

# My Digital Travel *for* Seniors



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Real Possibilities

Jason R. Rich

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# My Digital Travel *for* Seniors



Jason R. Rich

**AARP**<sup>®</sup>  
Real Possibilities

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800 East 96th Street,  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240 USA

# My Digital Travel for Seniors

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## About the Author

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Through his work as an enrichment lecturer, he often offers workshops and classes about digital photography, the Internet, and consumer technology aboard cruise ships operated by Celebrity Cruise Lines, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Princess Cruises Lines, and Royal Caribbean, as well as through adult education programs in the New England area. Please follow Jason R. Rich on Twitter (@JasonRich7) and Instagram (@JasonRich7).

## About AARP and AARP TEK

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into *real possibilities*<sup>™</sup>, strengthens communities, and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities, and protection from financial abuse. Learn more at [aarp.org](http://aarp.org).

The AARP TEK (Technology Education & Knowledge) program aims to accelerate AARP's mission of turning dreams into *real possibilities*<sup>™</sup> by providing step-by-step lessons in a variety of formats to accommodate different learning styles, levels of experience, and interests. Expertly guided hands-on workshops delivered in communities nationwide help instill confidence and enrich lives of the 50+ by equipping them with skills for staying connected to the people and passions in their lives. Lessons are taught on touchscreen tablets and smartphones—common tools for connection, education, entertainment, and productivity. For self-paced lessons, videos, articles, and other resources, visit [aarptek.org](http://aarptek.org).

## Dedication

*This book is dedicated to my family and friends, including my niece Natalie, my nephew Parker, and my Yorkshire Terrier Rusty, who is always by my side as I'm writing.*

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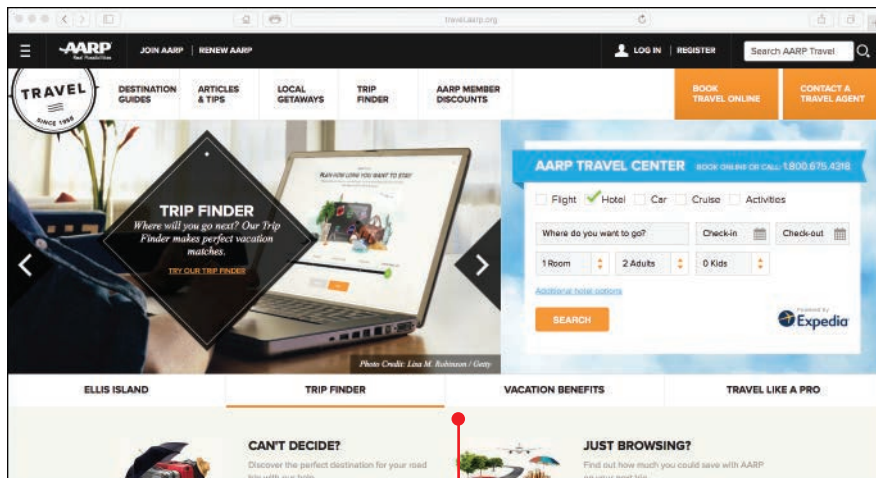
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AARP Travel (travel.aarp.org) is an integrated travel website for generating ideas for planning, and booking your travel.

**In this chapter, you discover what it takes to start planning a trip and find out how to use technologies to help you make important decisions. You'll learn**

---

- How to perform research about travel destinations using your Internet-enabled computer, smartphone, or tablet
- Which online resources to rely on for the most timely, accurate, and relevant information
- How to use AARP Travel
- How to use Travelzoo
- How consumer review sites, such as TripAdvisor and Yelp!, can be extremely helpful when planning your travel itinerary

# 2

## Researching Travel Opportunities

Even if you're the most frugal traveler who invests a lot of time seeking out the very best travel deals, taking a trip can be costly. There are a lot of expenses and fees to consider. For example, it's important to determine

- How much you have to spend, and how you'll pay for the trip
- Where you want to travel, when you want to go, and how you'll get there
- How much transportation will cost
- Where you'll be staying, and the cost of accommodations
- What you want to experience during the trip, and what those activities will cost
- How much you need to budget for additional trip-related expenses, such as travel insurance, care for your pet while you're away, meals, and the cost associated with using your smartphone or tablet abroad (if applicable)

By making important decisions early during the trip-planning process, you can better cater to the wants, needs, and expectations of everyone you'll be traveling with (including yourself), and then use the technology that's at your disposal to research various aspects of your trip, which lets you make intelligent choices that will ultimately save you money without compromising your travel experience.

## *It's Not All Good*

### **Travel Often Involves Many “Hidden” Fees**

When it comes to booking airfares, choosing accommodations, renting a car, picking a cruise ship, or selecting an all-inclusive resort, in addition to the rate that's quoted, you can expect to pay a handful of additional fees that you should calculate into your travel budget.

For example, in addition to the advertised cost of an airline ticket, you might incur additional charges for taxes, airport fees, and potentially ticketing fees.

Plus, most airlines charge for some or all checked luggage and have a penalty fee for overweight or oversized bags. These fees can add \$100.00 or more (each way, per passenger) to the cost of air travel. Southwest Airlines is one of the few remaining major airlines that not only offers reduced airfares for seniors but also allows all passengers to check two pieces of luggage for free, plus carry on one piece of carry-on-sized luggage and one personal item (such as a purse, briefcase, or backpack).

Many airlines now charge for snacks, premium drinks (alcohol), and meals. Some airlines also charge extra for reserving any seats or an upgraded seat with additional legroom.

Furthermore, unless you have special pre-boarding needs that you have requested in advance, many airlines charge passengers to pre-board an aircraft and charge extra for in-flight entertainment and Wi-Fi Internet access.

Chapter 5, “Finding and Booking the Best Airfares,” focuses on how to calculate and, in some cases, avoid or reduce the extra charges imposed by airlines. Other chapters explain how to minimize or eliminate added fees imposed by rental car companies, hotels, cruise ships, and resorts.

Knowing what fees and extra charges to expect, and taking steps to minimize or avoid some of them, helps you set a more accurate travel budget and avoid unwanted surprises. The pre-trip research you perform helps you identify and potentially avoid these fees, or at least develop a realistic expectation.

# Making the Important Decisions

Planning any travel requires making some decisions. Throughout this decision-making process, you can use your computer, smartphone, or tablet to help you research answers and make more educated, and potentially money-saving, choices.

For example, the first few decisions you need to make while planning any trip include

- Where do you want to travel?
- What do you and your fellow travelers want to get out of the trip?
- When do you want to travel?
- How will you get there?
- How long will your trip last?
- Where will you stay?
- How will you get around?

If you don't already have an answer to where you want to travel, using any of the online travel services that offer travel guides and travel-related articles can be very helpful.

After you determine where you're headed, you might then use the same travel guides and articles to help you develop realistic expectations about what that destination offers, so you can begin planning an itinerary based around the types of activities you and your fellow travelers will enjoy. For example, you can seek out adventurous activities, informative tours, details about spas, restaurant reviews, information about local attractions and historical sites you'd like to visit, facts about the local culture, and the weather forecast at your chosen destination.

Deciding when you want to travel is also an important decision, and one that affects cost. In general, you'll find lower airfares if you depart and return on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday and if you travel during the destination's off-peak or shoulder season.

>>> *Go Further*

## UNDERSTANDING THE TRAVEL SEASONS

Every popular travel destination has a *peak*, *shoulder*, and *off-peak* season. Peak season is when the most people travel to that destination, so typically airfares and lodging will cost more. Peak season is also when you'll experience the largest crowds at tourist attractions, and you might discover it's harder to find dining reservations or tickets for theater or other events.

The peak travel season varies by destination. For example, in Cape Cod, peak season is the entire summer, whereas in parts of Colorado or Utah where skiing is popular, winter is the peak season.

The shoulder season is the gap between the peak and off-peak seasons. Prices are lower and crowds are less, but the tourist destination is still geared up for the peak season.

Off-peak season is when fewer tourists visit that destination. For example, the off-peak season in the Caribbean is during hurricane season (which lasts from June until November). During off-peak season, the weather might not be ideal or the activities that destination is known for might not be available. The benefits of traveling during a destination's off season are much smaller crowds and considerably lower prices.

If the information you need isn't prominently described in a travel guide or article about a particular destination, do a quick Internet search to determine the best times of the year to travel to particular destinations. In your web browser, open a search tool (such as Bing or Google) and type **peak travel season for [destination]** or **best time to visit [destination]** or **cheapest time to fly**.

Next, determine how you'll get to your destination and how long you'd like to stay. For domestic travel, you can drive, fly, or take a train (Amtrak) or a bus. Based on the distance and cost, which you can easily determine through online research, it's possible to find the fastest or most economical way to travel. For most international travel (unless you're going to Canada or Mexico from the United States or traveling around Europe), you'll probably need to fly or take a cruise ship, both of which offer their own benefits and perks, based on how you like to travel and what you want to experience during your trip.

The length of your trip is often based on your budget and the cost of travel, accommodations, meals, activities, and other travel expenses. Once again, by using some of the travel tools you'll soon be reading about, you can seek out low airfares, discounted accommodations, and/or complete package deals that allow you to save money and potentially extend the length of your trip while still staying within your budget.

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### **Flexible Travel Dates Are Ideal**

If your travel dates are flexible, you'll have more options when shopping around for lower airfares and accommodations. Sometimes you can alter your departure or return date by just a few days and save hundreds of dollars on your airfares. Likewise, if there are multiple airports in or near your departure or destination city, you'll sometimes find lower airfares by choosing a different airport.

Chapter 5 explains how to use the various online travel agents and travel services to find and book the lowest airfares.

---

When deciding where you'll stay when you reach your destination, you also typically have a wide range of options so you can pick one that best suits your personal preferences and budget. Each option offers advantages based on the services and amenities you're looking for. As described in Chapter 7, "Finding and Booking Accommodations," the following are some of your accommodation options:

- Brand-name hotel
- Boutique hotel
- Bed & breakfast
- Motel
- Timeshare property
- Airbnb
- Home or apartment rental

---

## Don't Be Scared by High Hotel Prices

Websites for hotels located in or near a particular destination might advertise high nightly room rates, but when you start using online travel services, such as AARP Travel ([travel.aarp.org](http://travel.aarp.org)), Booking.com, Hotels.com, or Trivago.com, you'll likely find the same or comparable accommodations at 30 to 70 percent off of those listed rates.

As with fares, you might be able to save money if you have a little flexibility in your travel dates or a willingness to stay a slight distance away from a popular destination. By using a rental car, a taxi, Lyft, Uber, or public transportation to get to a popular area, you can often find much lower rates at lodgings located a few miles away from popular tourist destinations.

---

Another factor to consider is how you'll get around after you reach your travel destination. Many people immediately think they need a rental car. In some cases, though, a rental car is a costly nuisance. In addition to the daily cost of a rental car and frustration at navigating unfamiliar territory, you have to pay for gas and often rental car insurance and parking. In major cities, overnight parking at a hotel can cost an additional \$30.00 to \$75.00 per night. Plus, each time you arrive at a tourist destination, nearby parking often costs an additional \$10.00 to \$25.00 (or more).

Many cities offer public transportation systems, which are much easier to navigate when you use your smartphone with the Google Maps app (Android and iOS devices) or Maps app (iOS devices) or a specialized mobile app, which is covered in Chapter 10, "Mobile Apps to Use at Your Destination."

You might also discover it's less expensive to rely on taxis, Lyft, or Uber for transportation. The focus of Chapter 6, "Finding Ground Transportation," is using technology to discover and manage your local transportation options after you reach your destination.

## >>>Go Further

### THE LYFT AND UBER GROUND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE

Lyft and Uber are independent services that offer a much less expensive ground transportation option compared to a traditional taxi or limo service. Both of these services require the use of a proprietary mobile app on your Internet-enabled smartphone to request and pay for the service. While taxi or limo drivers and vehicles need to have special licenses, Lyft and Uber are staffed by independent drivers who use their own cars to transport people.

These services are available in many cities throughout the world, and a ride typically costs about half of what a traditional taxi charges, although in some places and during peak times, fees increase.

When you use the Lyft or Uber mobile app, your smartphone asks where you want to go, and then it determines your exact location when you request a pickup. The app locates a driver who is nearby and informs you when your ride arrives to your pickup location. After your trip, the app automatically charges the credit or debit card that's linked to the Lyft or Uber app when you reach your destination. Tipping the driver is not required.

Lyft and Uber mobile apps are available from the various apps stores. For more information, visit [www.lyft.com](http://www.lyft.com) or [www.uber.com](http://www.uber.com).

## Using Your Devices to Conduct Pre-Trip Research

Throughout the trip planning process, and then once you reach your destination, your computer, smartphone, or tablet can be an indispensable tool that connects you to many information-packed resources.

Some popular travel websites, online services, and mobile apps serve you better than others in certain situations, so you'll benefit the most if you're willing to use



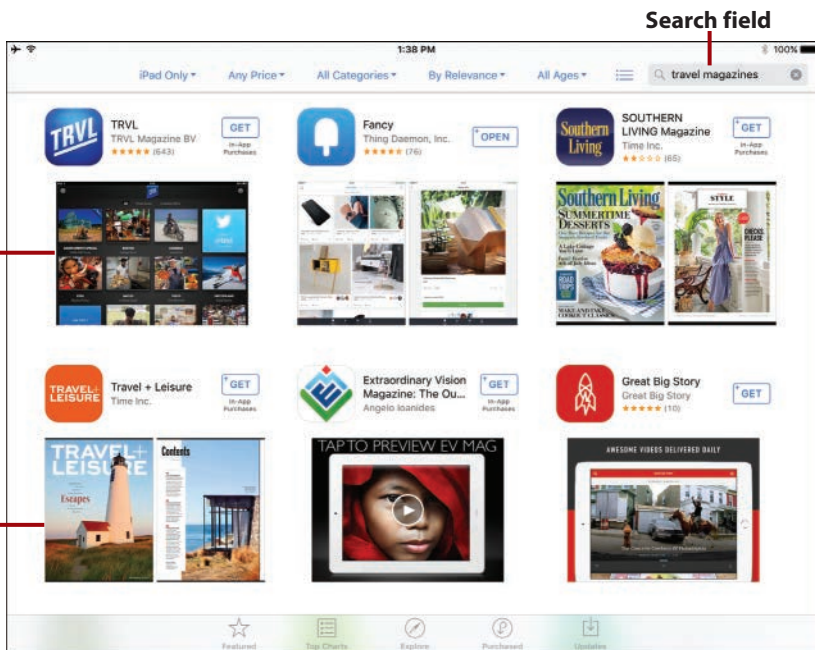
a handful of different tools and resources during the trip-planning process and throughout your journey.

The following section describes the types of tools and resources that are available for travel-related research; Chapter 3, “Getting to Know Some Popular Travel Tools,” focuses on teaching you about 12 of the most popular travel-related tools and resources and offers tips on how to best use them.

## Digital Editions of Travel Magazines

Available for computers, smartphones, and tablets are digital editions of popular print publications and magazines, as well as publications that are only available in a digital format.

To find these digital publications, launch the app store app that comes preinstalled on your mobile device, and in the Search field, enter the phrase **travel magazines**.



Digital magazine app listings

The search results will include apps for popular travel magazines and publications that offer a digital edition, such as *Budget Travel*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Cruise Travel*, *Golf & Travel*, *Lonely Planet Traveller*, *Luxury Escapes*, *National Geography Traveler*, *Romance Travel*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *World Travel*. In addition, you'll discover the digital edition of destination-specific magazines, such as *Escape! Asia*, *Hawaii Traveler*, and *Ontario Travel*, as well as city-specific editions of *Where* magazine and digital editions of airline magazines, all of which feature articles that can help you plan and experience an awesome trip.

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### Find Magazines in the App Store

To find the digital edition of any publication, simply enter the title in your app store's Search field. If a digital edition of that magazine is published, you'll be able to download the proprietary app for it and then acquire individual issues or a digital subscription.

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Travel magazines are typically monthly publications written by professional travel journalists that you can read on your smartphone, tablet, computer, or eBook reader's screen. One great feature of the digital editions of these publications is that in the articles, you'll often find hyperlinks that you can tap or click to access additional relevant information. Plus, with a few extra taps or clicks, you can access past issues of the publication.

---

### The Cost of Reading Digital Publications

The cost to acquire, download, and read a single digital issue of a popular magazine is typically about the same as buying a single issue of the printed magazine at your favorite newsstand. However, deep discounts are offered if you purchase an annual digital subscription to a particular publication. In some cases, if you're already a paid subscriber to a printed publication, the digital edition is available to you for free.

Another option is to install the free Texture mobile app on your smartphone or tablet, and then pay a flat monthly fee for unlimited access to hundreds of magazines, including dozens of popular travel and regional publications.

Public libraries offer their patrons digital magazines free of charge. The most common source is the digital newsstand Zinio, which offers libraries subscriptions. Overdrive is the other Library platform where you can find digital magazines.

---

## Interactive Travel Guides

Interactive travel guides are just like traditionally printed guide books, but they're better because they're interactive and you don't have to lug around a heavy printed book! When your mobile device is connected to the Internet, it can access additional information and resources above and beyond what's printed in the actual travel guide.

Interactive travel guides are available online and via proprietary mobile apps. They're typically written by professional travel writers and published by highly reputable travel publishers. Examples are Fodor's, Frommer's, and Lonely Planet.

These guides are also city- or location-specific and include information about all aspects of that destination that's of interest to visitors, such as details about hotels, restaurants, tours, activities, tourist attractions, historical sites, and local transportation options.

---

### Quickly Access Destination-Specific Travel Guides

To find an interactive travel guide while surfing the Internet, access any popular search engine and enter the search phrase, **[City Name] Travel Guide**. (You can use the same search phrase in your mobile device's app store.)

If the publisher of the travel guide website or mobile app isn't familiar to you, be sure to pay careful attention to the source of the information, as well as the mobile app's ratings and reviews (when applicable), to ensure the content is timely, accurate, and comes from a reputable source.

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## Popular Online Travel Services and Websites

Many of the travel services, websites, and mobile apps covered in the next chapter include comprehensive travel guides for popular destinations. This is true for services like AARP Travel ([travel.aarp.org](http://travel.aarp.org)), Hotwire.com, Orbitz.com, and Travelocity.com.

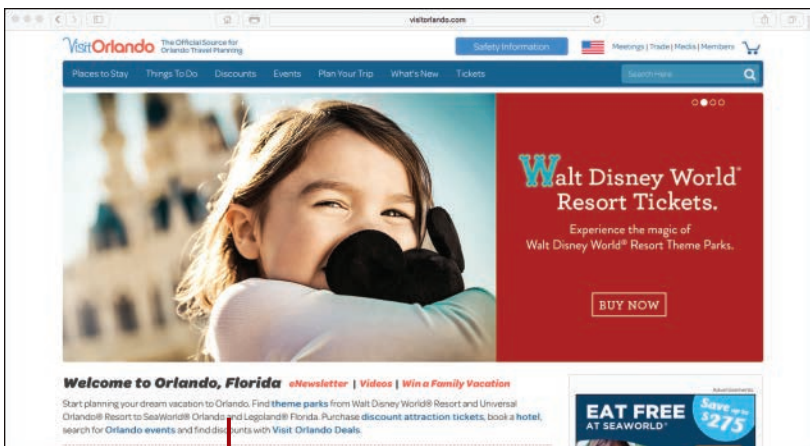
## Websites Operated by Individual Departments of Tourism

Every popular tourist destination, major city, and country throughout the world has a department of tourism or a convention and visitor's bureau (CVB). The sole purpose of these government agencies is to promote tourism and make it easier for prospective visitors to plan travel to that destination.

### Finding a Department of Tourism or Convention and Visitor's Bureau

To quickly find the website for any department of tourism or CVB, launch your favorite web browser, and in the Search field, enter the phrase, **Department of Tourism, [location]** or **Convention & Visitor's Bureau, [location]**. Click or tap the search result that lists the official website for the tourism department or CVB you're looking for.

All these agencies have websites, and in many cases mobile apps, that offer information about flights, hotels, accommodations, restaurants, activities, historical sites, tourist attractions, and other information for that destination. The information is typically comprehensive, but it's important to bear in mind that the goal of a department of tourism or CVB is to attract tourists, so the content can be biased.



Visit Orlando tourism website

Despite possible bias, the website for a department of tourism or CVB can help you choose a travel destination, learn about what that destination offers, and then help with every aspect of your trip and itinerary planning process. Best of all, these resources are free of charge, and there's typically a toll-free phone number you can call to get your specific questions answered.

## Map Apps on Your Smartphone or Tablet

Preinstalled in your iPhone or iPad is the Maps app. If you're using an Android-based mobile device, the Google Maps app comes preinstalled. (iPhone and iPad users can also download and install the free Google Maps app onto their mobile devices.) These two apps, as well as others like them, make use of the GPS capabilities and Internet connectivity that are also built in to your mobile device to provide powerful navigation tools that are useful pretty much anywhere in the world.

In addition to providing an interactive map and real-time navigation assistance, these apps contain vast databases that include informative listings about millions of points of interest, local businesses, restaurants, tourist attractions, historical sights, and other services.

These listings often include ratings and reviews about businesses, restaurants, and services, their hours of operation, and other pertinent details. So, if you're looking for a good pasta restaurant while exploring Venice, Italy, or want to find a highly rated steak restaurant in New York City, these apps can be extremely useful. Likewise, if you're looking for information about a specific museum to visit and need to know when it's open and how much the admission fee is, one of these apps can provide this information with a few onscreen taps.

In addition, as long as your mobile device has cellular Internet access, map apps can help you navigate, in real time, to your desired location by car, on foot, or using public transportation.

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### Digital Geography 101

For step-by-step information on how to use the Maps app on your iPhone or iPad or the Google Maps app on your Android-based mobile device, check out Chapter 10.

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# Using AARP Travel to Conduct Research

When you know where you want to go, AARP Travel is one of many online services that can help you figure out how to get there and pre-plan the best possible trip. If you don't yet know where you want to go, this service—for nonmembers and members—offers a quick, five-question quiz to help you choose travel destinations that match your interests. Anyone can use the site to conduct research, use travel tools, learn expert travel tips, and use the booking engine. You must be an AARP member to take advantage of member-only offers and discounts.

## >>>Go Further

### FEATURES OF AARP TRAVEL

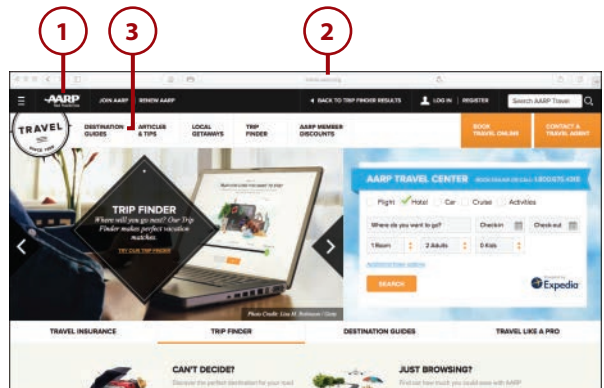
You can find an ever-expanding selection of travel-related articles, travel tips, expert advice, and other content available in the AARP Travel website by visiting the site and clicking the Articles & Tips option that's displayed near the top of the screen.

For help selecting potential travel destinations, or to research destinations, click the Trip Finder option, and then follow the on-screen prompts to progress through the brief questionnaire.

Answer just five questions about your travel preferences, including how long of a trip you'd like to take, approximately when you want to travel, and with whom you'll be traveling. Within seconds after answering the questions, AARP Travel recommends a handful of destination suggestions, which you can then learn more about.

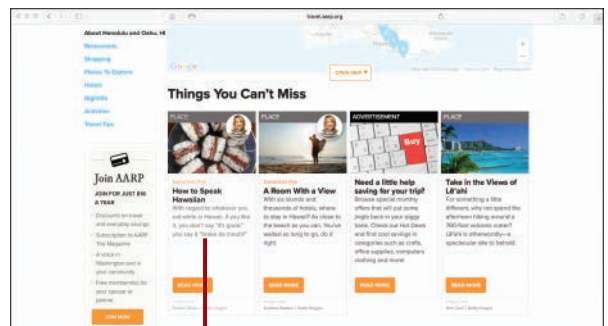
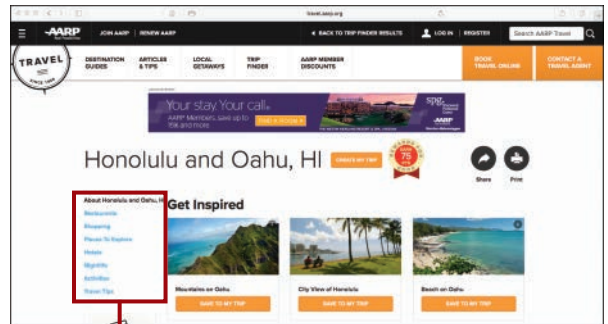
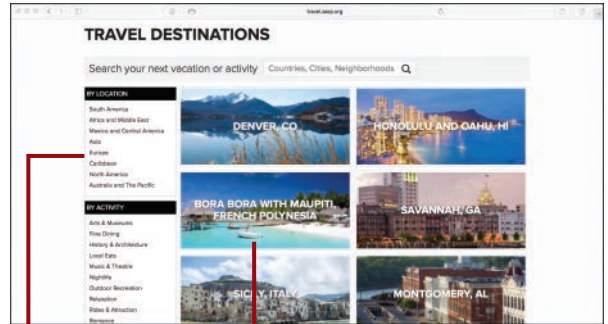
## Use AARP Travel to Choose a Destination

- 1 Launch your computer's web browser (shown here is Safari running on a Mac).
- 2 Enter **travel.aarp.org** in the address field.
- 3 Click the Destination Guides option.





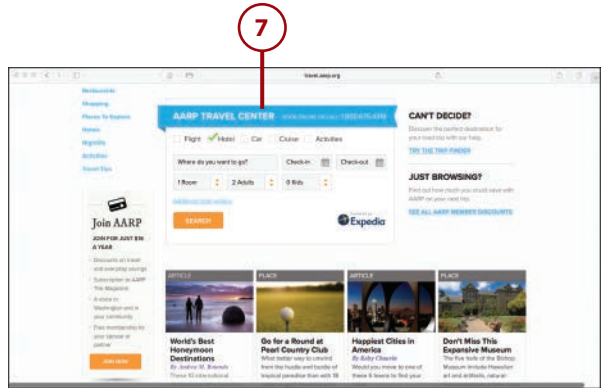
- 4 Scroll through the options in the left sidebar and click on the one you want. The available guides are sorted by location, activity, environment, and alphabetically.
- 5 Scroll through each section of a destination's guide or, when applicable, click the Restaurants, Shopping, Places to Explore, Hotels, Sights, Nightlife, Activities, or Travel Tips link to access more specific information about a location.
- 6 Scroll to the Things You Can't Miss heading and click the Read More button that's associated with any of the listings.



## Creating Hard Copies of Information

If you have a printer connected to your device, click the web browser's Print button to print the contents of the web page you're looking at. You can also click the Print icon near the top of each AARP Travel Destination Guide's webpage.

- 7 Use the search window near the bottom of the Destination Guide page to shop for flights, a hotel, car, cruise, or activities related to that destination.

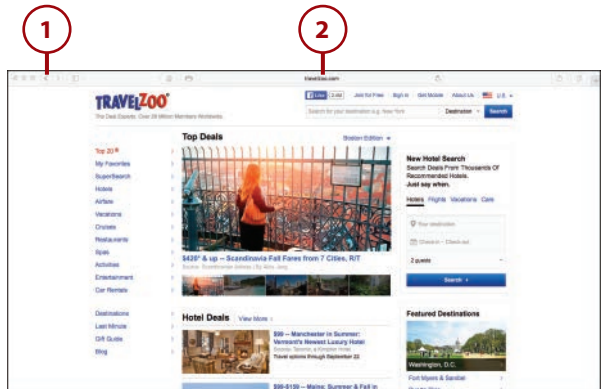


## Using the Travelzoo Website and Mobile App

If you need help deciding where to go or want to research specific travel destinations and discover money-saving deals on vacation opportunities to those destinations, the Travelzoo online service and mobile app are useful tools.

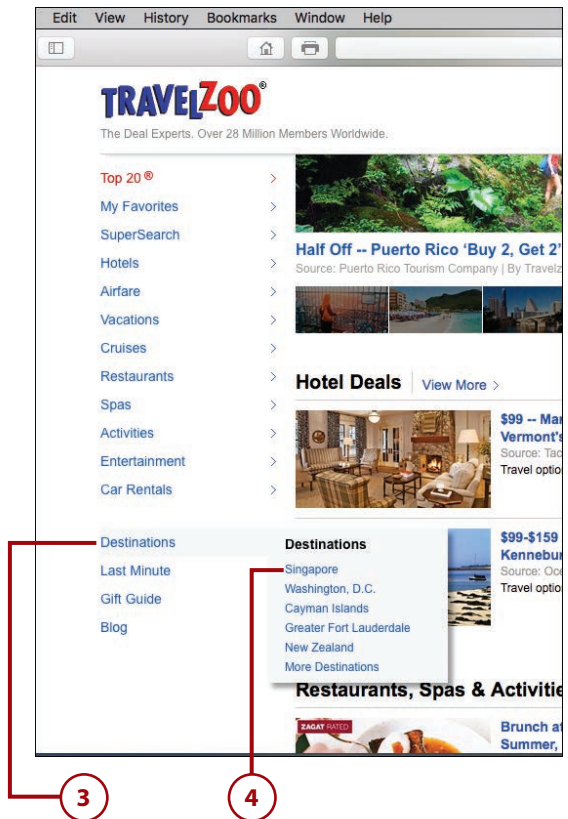
### Use the Travelzoo Website

- 1 Launch your favorite web browser on your computer.
- 2 Type **www.travelzoo.com** in the address field.





- 3 Click the Destinations option that's displayed along the left margin of the screen.
- 4 Select a specific destination.
- 5 In some cases, you will see one or more relevant articles, written by Travelzoo's experts.



6 Click Top Deals for the selected destination to learn about money-saving offers from airlines, hotels, and tour operators and to get information about discounted travel packages, when available.

7 Alternatively, from the Travelzoo.com homepage, type your desired destination in the Search field (shown), or click the Last Minute option (when it appears) to find last-minute travel deals for specific destinations.

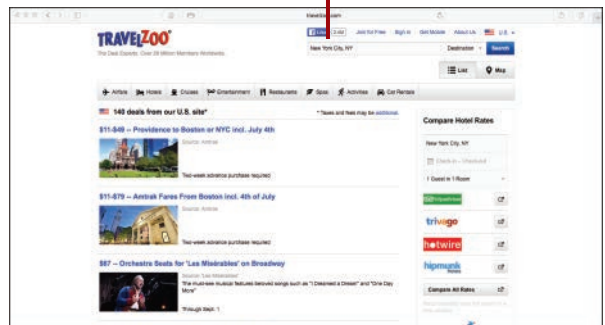
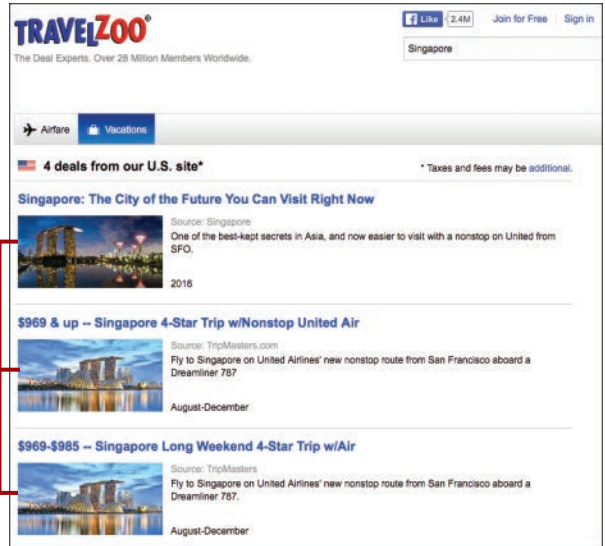
## Join TravelZoo.com for Free

To unlock all the features and functions offered by TravelZoo, click the Join for Free option and set up a free Travelzoo account by providing your email address and ZIP code (or linking with your existing Facebook account).

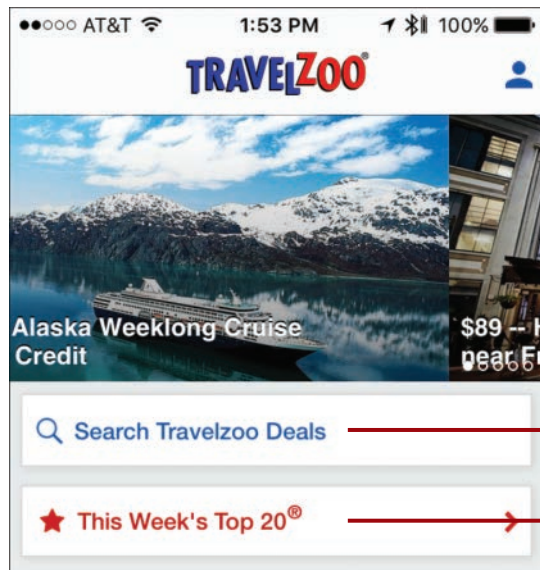
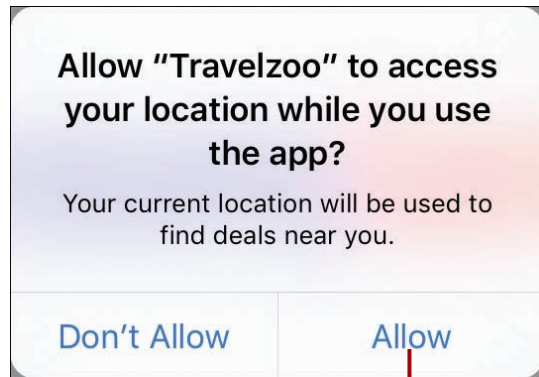
## Use the Travelzoo Mobile App

1 Launch your app store app, and type **Travelzoo** in the Search field. Download and install the free Travelzoo mobile app onto your smartphone or tablet. (Not shown.)

2 Launch the Travelzoo mobile app by tapping its app icon.



- 3 The first time you use the app, tap the Allow button to allow the Travelzoo app to access your location. If you're using an iPhone or iPad, tap the OK button to allow the app to display notifications on your mobile device, when applicable. (Tap Don't Allow to prevent app-specific notifications from being generated and displayed.)
- 4 Enter the desired travel destination to search for destination-specific deals. You can use a city, or a city and state, and/or a country.
- 5 Tap the This Week's Top 20 option to display the week's 20 best deals from Travelzoo, or scroll down on the app's main screen to view nearby deals, based on where you're currently using the app.



## Many More Resources Are Available

Chapter 3 offers more useful information about online resources and mobile apps that allow you to easily and quickly conduct research about airlines, accommodations, tourist destinations, tour operators, and other services you might want to use during your trips.

# Getting Advice from Fellow Travelers

Through its website or app, TripAdvisor offers the world's largest database (containing more than 350 million entries) of travel-related reviews and opinions that have been written by consumers like you. These reviews cover more than 6.5 million accommodations, attractions, and restaurants around the world.

More than 340 million unique users access TripAdvisor each month. The service can be a powerful tool for making intelligent decisions about where to stay, what to do, and where to eat when you're planning or experiencing a trip.

In general, the reviews published on TripAdvisor are unbiased and based on customers' actual experiences. However, never put too much emphasis on one single review. Instead, when looking up a particular hotel, attraction, or restaurant, read a handful of reviews to get a more realistic idea about what you should expect.

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## Get the Real Scoop About a Hotel

When a specific business on TripAdvisor has dozens or even hundreds of reviews associated with it, you can get a real sense of what you can expect when you stay at that location. For example, you'll hear from other travelers whether the rooms are clean, quiet, and well-equipped with amenities, or whether the staff was rude, the rooms were infested with bedbugs, or the expectations of visitors consistently go unmet.

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You can access TripAdvisor from any Internet-enabled computer by pointing your web browser to [www.TripAdvisor.com](http://www.TripAdvisor.com). If you want to access the same content from your smartphone or tablet, download and install the official TripAdvisor mobile app.

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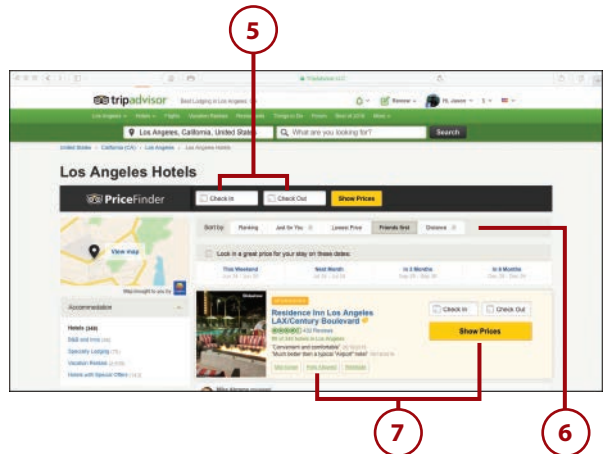
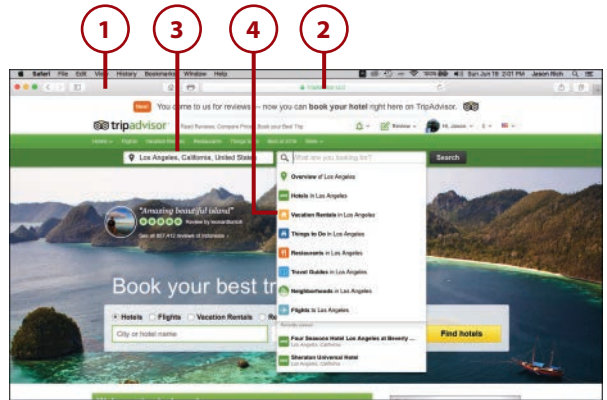
## Set Up a Free TripAdvisor Account

To unlock all of TripAdvisor's free tools and resources, set up a free account the first time you visit the website or use the mobile app. To do this, click or tap the Join option. When prompted, share your Facebook, Google, or Email account information.

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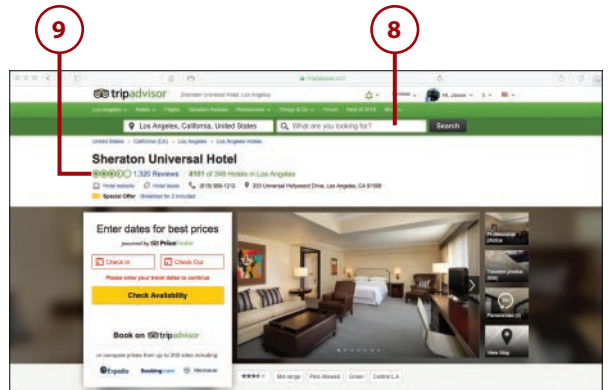
## Use TripAdvisor on Your Computer

- 1 Launch your favorite web browser on your computer.
- 2 Type **www.tripadvisor.com** in the address field.
- 3 Type a city, state, and/or country in the Where Are You Going? field. Click the Search button to continue.
- 4 Alternatively click the What Are You Looking For? field. From the menu that appears, click what you're looking for, including options such as Overview of [location], Hotels in [location], and Vacation rentals in [location]. You can also type something specific, such as **Sheraton Hotel**.
- 5 You see a listing of what's available in the category you selected. From here, you can enter your desired check in and check out dates.
- 6 Sort the listing by various criteria by clicking on the appropriate tab.
- 7 Click a specific listing to read customer reviews of that location. In the listing title, you can also see its average rating. Click the Show Prices button to display rates for that hotel.





- 8 Find reviews about a specific hotel, attraction, or restaurant by entering the name and location, such as Sheraton Universal, Universal City, California in the What Are You Looking For? field. Click the Search button to continue.
- 9 You see the average TripAdvisor rating as well as details about the hotel.
- 10 Click the Overview tab to learn more about the specific hotel, or click the Reviews tab to see how many reviews have been posted about that hotel by travelers, and then read those reviews. Click the Photos option to view photos taken and published by TripAdvisor users.

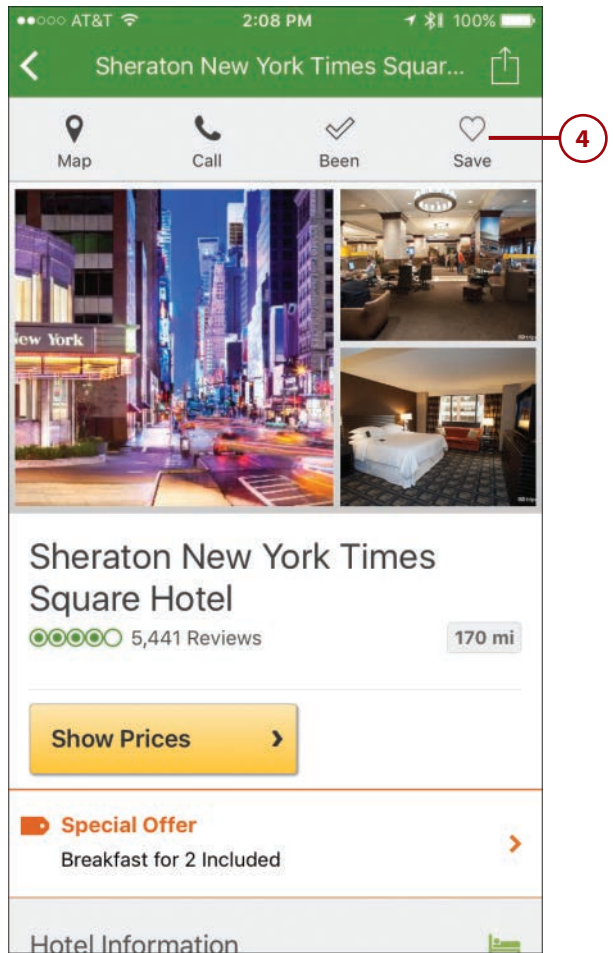
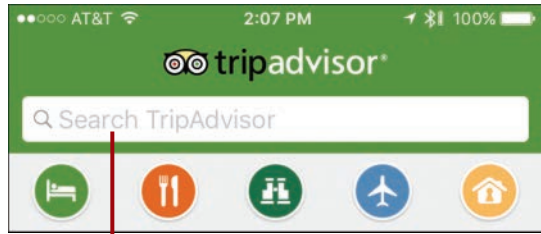


## Find Other Information

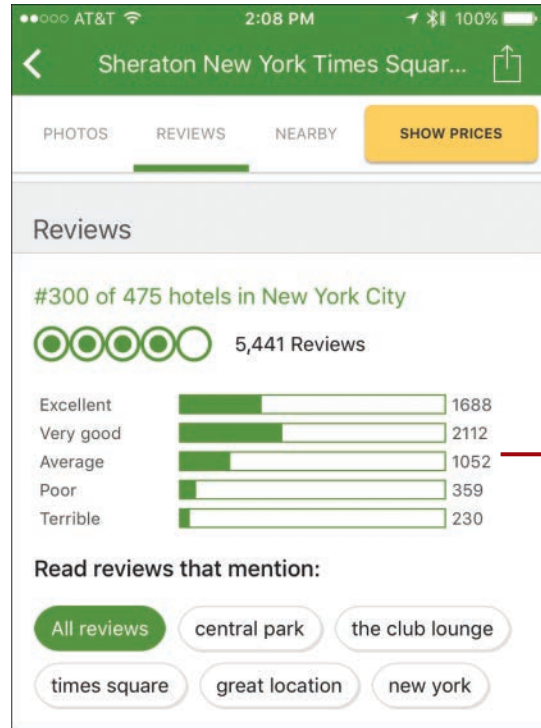
Instead of typing a hotel name in the search field or clicking the Hotels In *[location]* option, you can access similar reviews, ratings, and information about restaurants, attractions, and things to do in or near a desired location.

## Use the TripAdvisor App

- 1 Launch the App Store app, and in the Search field, type **TripAdvisor**. Download and install the free TripAdvisor mobile app onto your smartphone or tablet. (Not shown.)
- 2 From the Home screen, launch the TripAdvisor mobile app and sign in or create an account. (Not shown.)
- 3 Enter the name of a hotel, attraction, or restaurant followed by a comma and the city and state (or city, state, and country) in the Search field displayed. For example, type **Sheraton, New York Times Square**.
- 4 You see an overview of that hotel, attraction, or restaurant, which includes its average TripAdvisor rating. Tap the Map icon to see a detailed map of the location where you requested is located. Tap the Call icon (if you're using a smartphone) to call the hotel, attraction, or restaurant. Tap the Been button to indicate you've been to that location, or tap the Save icon to save that listing.

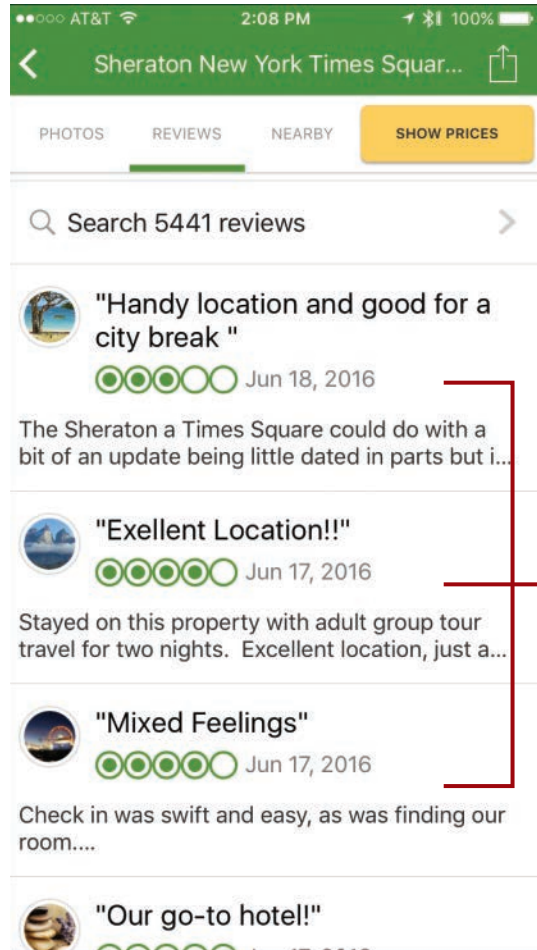


- 5 Swipe up to see more details about a location's TripAdvisor ratings and, when applicable, sort the ratings and reviews by relevant criteria.

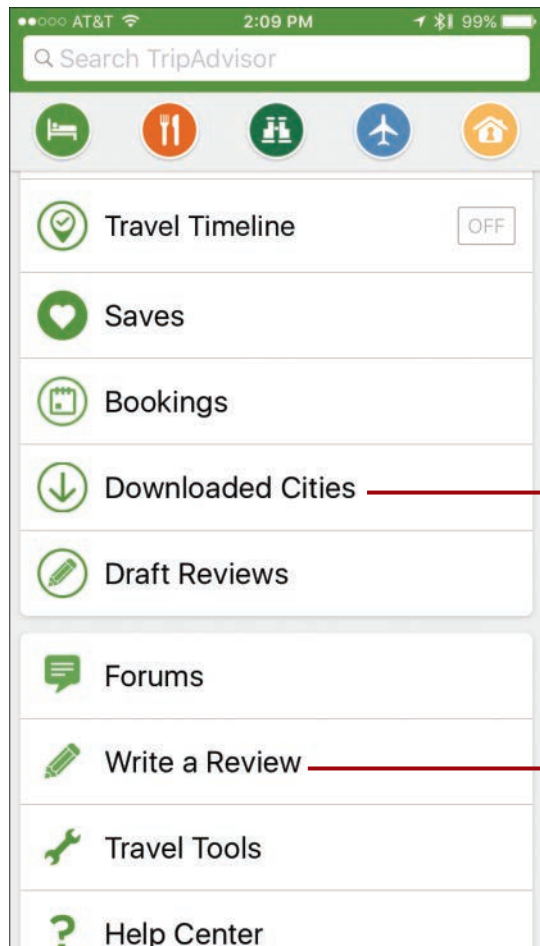
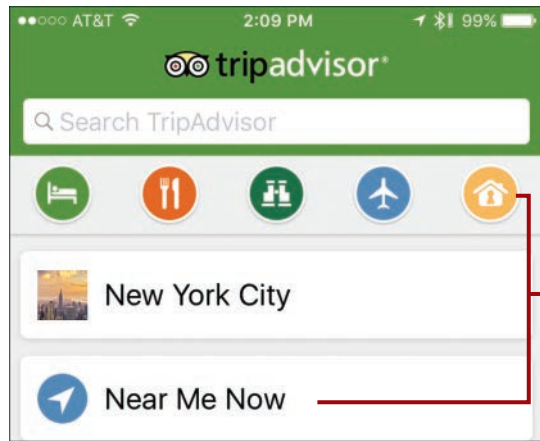




- 6 Keep swiping up to read individual text-based reviews and see ratings created by TripAdvisor users. Tap any review to open and read it.



- 7 From the app's main screen, tap the Hotel, Dining, Attraction, or Flight Search icon to locate specific information relating to a destination you select, or tap the Near Me Now option to view a listing of reviews for hotels, attractions, and restaurants that are located near your current location (which is determined using your smartphone or tablet's built-in GPS).
- 8 If you'll be traveling abroad and won't have Internet access from your smartphone or tablet, tap the Download Cities option. (Not shown.)
- 9 Tap the Download a City button and select the city where you'll be traveling. Doing this before you leave will allow you to access location-specific content within TripAdvisor without requiring Internet access.
- 10 Once you set up a free TripAdvisor account, you're encouraged to write and publish your own ratings, reviews, opinions, and travel photos. To do this from the mobile app, tap on the Write a Review option, and follow the on-screen prompts.



## Other Sources for Consumer Reviews

TripAdvisor offers the largest collection of consumer-written reviews and opinions available online, but many popular travel services and websites, such as Booking.com and Hotels.com, also encourage their customers to rate and review their experiences. Reading these reviews before making plans and reservations will help you develop realistic expectations about what to expect and potentially avoid the pitfalls experienced by previous travelers.

Many online services and mobile apps, including Foursquare, OpenTable, Yelp!, Zagat, and Zomato (formerly UrbanSpoon) allow you to quickly find restaurants using a variety of search criteria (such as location, price, average rating, and/or food type) and then read customer reviews about each dining establishment before making a reservation.

---

## Rely on Multiple Sources

To ensure you gather the most information possible and find the very lowest prices, always consider using at least three different online services, websites, or mobile apps when planning. The good news is that using any of these services to look up information takes just a few minutes.

Ultimately, by investing time to research the best travel deals online, you'll typically be able to have a better travel experience and save money.

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