

What a Site: 36 Web Addresses You Should Know

Using the Internet to book travel is here to stay. In the past year, nearly 45 million booked their travel plans through the Web, up nearly 6 percent from the previous year, according to a survey by the Travel Industry Association. In this chart, we've updated our annual guide to travel sites, including new spins on old standbys and new sites worth perusing. We've also added a category on aggregators, sites that basically scan direct booking sites for the best deals and then point you there to purchase. One constant remains: Compare prices on two or more sites to make sure you're getting a fair deal. And, yes, there are plenty of other worthwhile sites out there—these are our admittedly subjective top picks.

—Carol Sottili

	SITE	PROS	CONS	NEW & NOTABLE
TRAVEL GUIDES / DESTINATION INFO	www.about.com/travel	Information is up to date; for example, to mark Republican National Convention, site featured article on the top 10 NYC attractions and landmarks. Detailed info on both domestic and international destinations. Caribbean islands particularly well covered.	Disconcerting audio pop-up ads are difficult to shut down.	Can sign up to receive free travel newsletters.
	www.fodors.com	Sections on hotels and restaurants— with reader reviews and ratings—are extensive; for example, 153 restaurants in Washington are discussed. Mini-guides about many North American destinations are posted. The feature "Right This Way: The Fodor's Blogs" contains interesting, timely travel articles.	Pop-ups are difficult to close. Info on international destinations not as extensive.	Offers fun, off-beat features, such as excerpts from book "The Sex Lives of Cannibals" by J. Maarten Troost.
	www.lonelyplanet.com	Designed for the traveler who doesn't do tours. Features include the "Thorn Tree" travelers forum, a good source of firsthand information, especially for out-of-the-way destinations. Travel advisories and warnings are up to date.	Travel guides are good, but they're also designed to whet your appetite just enough to buy the book. Postcards feature is out of date.	Has given up on posting downloadable upgrades to its guidebooks.
	www.timeout.com	Chock full of information on eating, drinking and lodging for major cities around the globe. Includes cool tidbits, such as drinking ages and last-call times.	Pushes the sale of its books. Many cluttering advertisements for other products.	This London-based company does its home town and New York City best.
	www.viamichelin.com	Best guide for driving directions in Europe. Also offers hotel and restaurant listings from Michelin Red guides.	Like most guidebook sites, too many opportunities to buy the book.	Redesigned Web page is much easier to navigate.