

Bunnyfoot



Trends of hyper-customisation and
hyper-personalisation in online travel
booking

May 2024

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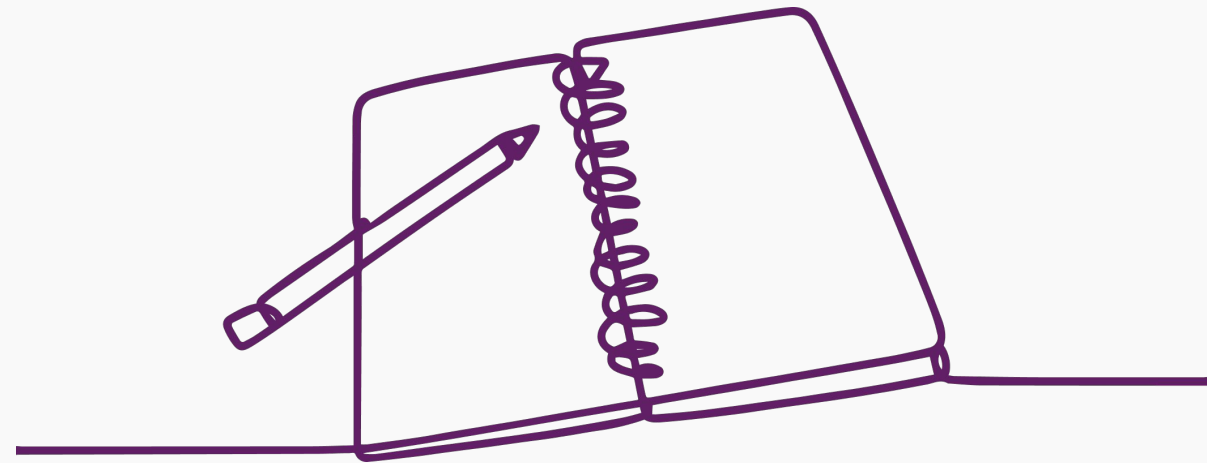
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What is hyper-personalisation and hyper-customisation?

First and foremost, let's clarify what hyper-personalisation and hyper-customisation mean in online travel booking.

- **Hyper-personalisation** involves using customer data, AI and Machine Learning to offer deeply insightful and contextually relevant suggestions. It goes beyond the basic personalisation of using someone's name or recognising their location into offering personalised itineraries and services such as spas, restaurants and local attractions that resonate with customers' interests.
- **Hyper-customisation** gives users a sense of ownership and control over their digital experience, providing tools to tailor the experience to their specific, nuanced requirements. For instance, when selecting a hotel users can consider not just the standard criteria such as budget, stars or meal packages but whether the property is LGBTQ-welcoming, if it allows pets or is located in a quiet area. When you offer hyper-customisable search or in other words, advanced search options, you arrange filters not based on hotel amenities but from the travellers' point of view, considering their unique needs and requirements.

In our exploration, we will focus on two areas where this trend manifests: search and wishlist features. As UX professionals, we understand that innovative features must integrate with the overall user journey, without compromising discoverability or usability. Through our investigation, we aim not only to provide examples for inspiration but also to offer a reflection on how such features get implemented. Additionally, we cover some UX fundamentals relating to search filters and wishlists.



Why should we care about hyper-customisation and hyper-personalisation?

After the pandemic 'travelling winter', travel has made a great comeback, stronger than ever before. Alongside the surge in travel and increased budgets, new and intriguing travel trends have emerged.

1. AI is revolutionising the travel industry; it is predicted that 32% of travel companies revenues will be influenced by AI in 2024.
2. A new category of traveller has appeared, known as 'bleisure travellers', who combine business trips with leisure tourism.
3. Sustainable tourism is on the rise with 69% of general travellers now actively seeking sustainable travel options.
4. Social media now plays a significant role in the creation of new travel destinations. Norway, Iceland and Morocco have grown in popularity due to social media posts.
5. Modern travellers have high expectations for the booking experience, seeking advanced personalisation and the ability to tailor trips to their needs. The trends of hyper-personalisation and hyper-customisation are booming, making it a fascinating phenomenon worth exploring.



1. Hyper-customisable search & personalised filters

Filtering results based on specific criteria such as location, travel dates, price range, star ratings and amenities is a common practice on booking sites. Let's have a look at how brands are stepping up to offer more user-centric filters that cater to special needs and predict user behaviour.



1.1 Persona-based filters

Expedia offers a special 'Traveller experience' filter category allowing users to quickly select properties relevant to their persona type, such as sustainability-minded travellers, LGBTQ travellers, business travellers and families.

- They make it easy for users to understand what filters mean by providing a short explanation.
- However, these filters are situated at the bottom of the filter panel. Consequently, some users might overlook them, resulting in a less effective and efficient search, and a missed opportunity to impress and hyper-personalise the experience. Undoubtedly, Expedia conducted their research; however, it would be advantageous to elevate the position of this unique filter for greater visibility.

Traveller experience

- Eco-certified
See properties certified by an accredited independent organisation for meeting certain sustainability standards.
- LGBTQ welcoming
See properties that pledge to make all guests feel safe, welcome and respected.
- Business-friendly
See properties with amenities to help you work comfortably, like WiFi and breakfast.
- Family-friendly
See properties that include family essentials like in-room conveniences and activities for the kids.

The screenshot shows the Expedia search interface for Colchester, England, United Kingdom, for a stay from Dec 21 to Dec 22 for 2 travelers in 1 room. The search results are sorted by 'Recommended' and show several hotel options. A purple box highlights the 'Traveller experience' filter category at the bottom of the filter panel, which is also detailed in a separate callout box.

1.2 Sustainability filters (1 of 2)

As we mentioned earlier, sustainable travelling is a significant trend in 2024 and an important requirement for planet-conscious travellers. Many booking platforms now offer this customisation feature, but not all execute it well, often merely 'ticking the box'.

- **Google** serves as a good example by clearly displaying the filter in the top panel and also providing links, enabling users to understand how emissions are calculated, should they wish to do so.

Google Flights search results for London LGW to Sharm El-Sheikh. The 'Emissions' filter is active, showing 'Any emissions' selected. A tooltip explains the filter options and provides a link to learn more about carbon emissions.

Flight	Duration	Stops	Emissions	Price
Wizz Air, 13:20 - 11:00 ¹ Separate tickets booked together · Wizz Air	19 hrs 40 min	1 stop	13 hrs 25 min	£250
easyJet, 17:35 - 11:00 ¹ Separate tickets booked together · easyJet, Wizz Air	15 hrs 25 min	2 stops	537 kg CO ₂ +12% emissions	£290
easyJet, 09:25 - 16:40	5 hrs 15 min	Non-stop	476 kg CO ₂ Avg emissions	£290

Google Flights search results for London to Paris. The 'Less emissions' filter is active. A tooltip shows the selected flight has 40 kg CO₂, which is 9% lower than the typical 44 kg CO₂ for this route.

Flight	Duration	Stops	Emissions	Price
easyJet, 14:35 - 16:45	1 hr 10 min	Non-stop	40 kg CO ₂	£23
easyJet, 18:10 - 20:25	1 hr 15 min	Non-stop	40 kg CO ₂ -9% emissions	£30
easyJet, 17:35 - 19:50	1 hr 15 min	Non-stop	41 kg CO ₂ -7% emissions	£31



1.2 Sustainability filters (2 of 2)

In 2021, **Booking.com** introduced a 'Travel Sustainable' filter to help travellers choose 'green' accommodation.

- However, the presentation of these filters falls short in explaining what the different sustainability levels mean. Having such a classification does not aid users in making informed decisions.

Travel Sustainable

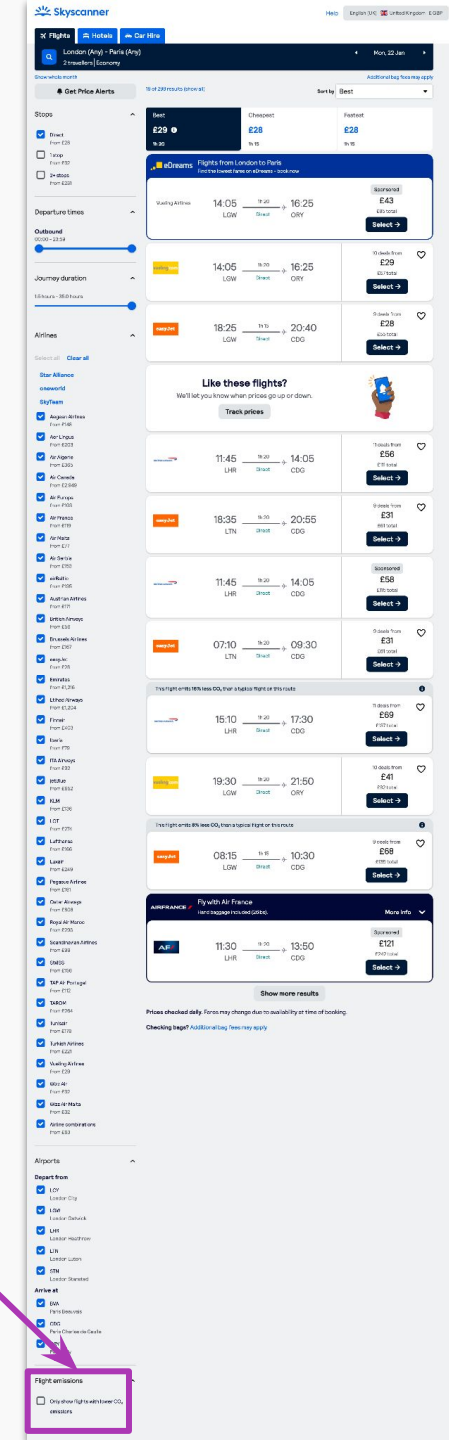
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3+	48
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 and higher	89
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 and higher	244
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 and higher	790

Skyscanner's presentation of the 'Flight emissions' filter lacks in both discoverability and quick comprehension.

- This trendy filter is positioned at the bottom of the list. It also lacks copy to explain how CO₂ emissions are calculated or clarify what they mean for travellers without climate knowledge.

Flight emissions

Only show flights with lower CO₂ emissions



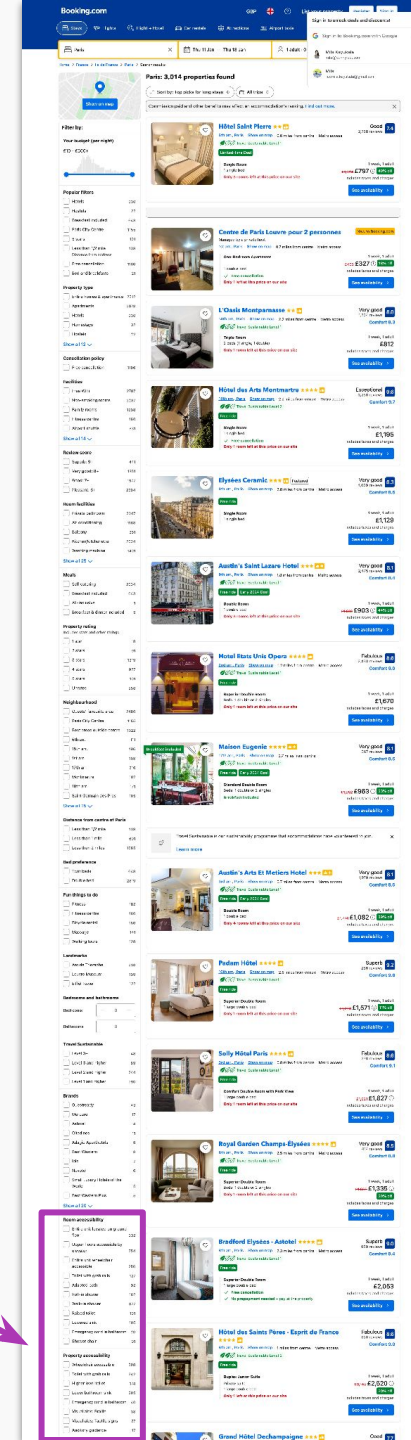
1.3 Accessibility filters

Booking.com offers a variety of filters to assist people with accessibility needs in finding accommodations that suit their individual requirements.

- Results can be refined using several "property accessibility" and "room accessibility" features, including braille, tactile signs, auditory guidance, roll-in or walk-in showers.
- These accessibility filters may be critical for a minority of users who might struggle in discovering them. The filter categories are located at the very bottom of the panel, beneath 16 expanded filter sections. Reaching them might require extensive scrolling/tapping, considerable attention and time/patience especially if users rely on assistive technologies. Opportunities to identify and better serve these customers should always be explored.

Room accessibility	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entire unit located on ground floor	332
<input type="checkbox"/> Upper floors accessible by elevator	754
<input type="checkbox"/> Entire unit wheelchair accessible	256
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet with grab rails	127
<input type="checkbox"/> Adapted bath	92
<input type="checkbox"/> Roll-in shower	162
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk-in shower	377
<input type="checkbox"/> Raised toilet	101
<input type="checkbox"/> Lowered sink	105
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency cord in bathroom	20
<input type="checkbox"/> Shower chair	91

Property accessibility	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair accessible	308
<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet with grab rails	242
<input type="checkbox"/> Higher level toilet	174
<input type="checkbox"/> Lower bathroom sink	205
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency cord in bathroom	40
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual aids: Braille	38
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual aids: Tactile signs	27
<input type="checkbox"/> Auditory guidance	17

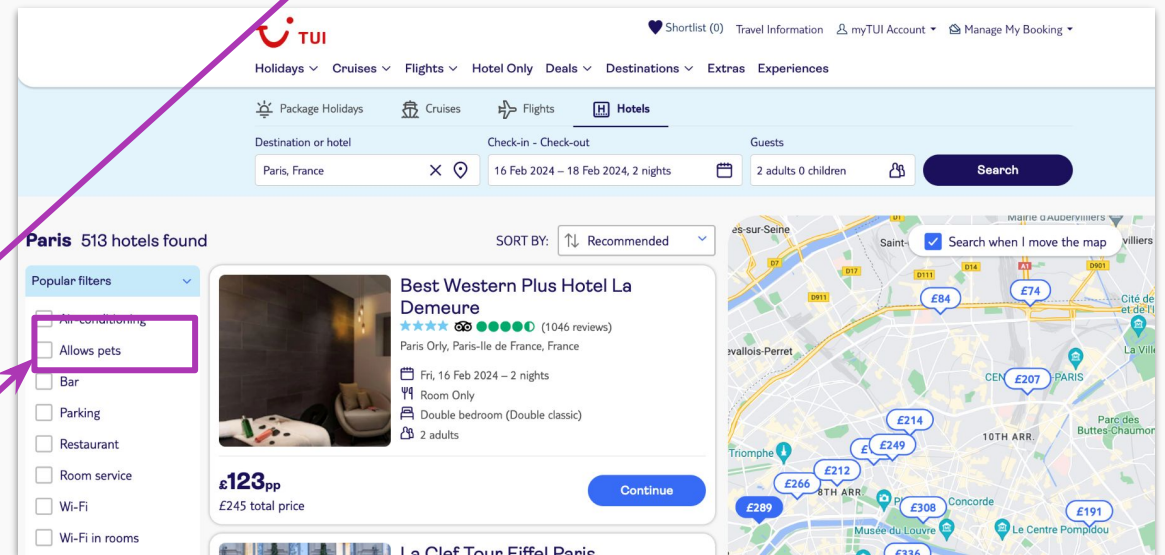
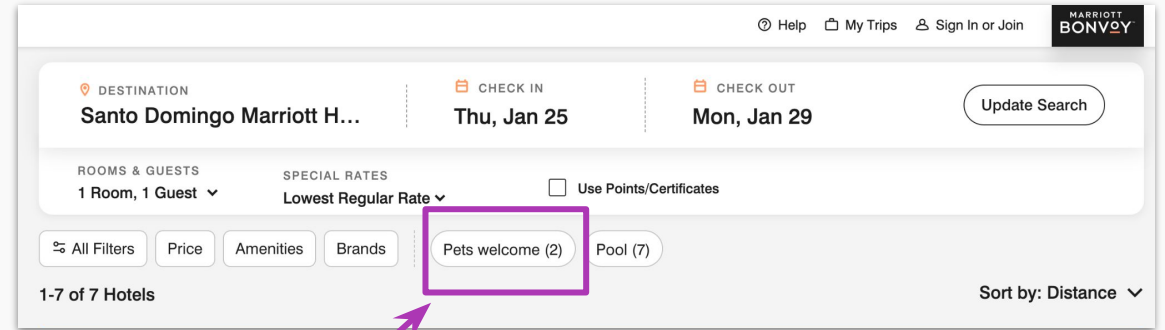


1.4 Pet-friendly filter (1 of 2)

The popularity of pet-friendly travel surged during the pandemic and shows no signs of slowing down, evidenced by the development of hotel dog parks, pup perks, and more. A [2022 survey conducted by Hilton](#) found that more than half of pet owners plan to travel with their pets. Considering this trend, it becomes crucial to have the ability to filter for places that welcome pets.

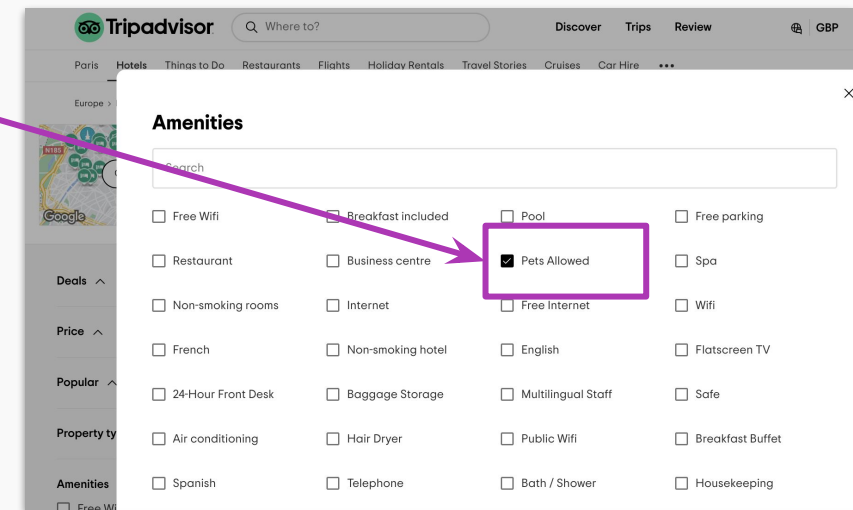
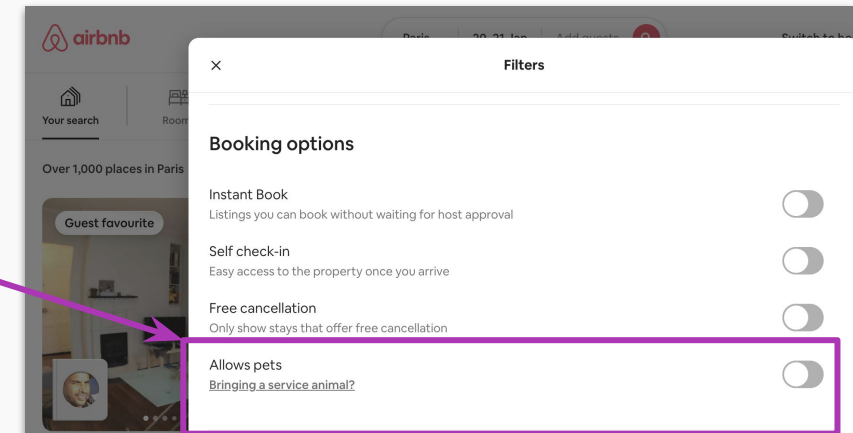
Some brands recognise the importance of appealing to pet owners and prominently feature 'Pets' filters on their websites:

- For instance, the **Marriott** hotel group's website features a separate tab for this filter in the top panel.
- Similarly, **TUI** smartly allocates its 'Pets' filter within the 'Popular filters' category, ensuring it is upfront and easily accessible.



1.4 Pet-friendly filter (2 of 2)

- Not every travel brand is willing to highlight their 'Pet-friendly' filter. For instance, **Airbnb** positions it within the 'Booking Options' section, alongside 'Instant Booking' and 'Free Cancellation' — a placement that may not be the most obvious for pet owners.
- However, most brands, including **Booking.com, Expedia, KAYAK and Tripadvisor**, have added the 'Pet' filter to their 'Amenities/Facilities' category. While it's likely these brands have conducted Information Architecture research to support these decisions, we suggest that there might be better placements. For example, adding 'Pet Owners' as a filter under Expedia's 'Traveler Experience' category could be a more intuitive solution based on the needs of this persona.

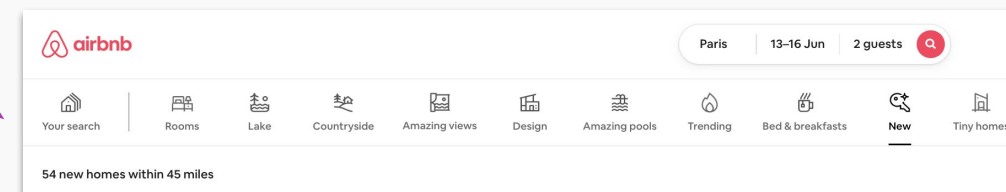
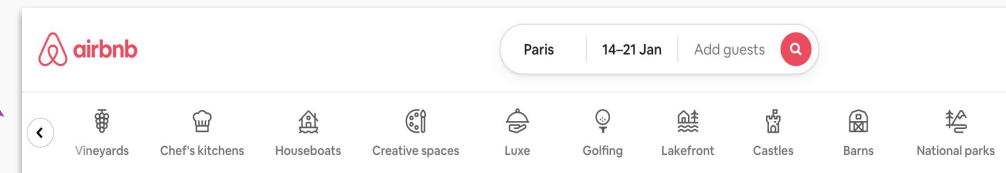
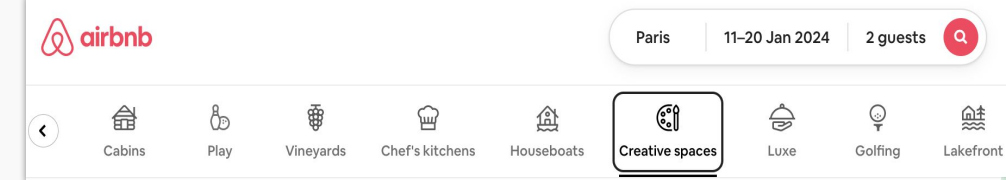
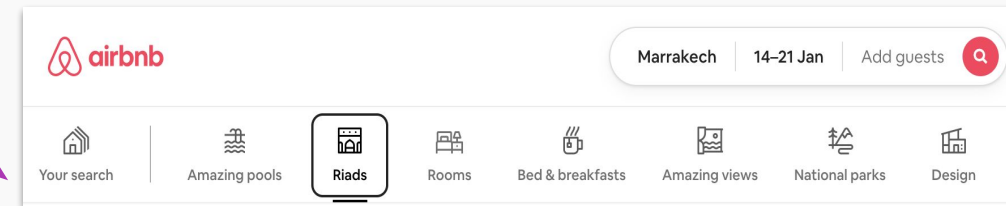


1.5 Unique 'Property type' filters

Airbnb's 'Property type' filters dynamically adjust to a selected destination and offer options uniquely available there, whether it is based on local architecture, landscapes, activities, or cultural trends. You can filter for 'Riads' in Marrakech, 'Minsus' in Taipei, 'Surfing' in Dahab, or 'Chef's Kitchens' and 'Creative Spaces' in Paris.

They are displayed in the top panel to capture users' attention with their visually appealing icons. They are engaging but don't always work well.

- For example, Paris has an overwhelming 28 categories to choose from, including irrelevant options outside of Paris such as 'Vineyards', 'Castles', 'Camping', 'National Parks', and 'Farms'.
- Alongside property types, there are generic categories such as 'New', 'Trending', 'Rooms', and 'Bed & Breakfast'. The system does not support multiple selection making the interaction with these aesthetically pleasing filters less efficient.



1.6 Weather and seasonal trends

Google's 'Weather' and 'Crowds' features provide useful aspects to consider when making a decision.

- These are secondary features, discreetly designed as additional tabs that open in modal windows, providing options for users who wish to make more informed decisions. For instance, people who prefer to travel off-peak to avoid crowds, or those who are willing to modify their search based on forecasted sunny weather, can enjoy a truly personalised search experience.
- It would be interesting to see if Google or any other brand might introduce a filter for noise levels or crowd density in the future. Such filters would undoubtedly benefit many travellers.

The image shows a Google Hotels search interface for London. The search results are filtered for 'Sun, 7 Jan' to 'Mon, 8 Jan' for 2 people. A modal window titled 'When to visit' is open, displaying weather and crowd data for the first four months of the year.

Explore the weather and other seasonal trends

Where to stay When to visit What you'll pay

London is a year-round destination, getting busiest Jun–Sep and in the run-up to Christmas and New Year (Dec). Jul–Aug is when many Europeans take holidays, ... [Read more](#)

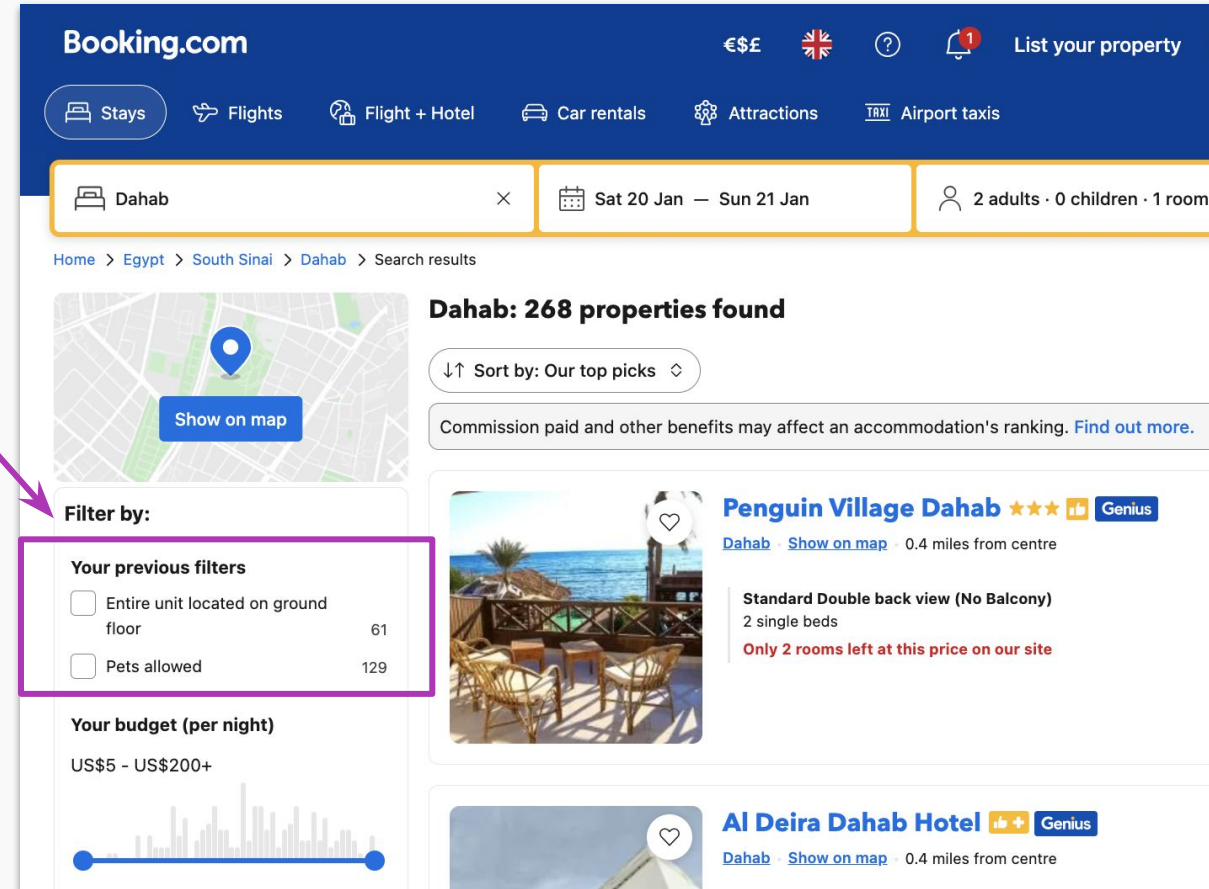
Month	Weather	Crowd Density
January	4°C – 8°C Typically 12+ rainy days	Somewhat busy Crowds are moderate in January
February	4°C – 9°C	
March	5°C – 11°C	
April	7°C – 14°C	

1.7 Personalised filters based on user history

The prime example of hyper-personalisation in search is offered by **Booking.com**. Their site suggests filters based on users' previous searches.

- These dynamic smart filters are not only simple to set up, but they also provide an excellent user experience. Therefore, more travel companies should save users' preferences across different searches

With the advancements in AI, we are approaching a point where websites will utilise available user data to present personalised product listing pages, complete with pre-applied filters tailored to, for example, typical budget, number of travellers, standard room type/bed



The screenshot shows the Booking.com interface for a search in Dahab, Egypt, from January 20th to 21st for 2 adults in 1 room. A purple box highlights the 'Filter by' section, which includes 'Your previous filters' (Entire unit located on ground floor: 61, Pets allowed: 129) and 'Your budget (per night)' (US\$5 - US\$200+). The search results show 268 properties found, with 'Penguin Village Dahab' and 'Al Deira Dahab Hotel' as top results.

Booking.com €\$£ 🇬🇧 ? 📧 1 List your property

Stays Flights Flight + Hotel Car rentals Attractions Airport taxis

Dahab × Sat 20 Jan — Sun 21 Jan 2 adults · 0 children · 1 room

Home > Egypt > South Sinai > Dahab > Search results

Dahab: 268 properties found

Sort by: Our top picks

Commission paid and other benefits may affect an accommodation's ranking. [Find out more.](#)

Filter by:

Your previous filters

- Entire unit located on ground floor 61
- Pets allowed 129

Your budget (per night)

US\$5 - US\$200+

Penguin Village Dahab ★★★★★ **Genius**

Dahab · [Show on map](#) · 0.4 miles from centre

Standard Double back view (No Balcony)
2 single beds
Only 2 rooms left at this price on our site

Al Deira Dahab Hotel **Genius**

Dahab · [Show on map](#) · 0.4 miles from centre



2. Some search filters fundamentals

When offering an additional level of customisation, brands should not sacrifice usability, so it is best to keep in mind the following fundamentals:

1. **Offer a sufficient number of filters** to enable users to customise their search.
2. Identify the **most important filters and prioritise them** on the page to streamline the initial search process.
3. **Make it easy for users to refine their search criteria.**
4. **Set up logical filter groups and use clear labels.**
 - a. Ensure logical grouping based on users' mental models to facilitate the filtering process. This is particularly important for mobile, where many designs use collapsed accordions to avoid displaying all categories content at once.
 - b. Use concise and easily understandable labels for filters. Avoid jargon and ensure that users can quickly grasp the purpose of each filter option.
5. **Design filters in a conventional way** so that it's already familiar to users.

Now we will illustrate how travel company websites either adhere to or deviate from the above fundamentals...



2.1 Offer a sufficient number of filters (1 of 3)

Airbnb offers a well-curated selection of filters that covers both the expected requests, as well as helpful additional criteria.

- Their filters include industry standards such as 'Type of place', 'Price range', 'Guest favourites', 'Property type' and 'Amenities'.
- More granular filters such as 'Host Language', and 'Accessibility Features' are available further down the list.

The screenshot shows the 'Filters' panel on the Airbnb website. It is organized into several sections:

- Type of place:** A search bar with three buttons: 'Any type' (selected), 'Room', and 'Entire home'.
- Price range:** A horizontal price range slider with a bar chart above it. Below the slider are input fields for 'Minimum £ 8' and 'Maximum £ 330+'.
- Rooms and beds:** Three rows of filter buttons for 'Bedrooms', 'Beds', and 'Bathrooms'. Each row has an 'Any' button and buttons for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8+.
- Top-tier stays:** Two featured categories: 'Guest favourites' (The most loved homes on Airbnb, according to guests) and 'Luxe' (Extraordinary homes with elevated design, inspected for quality).
- Property type:** Four buttons with icons: 'House', 'Flat', 'Guest house', and 'Hotel'.

The screenshot shows the 'Amenities' panel on the Airbnb website, featuring several sections of filter options:

- Popular in Paris:** A grid of checkboxes for 'Hot tub', 'Wifi', 'Kitchen', 'Washing machine', 'Free parking', and 'Dryer'. A 'Show more' link is below.
- Booking options:** A list of toggle switches for 'Instant Book', 'Self check-in', 'Free cancellation', and 'Allows pets'. A link 'Bringing a service animal?' is under 'Allows pets'.
- Accessibility features:** A section for 'Guest entrance and parking' with checkboxes for 'Step-free guest entrance', 'Accessible parking spot', 'Guest entrance wider than 32 inches (81 centimetres)', and 'Step-free path to the guest entrance'. A 'Show more' link is below.
- Host language:** A grid of checkboxes for 'English', 'German', 'French', and 'Japanese'. A 'Show more' link is below.
- Clear all:** A 'Clear all' button on the left and a 'Show 1,000+ places' button on the right.

2.1 Offer a sufficient number of filters (2 of 3)

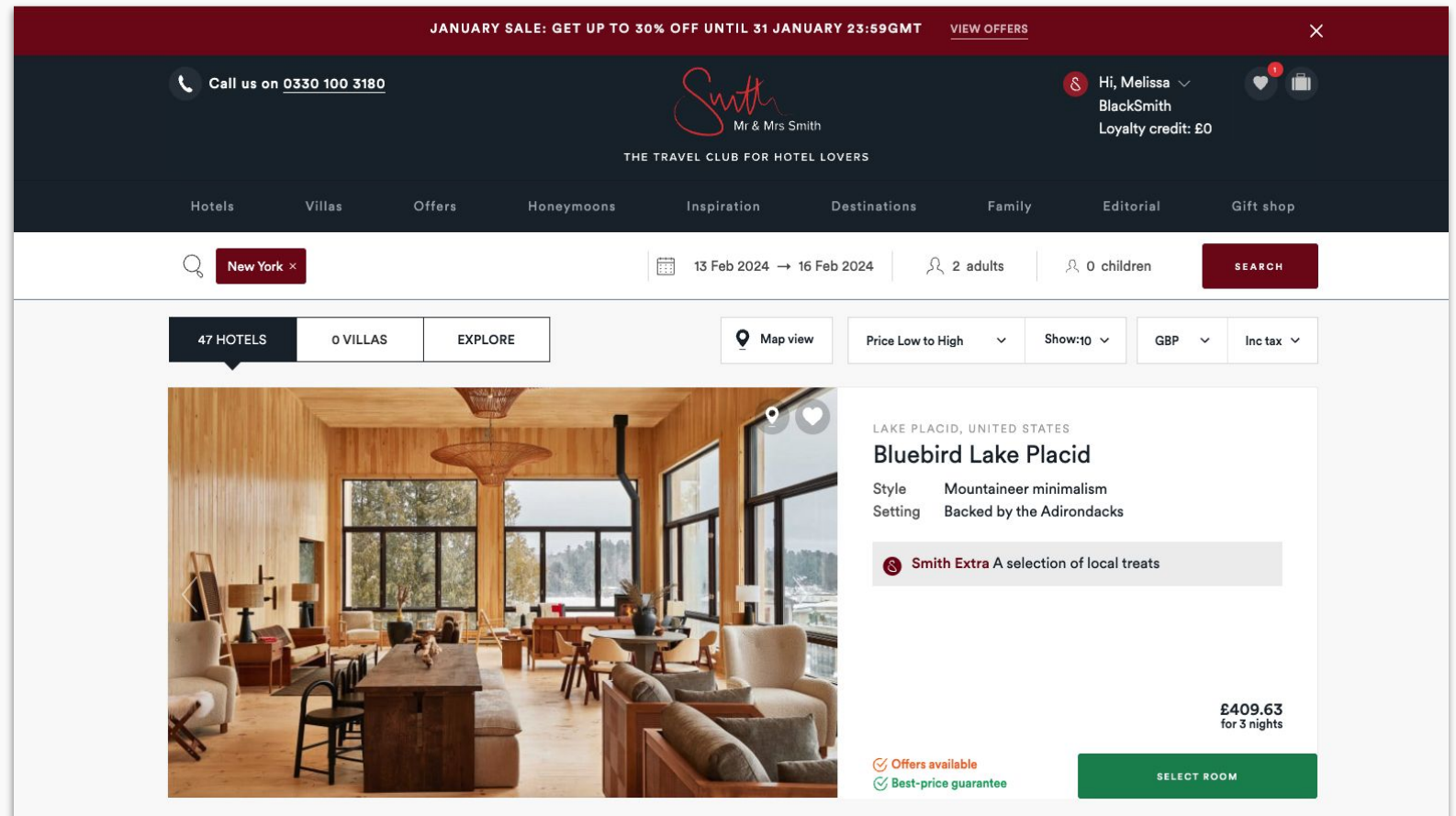
Amex covers the basics; however, it does not offer key additional filters such as accessibility, sustainability, or meal options, which are critical for some travellers.

The screenshot shows a travel website interface for searching hotels in Paris, France. The search criteria are for the dates 03/02/24 to 04/02/24 for 2 adults. The results are sorted by 'Recently Booked'. The left sidebar contains various filters: 'Filters' (1608 out of 1608 hotels displayed), 'Popular Filters' (Special offers or discounts, Parking, Hotel, Spa, Apartment), 'Card Member Benefits' (Fine Hotels + Resorts), 'Filter' (Search by hotel name, amenities, etc.), 'Promotions' (Special offers or discounts), 'Price Range' (£33 to £2,948), 'TripAdvisor Rating' (5 stars to 1 star), 'Hotel Class' (5 stars to 1 star), 'Property Types' (Hotel, Apartment, Extended stay, Other, Guest house), and 'Amenities' (Babysitting/Child Care, Business Centre, Children/Teen Programs, Continental Meal Plan, Parking). The main content area displays a list of hotels with their names, ratings, and prices. The first hotel is Waldorf Astoria Versailles - Trianon Palace, followed by B&B HOTEL Paris Grand Roissy CDG, Fraser Suites Harmonie Paris La Défense, Hôtel Beauregard, Neuville Arc de Triomphe, OKKO Hotels Paris Rueil-Malmaison, Hôtel Bootcamp, and XO Hotel Paris.



2.1 Offer a sufficient number of filters (3 of 3)

The **Mr & Mrs Smith** website fail to offer even the basic filters, such as 'Price, 'Star rating', 'Meal plans', or 'Facilities', which makes it hard to choose a place.



The screenshot displays the Mr & Mrs Smith website interface. At the top, a dark red banner announces a "JANUARY SALE: GET UP TO 30% OFF UNTIL 31 JANUARY 23:59GMT" with a "VIEW OFFERS" link. Below this, the user's name "Hi, Melissa" and account details "BlackSmith" and "Loyalty credit: £0" are visible. The navigation menu includes "Hotels", "Villas", "Offers", "Honeymoons", "Inspiration", "Destinations", "Family", "Editorial", and "Gift shop". The search bar shows "New York" as the selected location, with dates "13 Feb 2024 → 16 Feb 2024" and "2 adults" and "0 children" specified. The search results for "Bluebird Lake Placid" are shown, featuring a large image of a modern interior. The listing includes the location "LAKE PLACID, UNITED STATES", the name "Bluebird Lake Placid", and details: "Style: Mountaineer minimalism" and "Setting: Backed by the Adirondacks". A "Smith Extra" offer is highlighted: "A selection of local treats". The price is listed as "£409.63 for 3 nights". At the bottom, there are checkmarks for "Offers available" and "Best-price guarantee", and a green "SELECT ROOM" button.



2.2 Prioritise key filters (1 of 3)

Sidebar filters are a common practice in most travel booking websites where brands highlight the main filters for their users at the top of the list. Some of them showcase user-centric organising principles for filters for example:

- **Hotels.com, Expedia and TUI (Hotels)**, use customer data to raise the most commonly used filters to the top of the list. However, when these 'popular filters' lack personalisation, they might fail to appear relevant to users.

The screenshot shows the Hotels.com interface. At the top, there's a search bar with 'Going to Colchester, England, United King...', 'Dates 27 Jan - 28 Jan', and 'Travellers 2 travellers, 1 room'. Below this is a map and a price range filter set to '£195 to £554'. A sidebar on the left contains a 'Filter by' section with a purple border, listing 'Popular filters' such as 'Bed and breakfast', 'Breakfast included', 'Pool', 'Spa', and 'Reserve now, pay later'. The main content area displays a list of hotels with their names, locations, amenities, and prices. The first hotel is 'Talbooth House & Spa' in Dedham, priced at £350 for 1 night. Other hotels include 'The Crown Stoke By Nayland' (£274), 'The Marquis' (£249), 'Lifehouse Spa & Hotel' (£279), and 'The Black Lion, Long Melford'.

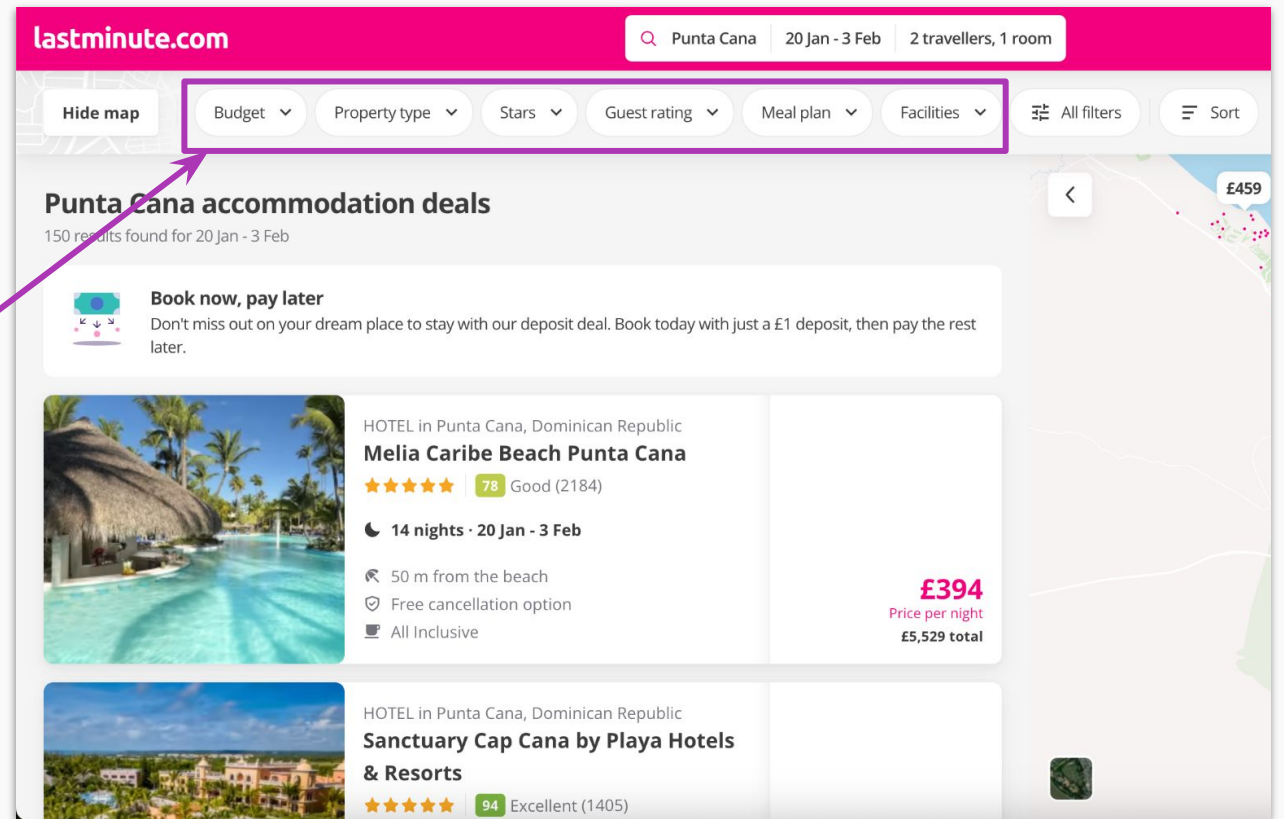
The screenshot shows the TUI interface. At the top, there's a search bar with 'Destination or hotel New York, NY, USA', 'Check-in - Check-out 12 Feb 2024 - 16 Feb 2024, 4 nights', and 'Guests 2 adults'. Below this is a map and a price range filter set to '£288pp'. A sidebar on the left contains a 'Popular filters' section with a purple border, listing filters such as 'Air-conditioning', 'Allows pets', 'Bar', 'Parking', 'Restaurant', 'Room service', 'Wi-Fi', and 'Wi-Fi in rooms'. The main content area displays a list of hotels with their names, locations, amenities, and prices. The first hotel is 'The Manhattan at Times Square Hotel' in New York, New York, USA, priced at £288pp for 1 night. Other hotels include 'Paramount Hotel' in New York, New York, USA.



2.2 Prioritise key filters (2 of 3)

Another filter menu alternative is the use of a top bar where primary filters are represented by separate buttons, while secondary filters are grouped under an 'All Filters' button.

- For example, **Lastminute.com** uses this approach, featuring 'Budget', 'Property type', 'Star', 'Guest rating', 'Meal plans', and 'Facilities' as their main filters.



2.2 Prioritise key filters (3 of 3)

Travelodge

Home Business Best Price Finder Deals Destinations Manage Booking Log In / Sign up

You searched for: Central London Check in: Mon 15 Jan Check out: Mon 22 Jan Rooms & guests: 1 room, 1 guest Search again

85 hotels found

Open map

Filter by: SuperRooms NEW Hotel Travelodge PLUS Bar Cafe Parking More filters Relevance

NEW DESIGN London Covent Garden 0.2 miles away from Central London From £792.93 for 7 nights See availability

On **Travelodge**, the most prominent filters are 'SuperRooms', 'NEW Hotel' and 'Travelodge PLUS'. Not only are these filters not important for most travellers, they are also company jargon. Additionally, the other top bar filters, such as 'Bar Cafe' and 'Parking', appear inadequate for effectively narrowing down the selection from the 85 hotels found.

Travelodge

Home Business Best Price Finder Deals Destinations Manage Booking Log In / Sign up

You searched for: Central London Check in: Mon 15 Jan Check out: Mon 22 Jan Rooms & guests: 1 room, 1 guest Search again

85 hotels found

Open map

Filter by: SuperRooms NEW Hotel Travelodge PLUS Bar Cafe Parking More filters Relevance

Distance in miles: 15 Price range: 284.93 - 810 Food & Drink: Bar Cafe (53) Parking: Free on-site parking (15), Chargeable on-site parking (19), Free parking nearby (1), Chargeable parking nearby (48) Hotel Category/Type: Airport (1), City centre (23)

In contrast, the 'Price range' filter, which is commonly used, is hidden behind 'More filters', making the filtering experience more challenging than it needs to be.



2.3 Make it easy to refine search criteria (1 of 2)

The filter bars on **Lastminute.com** and **Trivago's** product listing pages remain persistent, enabling users to refine their search criteria from any position on the page.

The screenshot shows the Trivago search interface. At the top, there are navigation links for Favourites, EN · £, Log in, and Menu. Below this is a search bar with the following criteria: Destination: Paris, Check in: Sat, 27/01/24, Check out: Sun, 28/01/24, and Guests and rooms: 2 Guests, 1 Room. A prominent purple box highlights the search bar and the filter bars below it. The filter bars include: Price: per night (£0 - £500 +), Filters (Select), Guest rating (All), Property type (Select), and Location (City centre). Below the filters, there is a 'Sort by' dropdown set to 'Our recommendations', 'Stays found: 1000+', 'Booking sites searched: 356', and a 'View map' button. The main content area shows a hotel listing for 'Best Western Premier Trocadéro la ...' with a 4-star rating, 8.0 guest rating, and a price of £160. The listing includes a 'View Deal' button and a 'Hotel site' link.

The screenshot shows the Lastminute.com search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the following criteria: Paris, 28 Jan - 29 Jan, and 2 travellers, 1 room. Below this is a search bar with the following criteria: Hide map, Budget, Property type, Stars, Guest rating, Meal plan, Facilities, All filters, and Sort. A prominent purple box highlights the search bar and the filter bars below it. The main content area shows 'Paris accommodation deals' with 300+ results found for 28 Jan - 29 Jan. Two hotel listings are visible: 'Hotel Trianon Rive Gauche' (4 stars, Very Good, £209 total price) and 'Hotel Bleu de Grenelle Tour Eiffel' (4 stars, Excellent, £192 total price). A map on the right shows the location of the hotels in Paris, with various districts and landmarks labeled.



2.3 Make it easy to refine search criteria (2 of 2)

First Choice stands out as a rare example of a sticky sidebar filter menu. It allows users to access it easily even from the bottom of the product list.

The screenshot shows the First Choice website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'FIRST CHOICE' logo and links for 'Travel Information', 'Manage My Booking', and 'Shortlist (0)'. Below this is a search bar with 'HOLIDAYS', 'DEALS', 'DESTINATIONS', 'FLIGHT FREE', and 'HOTELS' tabs. A promotional banner for 'Summer 2024 savings!' is visible. The main search results area shows a calendar for February 2024 with prices per person. A purple box highlights a sticky sidebar filter menu on the left, which includes sections for 'FILTER HOLIDAYS', 'BOARD TYPE', 'STAR RATING', and 'TRIP ADVISOR RATING'. The filter menu is positioned over the search results, demonstrating its sticky nature.

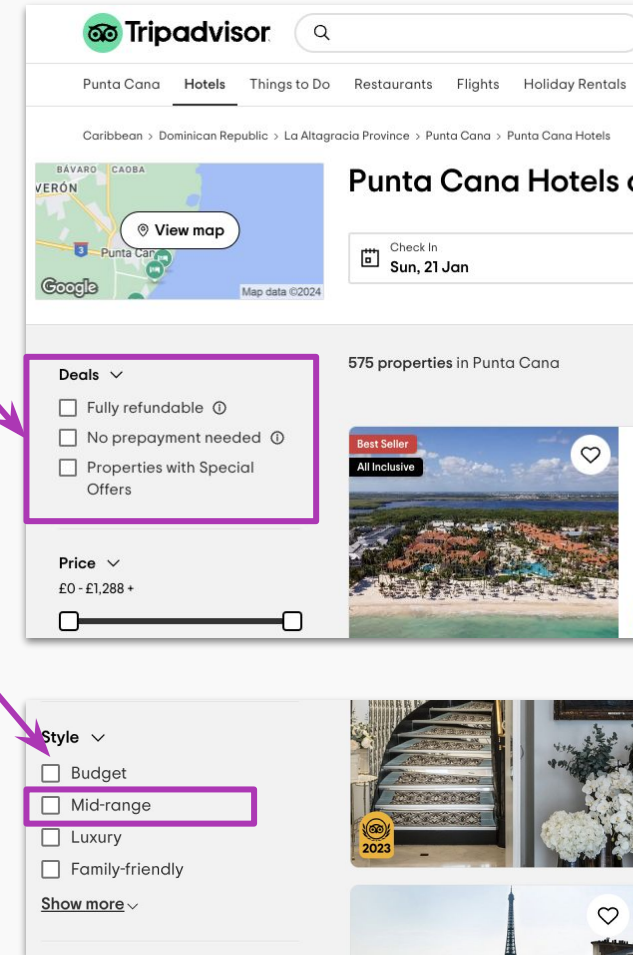
The screenshot shows the product detail page for Staycity Aparthotel Bordeaux City Centre. The page features a large image of the hotel building, a star rating of 4.5, and a price of £450 per person. A purple box highlights the sticky sidebar filter menu on the left, which is identical to the one in the previous screenshot. The filter menu is positioned over the product details, demonstrating its sticky nature. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with contact information and logos for ABTA and TUI.

2.4 Logical grouping & clear labels (1 of 3)

The 'Deals' category on **Tripadvisor** is misleadingly labelled, as most options under this heading are unrelated to deals.

- For instance, it includes options like 'Fully refundable' or 'No prepayment needed'. A more accurate label for this filter group would be 'Payment Options'.

Also, their 'Style' filter group contains an unclear 'Mid-range' option, where users may be aided by providing a tooltip.



2.4 Logical grouping & clear labels (2 of 3)

TUI presents detailed filter categories like 'Other Facilities', 'Health and Beauty', and 'Family', which unnecessarily extend the length of the filter sidebar.

The screenshot displays a travel booking interface. On the left is a filter sidebar with four categories: 'Other facilities', 'Health and beauty', 'Family', and 'Sports and activities'. Each category has a dropdown arrow and a list of checkboxes. The 'Other facilities' category includes 'Lift'. 'Health and beauty' includes 'Sauna' and 'Spa'. 'Family' includes 'Childcare' and 'Kids' pool'. 'Sports and activities' includes 'Bike rental', 'Fitness room', 'Golf course', 'Sailing', 'Tennis court', and 'Windsurfing'. On the right, three hotel listings are shown. Each listing includes a photo, the hotel name, star rating, review count, location, dates, room type, and price per person (pp) and total price. A 'Continue' button is present for each listing.

Other facilities ▾

- Lift

Health and beauty ▾

- Sauna
- Spa

Family ▾

- Childcare
- Kids' pool

Sports and activities ▾

- Bike rental
- Fitness room
- Golf course
- Sailing
- Tennis court
- Windsurfing

Hotel 1: 2 adults, £956pp, £1,912 total price, Continue

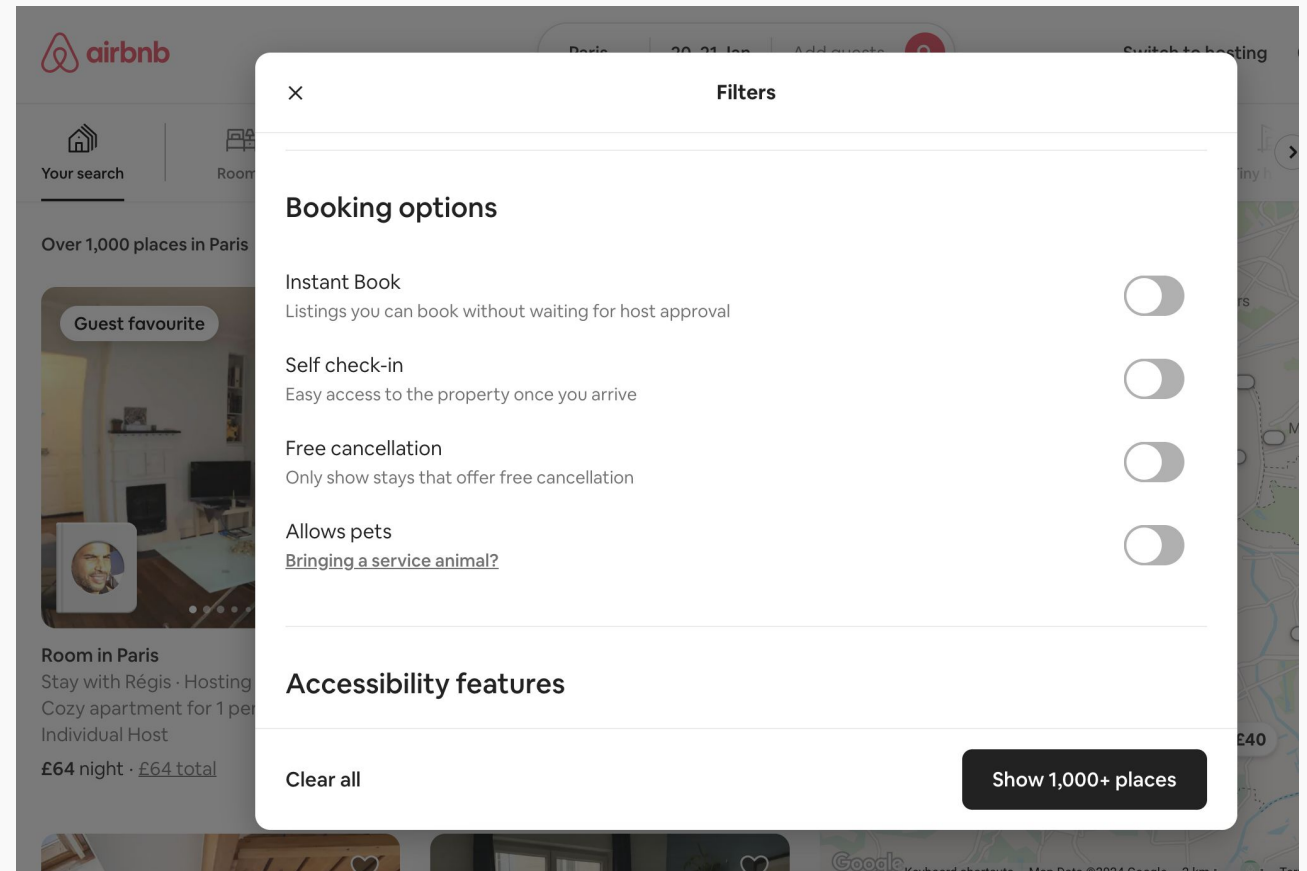
Golden Tulip Washington Opera (466 reviews)
Paris Orly, Paris-Ile de France, France
Mon, 11 Mar 2024 – 13 nights
Room Only
Double bedroom (Double superior)
2 adults

£2328pp, £4,656 total price, Continue

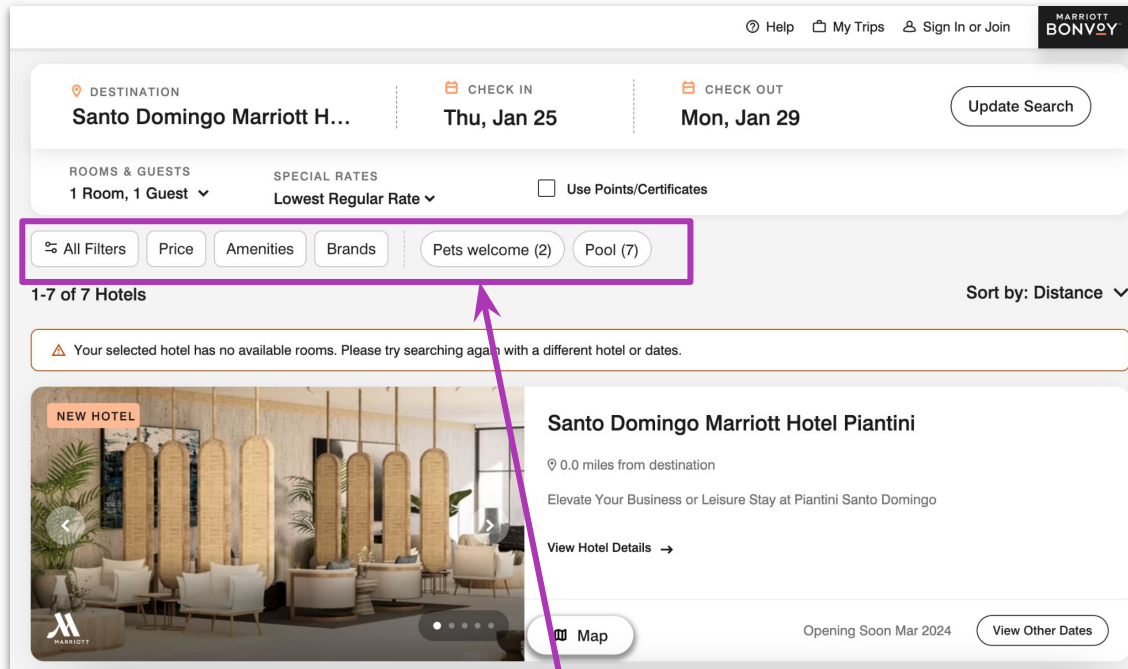
M Social Hotel Paris Opera (84 reviews)
Paris Orly, Paris-Ile de France, France
500 m from the city centre
Mon, 11 Mar 2024 – 13 nights

2.4 Logical grouping & clear labels (3 of 3)

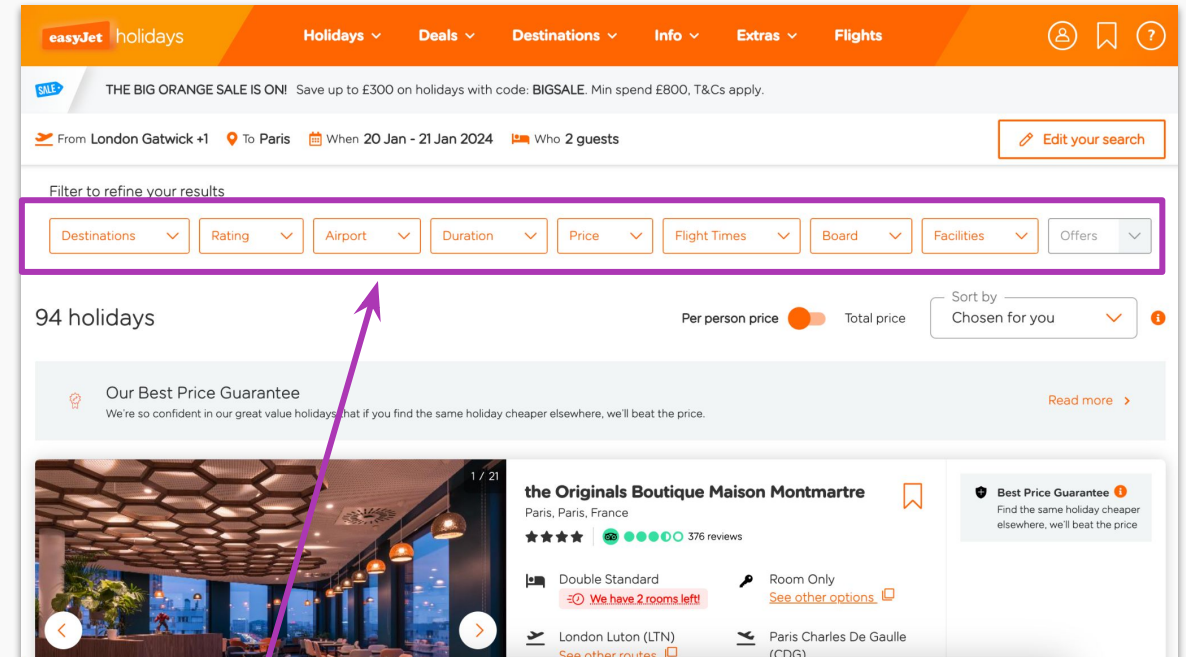
Airbnb's 'Booking options' category, which includes expected filters like 'Instant booking' and 'Free cancellation', also features like 'Self check-in' and 'Allows pets'. These latter options seem out of place, creating an impression that this category serves as a catch-all for various filters that don't fit elsewhere.



2.5 Design filters in a conventional way



The filter buttons on the **Marriott** website are missing down arrows, which are typically used to indicate the presence of a dropdown menu.



On the **easyJet** website, the filter buttons conform to standard design conventions. But their design fails on accessibility with its low contrast.



Conclusion for search filters

The examples provided highlight the importance of implementing new hyper-customisable filters without compromising basic usability. No matter how sleek or trendy features might be, it's crucial that users can discover, understand, and use them without difficulty. Therefore, we strongly recommend conducting regular audits of your booking experience, including the search functionality.

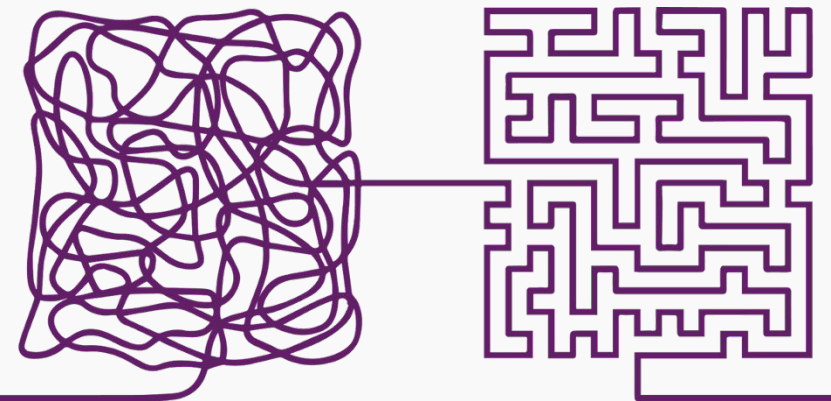
- Evaluate each design decision from the users' perspective through [iterative testing](#). Every new UI element, filter, or button should meet user needs yet remain straightforward.
- When adopting new trends, it's vital to also cater to users with accessibility needs by conducting [accessibility testing](#) and [audits](#).
- A well-organised [Information Architecture](#) is fundamental to a good user experience. This involves establishing optimal filter groups and proper search menus. Read about Information architecture research activities [here](#).
- Understanding your key users well and keeping up with the pace of change in their needs and behaviours is crucial. Conducting comprehensive [user research](#) to develop personas and map out booking journeys will help you stay up-to-date and thrive in the highly competitive environment by offering the most user-friendly booking experience.



3. Wishlist features with intelligent cross-selling strategies

Wishlists on travel booking websites serve as a convenient tool for users to curate and save their preferred destinations, accommodation, or activities.

Forward-thinking brands are taking their wishlist feature a step further by enabling users to create itineraries from their list of saved items and find personalised inspiration to enhance their trips directly from the wishlist page.

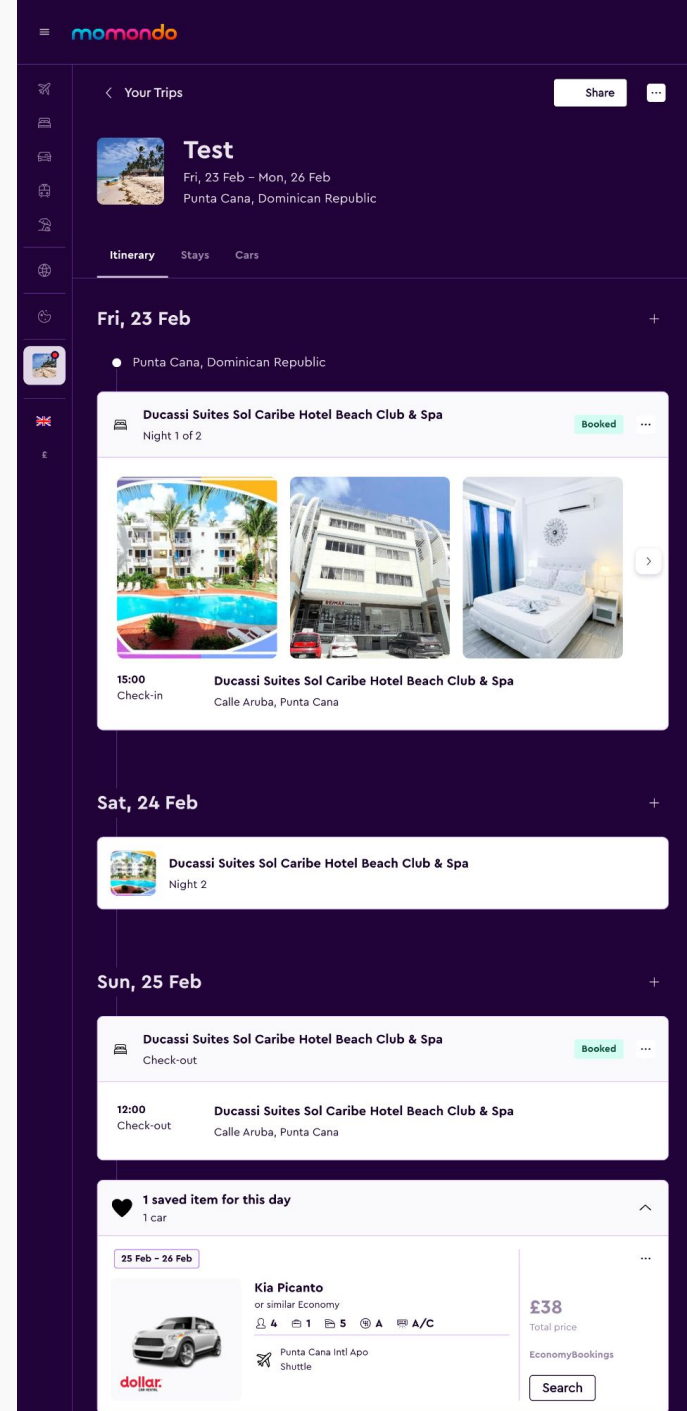


3.1 Creating an itinerary from a saved list (1 of 2)

KAYAK and, their sister company, **Momondo**, allow their users to create a travel itinerary from a wishlist, combining both booked and saved items.

Their unique features include:

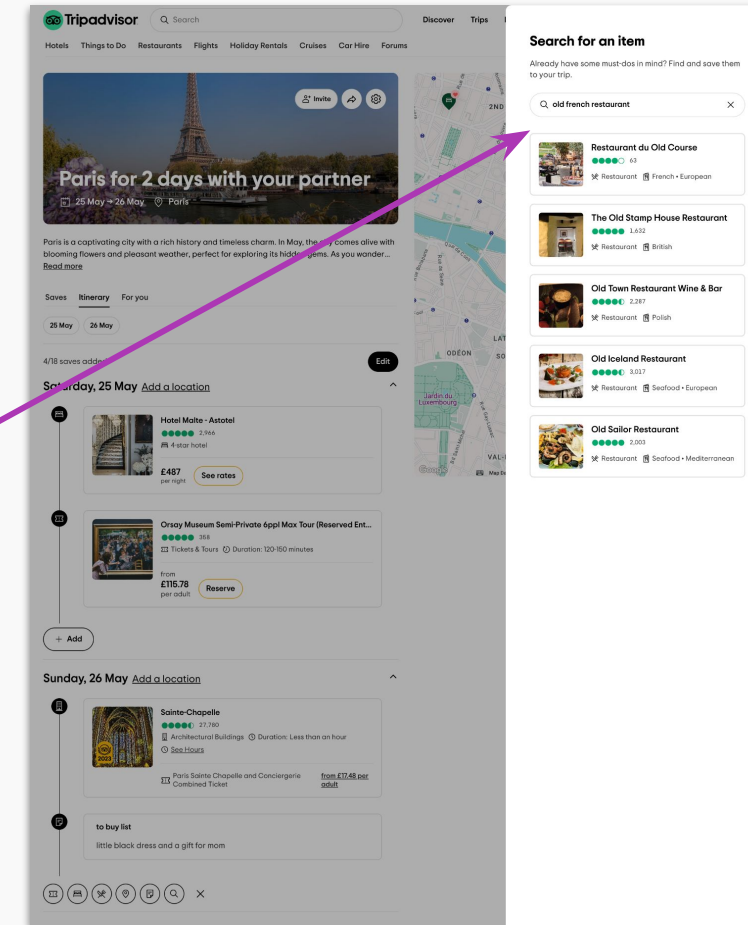
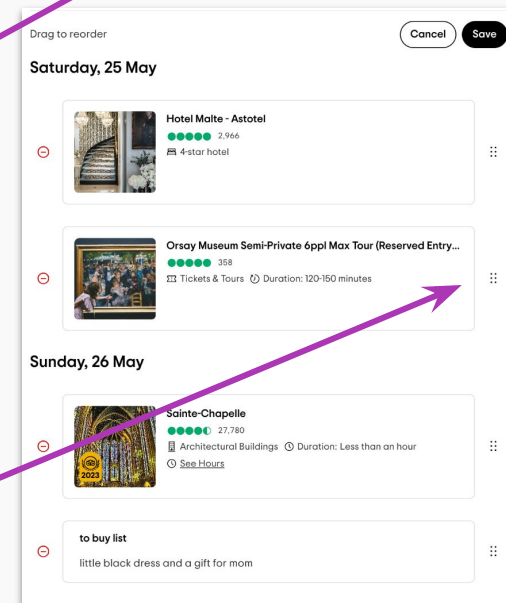
- options for accommodation, transportation or custom events
- clearly displayed trip dates including images for quick reference
- check-in and check-out times



3.1 Creating an itinerary from a saved list (2 of 2)

TripAdvisor implemented a similar itinerary builder, but with a focus on the experiences and with an extra layer of customisation:

- Users can add places to stay, eat, visit, and activities to do from their wishlists
- They can also add notes and do a search. However, the search function is not well integrated. It performs a generic search rather than a targeted one based on a wishlist location. Additionally, users need to know specific names, as there are no filters available to aid in the search.
- To edit the sequence of their itineraries, users can easily rearrange them using a drag-and-drop feature.



3.2 Finding inspiration to enhance a trip

Many companies provide cross-selling opportunities after the initial product, such as a hotel, have been booked. However, **Expedia** enhances the user experience earlier in the booking process with smart recommendations at the 'saved lists' stage.

- Expedia goes beyond the usual suggestions for accommodation and transportation by offering recommendations for activities tailored to the users' travel destinations and dates.
- Also, they provide a personalised travel guide that closely mirrors a travel agent's service, assisting users in discovering inspiring places to visit and activities to enjoy.

The screenshot shows the Expedia mobile app interface for a 'Test' trip. The page is divided into several sections:

- Test**: A header section with a user profile icon and 'Invite to your trip' button.
- Your bookings**: A section indicating that no bookings have been made yet.
- Your saved items**: A section listing saved items, including 'Jewel Palm Beach' (accommodation) and 'Flintstones Buggy Adventure - Punta Cana' (activity).
- Find a place to stay**: A section with a search bar and a grid of accommodation options, including 'Barceló Bávaro Beach - Adults Only - All Inclusive', 'Catalonia Punta Cana - All Inclusive', 'Barceló Bávaro Palace - All Inclusive', and 'Lopes Resort Includi'. Each option includes a rating and price per night.
- Get around**: A section with a search bar and a grid of rental car options, including 'Midsize', 'Fullsize People Carrier', 'Compact', and 'Stand'. Each option includes a price per day and cancellation policy.
- Find things to do**: A section with a search bar and a grid of activity options, including 'All-Inclusive Saona Island Tour by Speedboat & Catamaran', 'Flintstones Buggy Adventure - Punta Cana', 'Saona Island: Full-Day Boat Tour with Buffet Lunch & Drinks', and 'Coco I Pick U'. Each option includes a rating and price per person.
- About your destination**: A section with a large image of a tropical beach and the text 'Your travel guide' and 'Find things to do and get inspiration'.



4. Some fundamentals of designing wishlist features

When designing a wishlist feature keep these few best practices in mind:

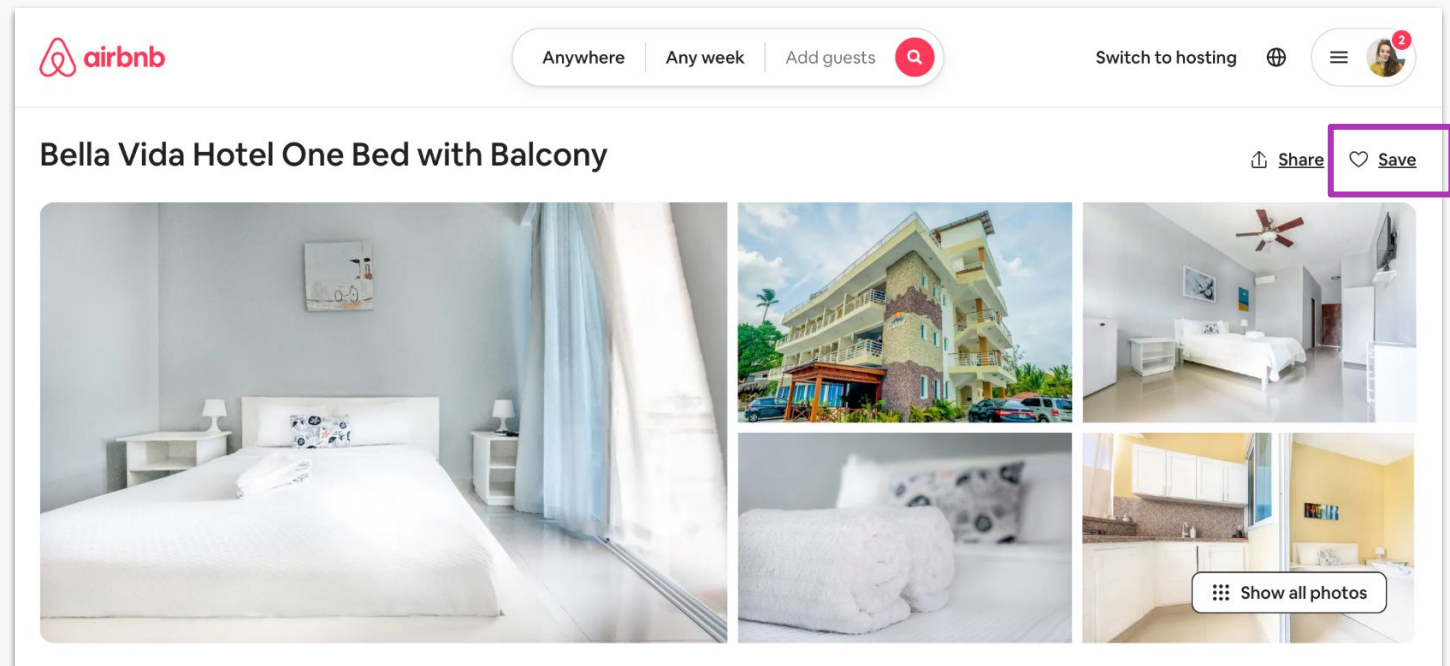
- 1. Discoverability and accessibility of the wishlist icon and page:** The wishlist icon should be easy to find and accessible, to aid discoverability. It should be prominently placed, such as in the header or near the booking options, to catch the user's attention, and it should be labelled to enhanced discoverability and learnability.
- 2. Easy addition and removal of an item to the wishlist with clear feedback:** It should be easy and quick for users to add items to their wishlist (one-click action) and there should be clear visual feedback when an item is successfully added or removed from the wishlist. This reassures users that their action has been registered.
- 3. Customisation and shareable wishlists:** Basic customisation features include enabling users to edit, rename, and remove items from their wishlist easily. As booking a trip often involves [two or more guests](#), users should also be able to share wishlists with others and contribute collaboratively to the search and booking process.



4.1 Discoverability & accessibility of a wishlist (1 of 3)

Airbnb's wishlist icon is visible and accessible on the product page.

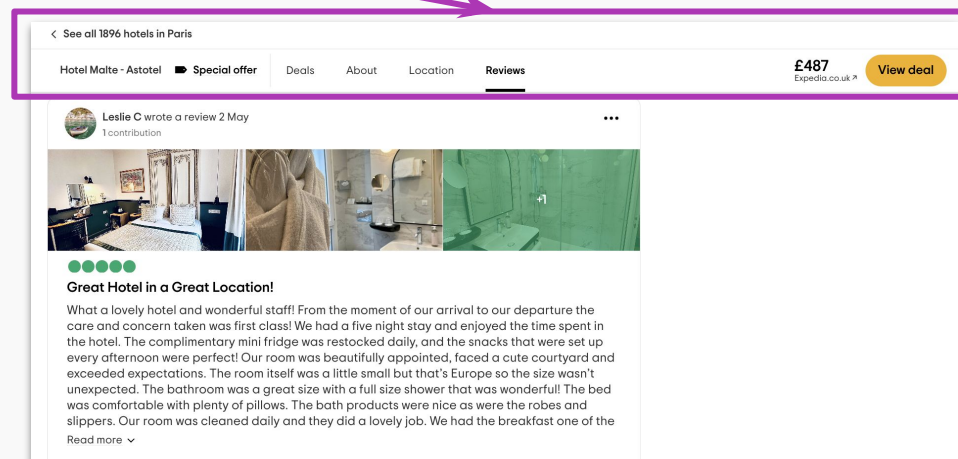
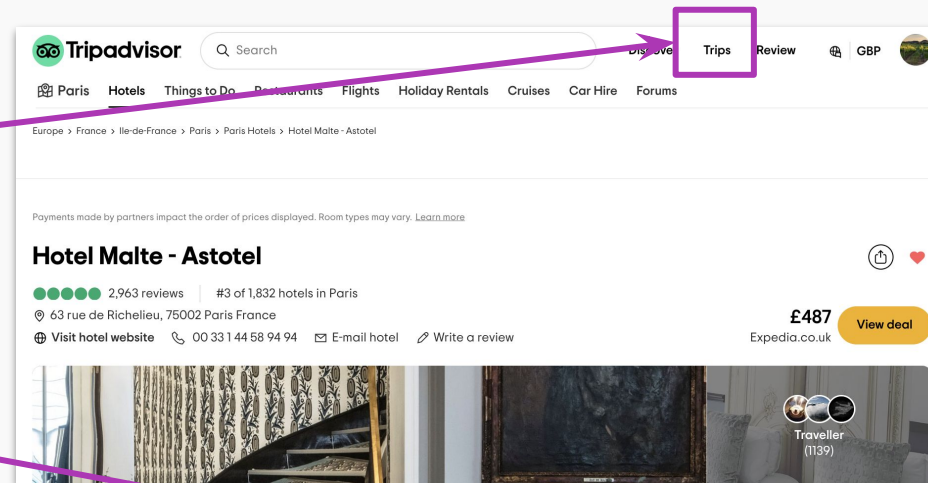
Also, the icon is clearly labelled, which enhances its discoverability and learnability.



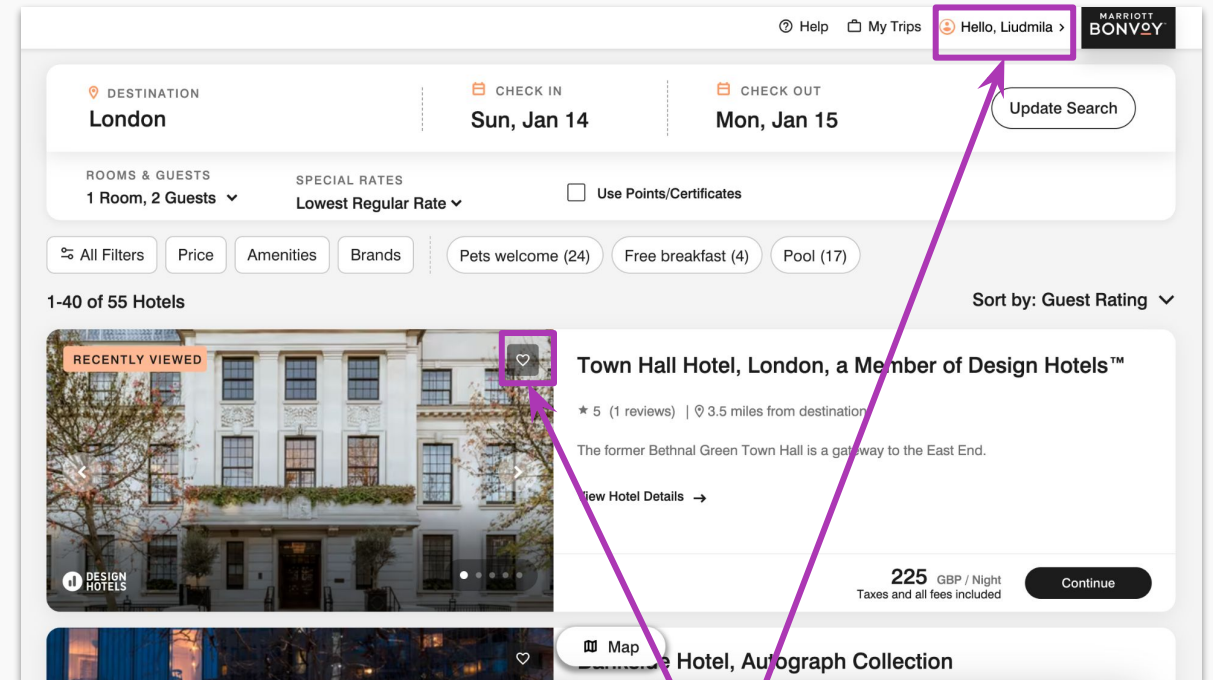
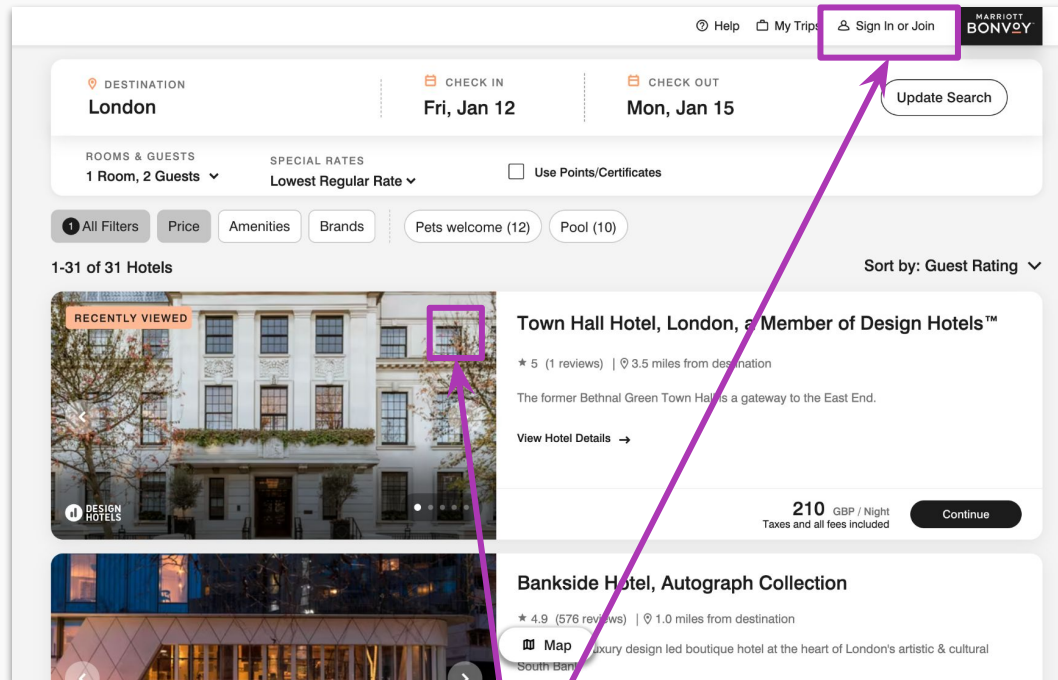
4.1 Discoverability & accessibility of a wishlist (2 of 3)

When navigating to a wishlist from anywhere on the website, **TripAdvisor** makes it easy for users by including a designated 'Trips' label in the top navigation bar.

- However, this option is only visible and accessible from the top of the page. Once a user scrolls down, the top navigation items disappear.



4.1 Discoverability & accessibility of a wishlist (3 of 3)



On the **Marriott hotel group site**, the heart icon for the wishlist is only visible in the list of accommodation when the user is logged in, leading to reduced discoverability of the feature and cause confusion.

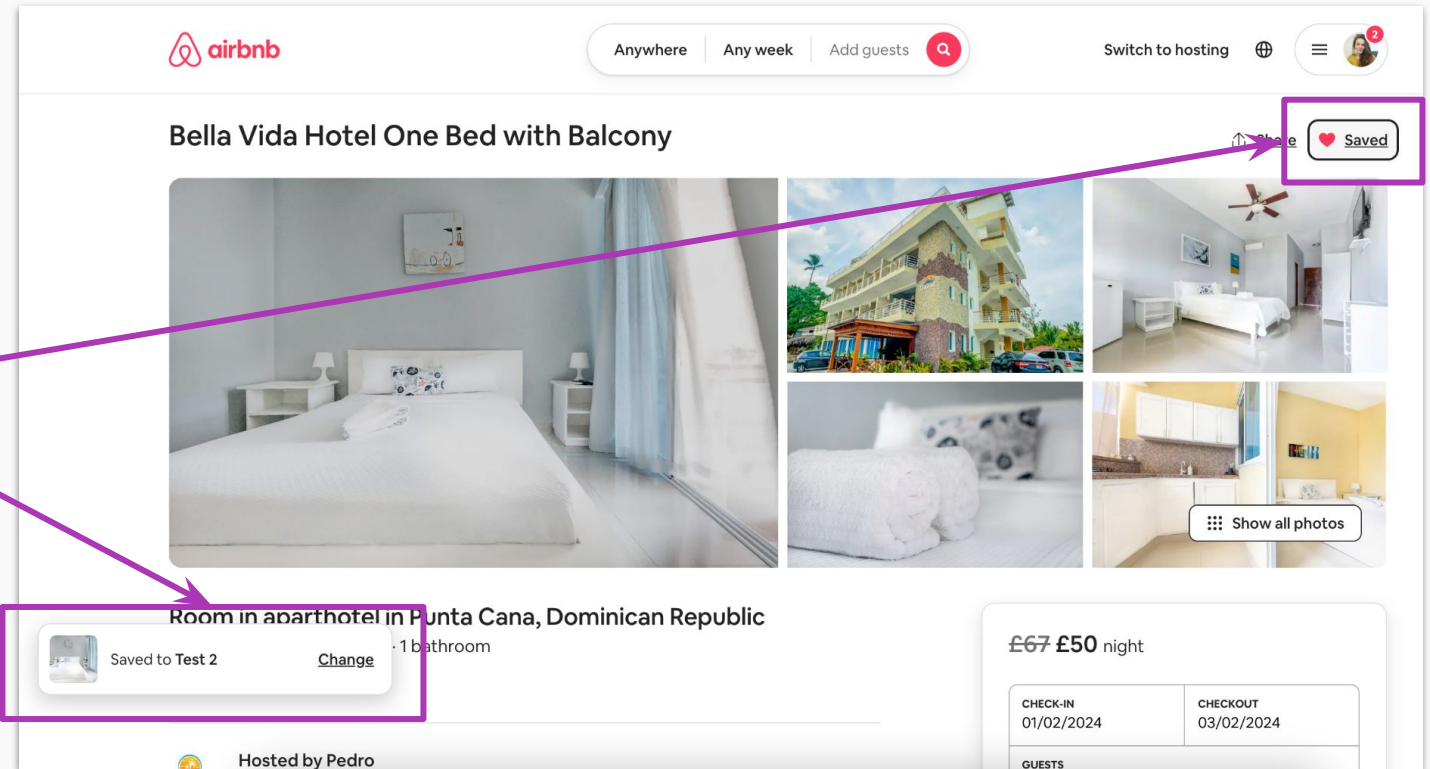


4.2 Easy addition and removal of an item to the wishlist with clear feedback (1 of 2)

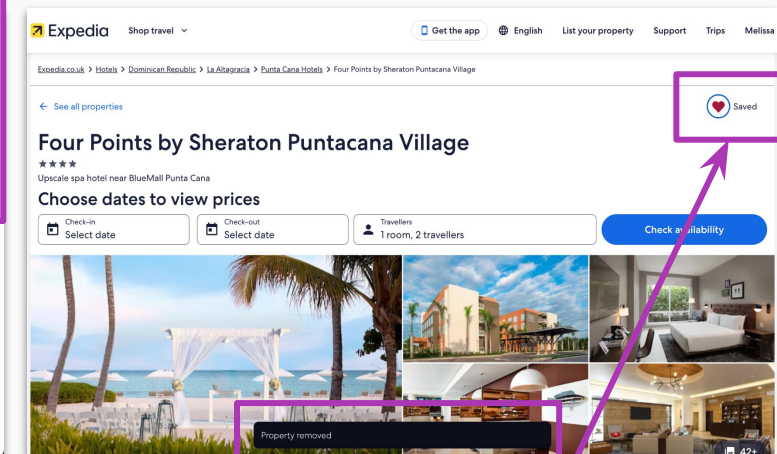
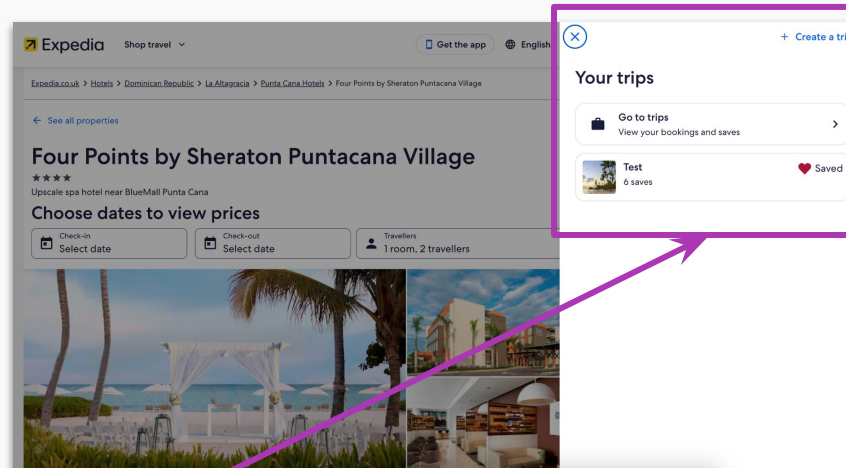
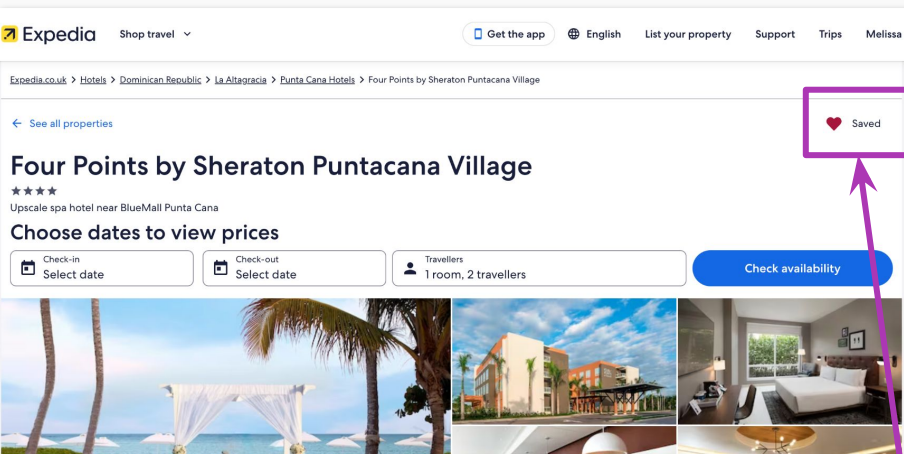
Airbnb requires only one click from users to add or remove items from their wishlist.

Also, the site provides clear feedback when adding new items to the wishlist -

- the heart icon changes colour,
- a confirmation message shows up to confirm the successful addition of the item.



4.2 Easy addition and removal of an item to the wishlist with clear feedback (2 of 2)



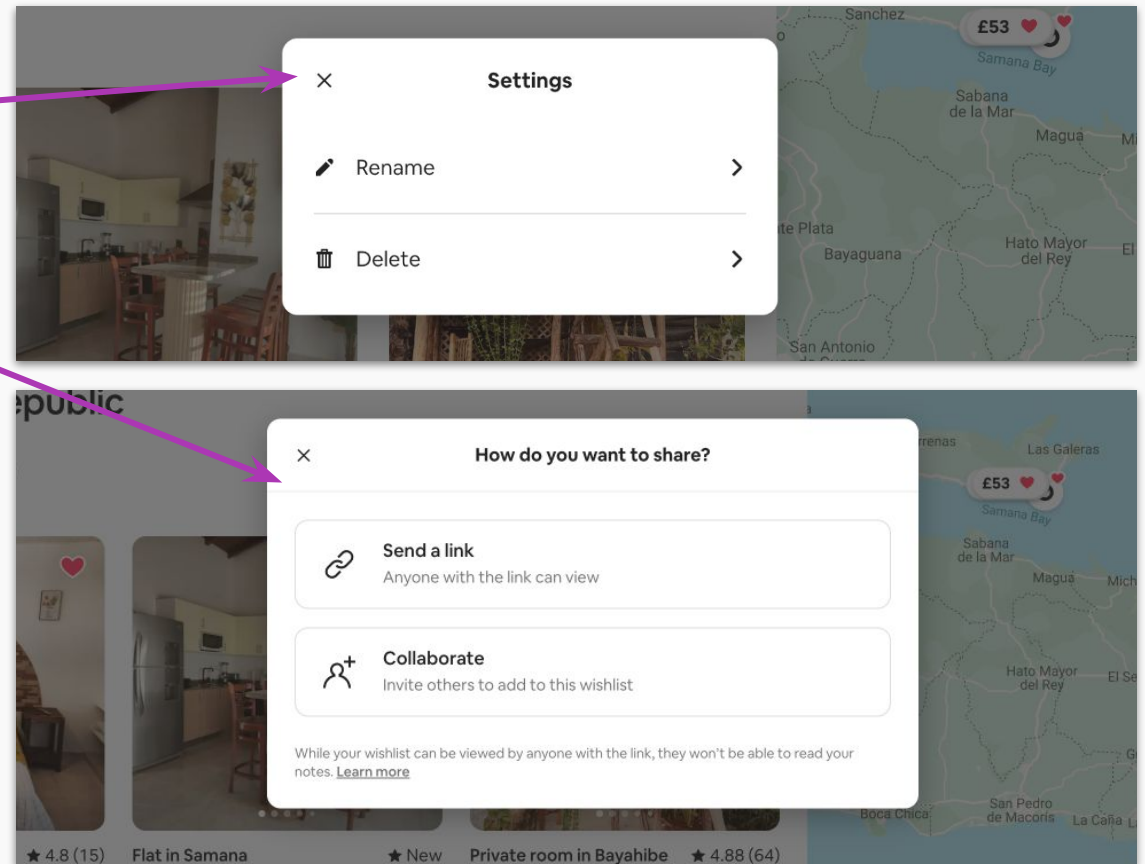
To remove an item from a wishlist on **Expedia**, users must first click on the icon to open the 'Your trips' overlay, and then on the specific item they want to remove. To enhance user experience, it would be best to remove such additional steps in the micro-journey.

When an item has been removed, the site provides conflicting feedback. While a confirmation message indicates that the item has been removed, the heart icon remains filled, suggesting the item is still on the wishlist.

4.3 Customisable and shareable wishlists

Airbnb provides a small element of customisation by enabling users to rename their wishlists.

The site not only allows sharing of a wishlist but also provides an option to invite others to contribute to the list.



Conclusion for wishlist features

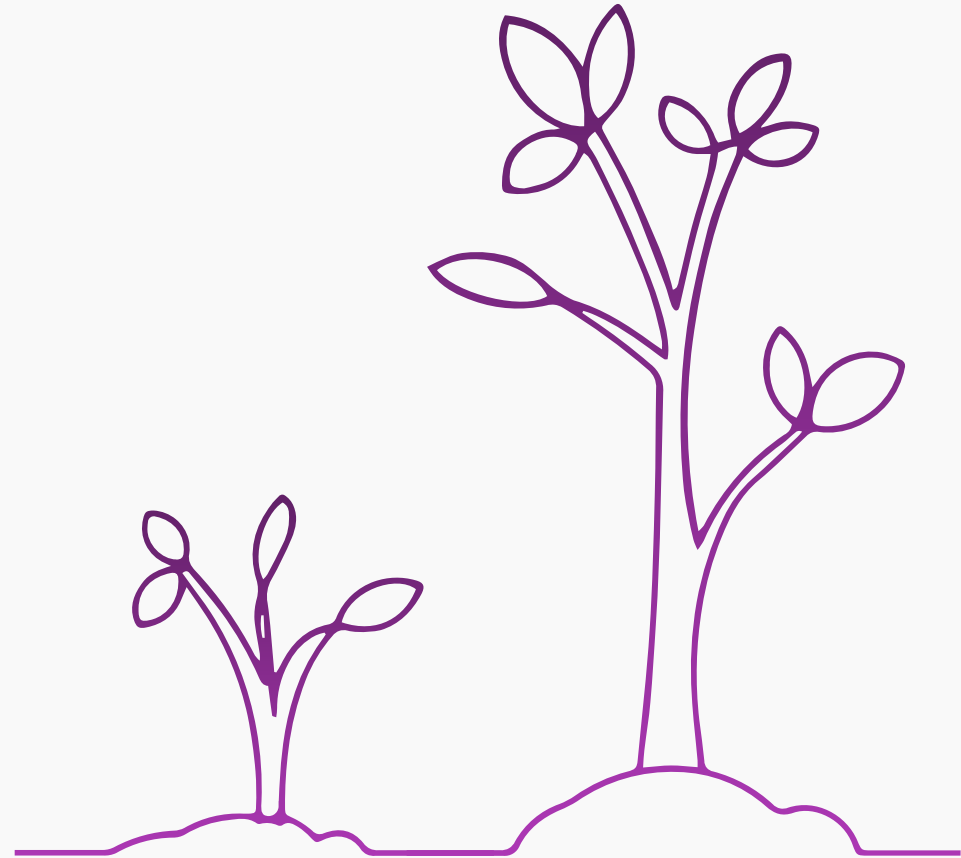
Test your wishlist flow: Conduct [usability testing](#) specifically focused on the wishlist feature to identify any pain points or areas of confusion. Incorporate user feedback to refine the design and flow of the wishlist experience.

Ensure accessibility requirements are met. Prioritise accessibility in the design of the wishlist feature, ensuring it is usable by individuals with varying abilities. Conduct [audits](#) and [accessibility testing](#) with participants who have diverse needs to ensure an inclusive experience for all users.

Run generative/exploratory research to help understand the needs of your users beyond their direct interaction with the wishlist feature and your site in general. The knowledge gained from exploratory research helps in building new feature capabilities that align seamlessly with users' requirements. Generative/exploratory research involves methods like in-depth interviews, contextual inquiries, or diary studies that help to gain qualitative insights into users' needs, expectations, and behaviours before, during, and after their travels. Read more about various [discovery research](#) methods we offer.

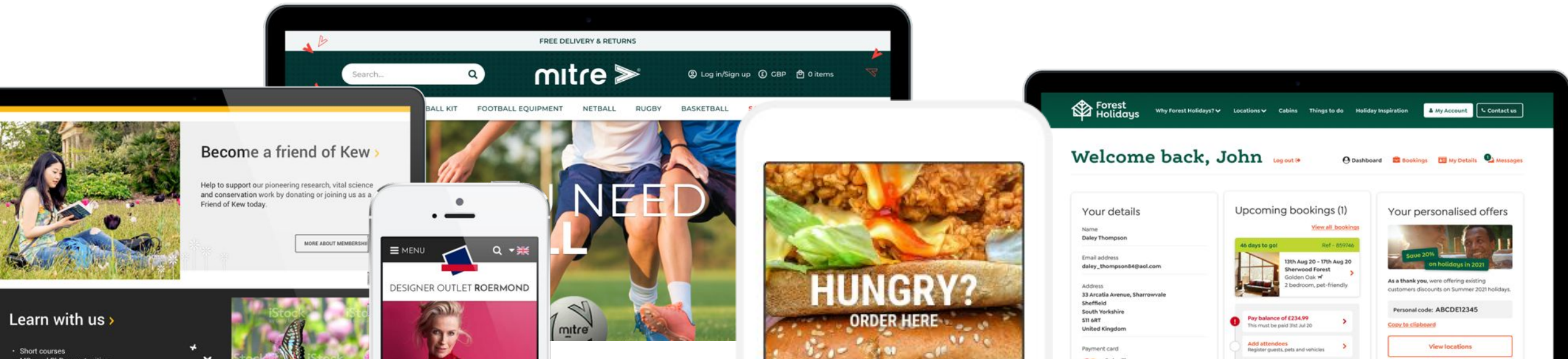


We can help increase your booking rates



Bunnyfoot - 25 years of research & design excellence

- **A 40 strong team of practitioners** – UX strategists, researchers, experience designers, service designers, usability and accessibility specialists and design thinkers.
- **UK based** (London & Sheffield) **with global reach** through international partners.
- **Core services include** – UX strategy and innovation, user research and usability testing, accessibility audits and evaluations, UX and interaction design, visual design and service design.
- **Additional services** - UX training and mentorship, participant recruitment, research lab design and build and lab hire.



Our travel industry experience

“Bunnyfoot did an excellent job of putting the customer at the heart of our approach to web usability. Previously, all our customer experience decisions were based on instinct rather than hard evidence. Working with Bunnyfoot, we were able to turn this on its head; we learnt some hard lessons about what we were doing wrong, but significantly improved the customer experience and online conversion as a result.

Sales Director
Great Rail Journeys





Online booking conversion increased by **38.5%** during the first two months after launch



Designing an award-winning travel website with increased conversions



THE CHALLENGE

Great Rail Journeys is the UK's leading operator of rail-based holidays. Despite this success, they had developed their website based on what they believed rather than basing it on evidence. They could offer a better experience and improved performance with a deeper understanding of their customer's needs and convert people from researching their holidays on the website to booking holidays.

WHAT WE DELIVERED

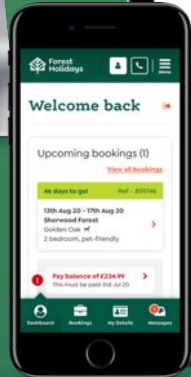
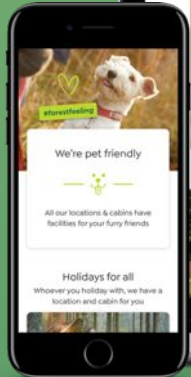
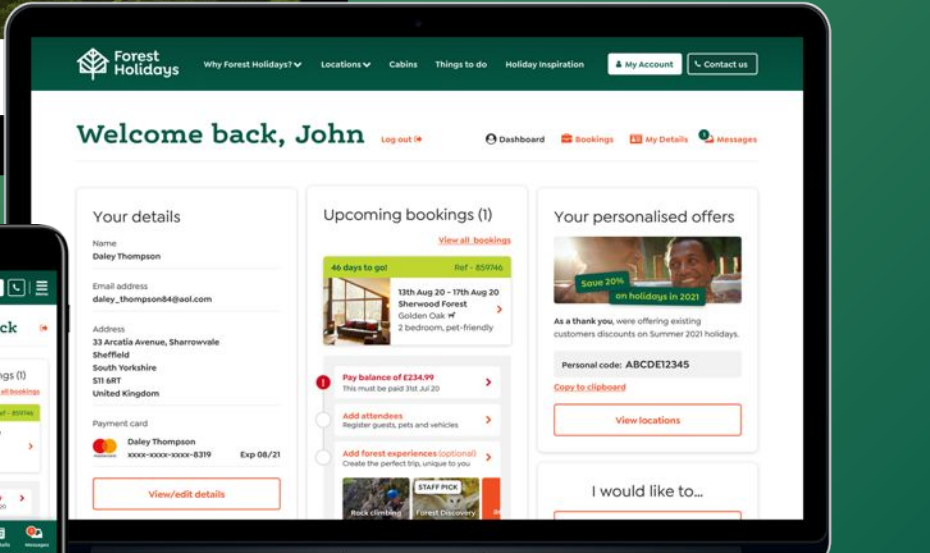
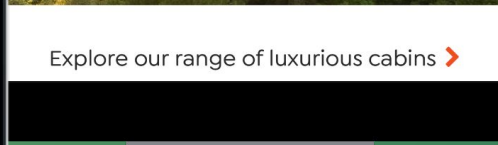
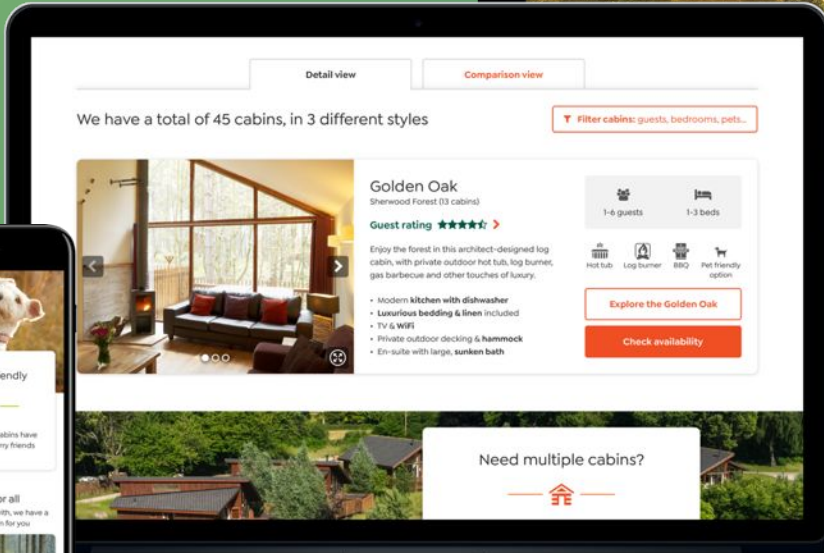
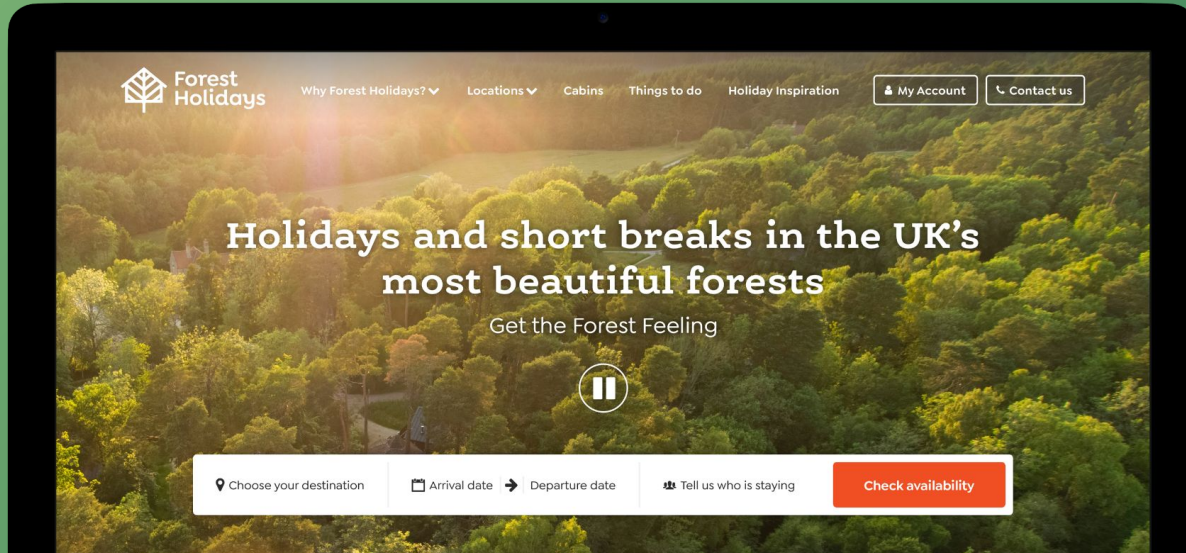
- **Research insight from sessions with over 40 users** of the site.
- A **full set of personas, mental models and experience maps** to help develop an ideal online experience.
- **Competitor analysis and content audit** with proposed changes to the **information architecture**.
- A **complete redesign of the full site** and **mobile responsive high-fidelity visual design**.

THE OUTCOME

Total website redesign based on a full user-centred design process, including numerous rounds of **iterative user testing**.

- The redesigned site was awarded 3 industry awards – **UXUK award** for best effect on business goals through UX, **Telegraph travel awards** and **British Travel Awards**.
- **Online booking conversion increased by 38.5%** during the two months after launch compared to the same period the previous year;
- **Average session duration improved by 40.6%**.
- **Bounce rate decreased from 57.1% to 45.9%**.





Redesign and rebrand of the travel site that meets all user needs

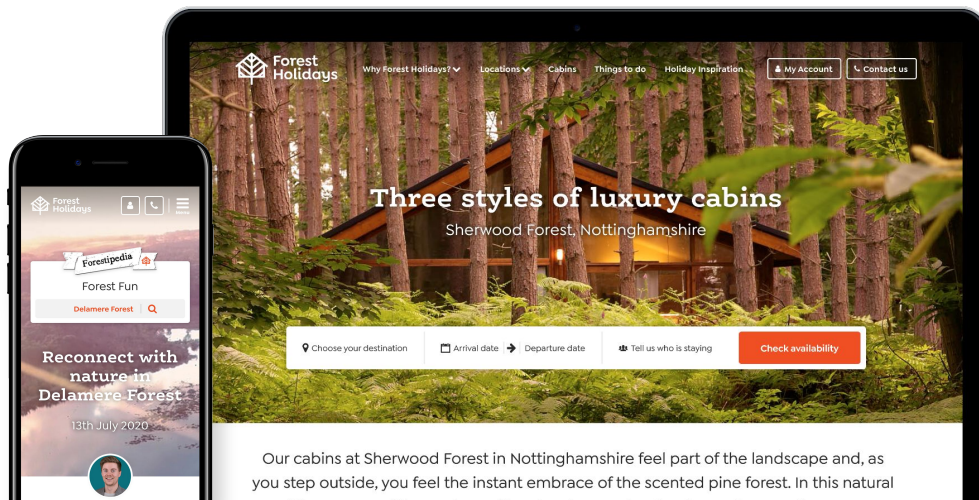


PROJECT BACKGROUND

To redesign and rebrand Forest Holiday's website by putting customers firmly at the centre of the process. Re-branding of Forest Holidays was ongoing when we began to redesign their site, enabling us to have an active role in defining the new digital graphic language and to ensure that the contemporary and consistent aesthetic not only met Forest Holidays' market positioning as one of the UK's premium holiday providers, but also met WCAG AA accessibility standards for colour contrast and font sizing.

WHAT WE DELIVERED

- Collaborative stakeholder workshops to understand goals and priorities.
- Identification of key personas and customer journey maps.
- Information Architecture creation and validation.
- Wireframe production and interactive prototyping.
- Usability testing of the Information Architecture and interactive prototype.
- Visual design concepts and application to key pages across desktop and mobile.
- Expert assistance to develop a consistent and accessible digital visual identity alongside the rebranding project.
- Lean digital style guides.



Bunnyfoot

We hope to hear from
you soon

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