manners, Shmanners, get it?

[theme music plays]

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