HOTEL INTEL

WAKE AND BAKE WITH CANNABIS-FRIENDLY BOOKINGS FROM HIBNB



ROCHELLE LASH

If your idea of a good time is getting buzzed with a bong, there is a vacay for you.

In the time since territories including Canada have legalized marijuana, cannabis-friendly lodgings have bloomed faster than seedlings in a greenhouse grow-op.

HiBnb (hibnb.ca) is at the forefront of this trend. The Toronto-based booking agent handles more than 300 cannabis-friendly vacation rentals in North America and beyond, as well as tickets for events and festivals that celebrate reefer madness.

HiBnb is similar to Airbnb in that hosts of properties advertise on an online platform and welcome travellers to private accommodations of all sizes and styles.

But with HiBnb, the lodgings are all marijuana-friendly and in many cases are located near happenings focused on pot, including 420 festivities (a reference to April 20, the annual date for celebrations dedicated to the doobie).

These options are blessings for travellers who can't toke up at traditional hotels or inns. A 2020 survey conducted in the U.S. by Forbes and Travel Agent Central indicated that more than 6.5

million millennials and Gen-Xers had experienced pot-friendly destinations and 29 per cent of all leisure travellers in the U.S. wanted to.

"We connect the cannabis community with cool places to stay," HiBnb founder Elizabeth Becker said recently. "We received 12 new listings for lodging today and we can hardly keep up with the demand.

"Canada is poised to become a global leader in marijuana tourism, eventually with events, activities and excursions that are cannabis-centric."

Generally, Canada's climate is a challenge for ganja growers, but Becker says the harvest from the Okanagan Valley (known as B.C. Bud) is "killer" and she sees great potential in the agri-rich Niagara region.

Within Canada, guests can bring their own bud to their rented digs. To stock up, HiBnb partners with licensed retailers to sell and deliver infused products like lemon-lime sparkling water, munchies such as ice cream sandwiches, as well as CBD oils and topical creams for healing.

Because you can't cross borders with drugs, some of HiBnb's foreign lodgings provide edibles, drinks or pre-rolled joints, as well as accessories like bongs, vaporizers and pipes. The hosts are not authorized to sell, but they might stash a welcome gift of brownies in the fridge or a bath bomb in the tub.

HiBnb's destinations are as varied as the product line in a cannabis shop.



Ontario's Five Star Ranch features a hayloft that has been converted into a cannabis-friendly country cottage, which can be rented through HiBnb at hibnb.ca. HIBNB

A studio in Greater Victoria, B.C., located between the beach and the charming village of Sidney-by-the-Sea, has a patio for smoking and provides a grinder and a rolling station. Guests can preorder marijuana products and a nearby dispensary will deliver. The town is chock full of bakeries, breweries and bike paths.

The Five Star Ranch, a picturesque farm about 70 km west of Toronto, is alive with gardens and animals. A century-old barn has been turned into a country chalet with a gym, sauna, pool and hot tub. The host, an accomplished equestrienne, nutritionist and cultivator, permits smoking in covered outdoor spaces. If you need to score product, there's a marijuana shop in nearby Campbellville.

An all-season retreat called Weekend Wellness in Algonquin Highlands, Ont., flourishes in a northern landscape of towering trees and tranquil waters. This cluster of 15 progressive cabins offers group meditation, yoga or qigong, massage, lake activities, evening gatherings and walking through the woods. The owner, who permits smoking outdoors, sees cannabis as a plant-based medicine and a "psychedelic ally" in the journey to relaxation and self-discovery.

The pot producers in the rolling hills around San Francisco cultivate weed of renowned potency and purity. One such farm in Watsonville rents a sprawling house with a chef's kitchen and pool, and guests can spark up on the porch while enjoying compelling views of the countryside, wildlife and marijuana fields. This idyllic getaway is near the beaches of Monterey Bay and the wineries of Santa Cruz.

In Jamaica, smoking ganja is a way of life and spliffs are rolled as big as bananas, but perhaps you're ready to go higher with hallucinogenic hospitality. HiBnb's trippiest experience is a five-day psychedelic retreat at the Rastafari Indigenous Village, a jungle-like domain near Montego Bay. Guests awaken to the sounds of songbirds and a rushing river, and later enjoy plantbased meals and Rastafarian rituals. Each visit incorporates "visionary plant" materials such as psilocybin or mescaline.

The cannabis travel rush is the latest phase in the evolution of marijuana from counterculture fodder of the 1960s to a major business commodity.

HiBnb also books lodgings in Puerto Rico, Portugal, Mexico, South Africa and Central and South America, and Becker intends to expand to Germany and the Czech Republic as cannabis legislation evolves. Travellers must respect local laws concerning the use or purchase of cannabis and the legal age. rochellelash@gmail.com

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