

Duff on Hospitality Law

## **This Week in Online Travel: Booking.com's Cruise Venture and Airbnb's Hotel Strategy Shift**

By Greg Duff on 11.13.23 | Posted in Online Travel Update

After a few incredibly busy weeks in online travel, this past week was relatively quiet. Enjoy.

- **Booking.com Launches Cruises in the U.S.** For years now, we've featured stories in our weekly Update detailing the many challenges of booking cruises online. The multitude of available sailings, cabins, pre and post accommodations, excursions, etc. were always referenced when explaining why cruises would never fit well on traditional online booking platforms. Booking.com seems committed to change that. Last week, Booking.com began offering cruises to U.S. users through a white label cruise site with cruise agency, World Travel Holdings. A similar partnership with Priceline already exists. Users of the new platform will be able to select from over 10,000 sailings, and customers booking on the new platform will find exclusive offer and be eligible to receive shipboard credits of up to \$1000 (depending on amount spent to book the cruise). World Travel Agents will handle the bookings (which will be made via phone), customer service and customer emails.
- **Airbnb May Look (Again) to Hotels to Fill Accommodations Demand.** Faced with a regulatory crackdown that has slashed the number of its NYC rental listings, Airbnb may soon turn to boutique hotels to fill the gaps. Airbnb CEO, Brian Chesky, reported in last week's earnings call that boutique hotels presented "a real opportunity" for addressing the recent regulatory changes. Readers of our Update will recall that Airbnb went down this hotel road before – even going so far as to create a special category for hotels on its platform- but that it ultimately dropped the effort with the onset of the pandemic. Since that time, it has been difficult to discern whether Airbnb viewed hotels as a real opportunity. We will have to wait and see whether this latest effort by Airbnb is different than the past.

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For those of you who I saw in Long Beach this past week at the HSMAI Sales Forum, it was great to see you.

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### **Booking.com Launches Cruises in the U.S. in Partnership With World Travel Holdings**

*November 9, 2023 via Skift Travel News*

There doesn't seem to be much of a downside for Booking.com getting into cruises. As with flights, which it launched in 2019, we can only say — what took you so long? Dennis Schaal Share Known for many years as primarily a Europe-focused accommodations business, Amsterdam-based Booking.com on ...

### **Airbnb May Add More Boutique Hotels as NYC Listings Collapse**

*November 6, 2023 via Skift*

Diluting its short-term rental business is one thing Airbnb won't need to worry about if it indeed increases its hotel offerings in New York City. Dennis Schaal Share Now that Airbnb has seen its listings numbers collapse in New York City because of a regulatory crackdown, the short-term ...

### **easyJet holidays Partners with SiteMinder to Make Listed Hotels Bookable Until the Last Minute**

*November 6, 2023 via Hospitality Net*

easyJet holidays, the UK's fastest-growing tour operator, has partnered with SiteMinder, the name behind the only software platform that unlocks the full revenue potential of hotels, to provide its 5000 listed hotels the ability to become bookable until the last minute.