

Somewhere to Stay

finding somewhere

The internet is a great place to look for accommodation in advance. Once you're there, notice boards and visitor's books in places frequented by tourists are a good source of information. Book ahead if you're planning to stay during public holidays.

types of accommodation

Hotels can be found in most of the large cities. They offer extensive leisure and business facilities, restaurants and bars. Credit cards are usually accepted and foreign currency changed.

Boutique hotels, at the top end of the scale, tend to be situated in scenic locations, upmarket seaside resorts and quiet colonial towns.

Hosterías and haciendas are converted land holdings and are often lovely examples of South American architecture.

Posadas, hospedajes, albergues, residencias, refugios and pensiones

are categories of inexpensive accommodation of a broadly similar standard across Latin America; **pensiones** and **residencias** are officially the most basic of all.

Eco-lodges are becoming increasingly popular and offer holiday packages including full board and outdoor activities in areas of natural beauty and private reserves.

Estancias provide the opportunity to experience working cattle ranches and can be found in Uruguay, Chile and Argentina.

Backpacker/youth hostels (albergues juveniles/albergues de la juventud) are mainly found in Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. These often have luggage storage and kitchen facilities.



Casas particulares Visitors to Cuba are often able to stay in rooms or apartments let in private houses. Outside Havana, these are often very simple. Breakfast is included and other meals can be arranged.

Camping Although camping is not popular in most countries, it is becoming more common in southern and central Latin America. Most official sites are well equipped with hot, running water, toilets and fire pits.

children & people with disabilities

Check beforehand that your accommodation offers facilities for children; cots and high chairs are not always available. Big hotels in major cities that are on the tourist trail are much more likely to have facilities that cater for families with children and travellers with mobility problems than more remote destinations.

rates

Most countries have some form of price regulation and there's sometimes a hotel tax and/or 10% service charge. Always check whether these are included in the price you are quoted. The good news is that foreigners do not always have to pay VAT.