



ESL Podcast 382 – Types of Hotels and Accommodations

GLOSSARY

to explore the options – to learn more about the choices one has; to gather information about what is available

* Bill is exploring his options for college by collecting information about all the colleges in the state that offer his major.

run-of-the-mill – ordinary or typical; not special in any way

* We ate at a run-of-the-mill restaurant, but we didn't complain because we were so hungry.

chain hotel – one of a group of hotels owned by a large company that has the same name and same look in every city where it is; a hotel owned by a large company that has hotels in several cities

* Is it better to stay in a chain hotel where you know what to expect or to choose an independently owned hotel you are not sure about?

cabin – a small, simple house made of wood; a vacation home outside the city, often near a lake or in the mountains

* Every summer my family and I spend our vacation at a cabin near Lake Michigan.

rustic – simple and a little rough in appearance; somewhat old-fashioned or rural

* The bakery in our town sells the best rustic bread, made with a recipe that has been in the family for over 200 years.

to rough it – to live without all the modern comforts; to do something (like live or travel) in a simple way

* Uncle Harold enjoys roughing it so he usually takes a tent, food, and cooking supplies when he travels.

hostel – a place to stay when traveling that may have shared bedrooms and bathrooms; a place where travelers can stay cheaply that is often popular with students

* We stayed in a hostel in New York City because everything else was too expensive. We found it was a good way to meet other travelers.

fleabag motel – a cheap, unclean motel; a motel that is not well kept and not comfortable

* I will not stay in that place. I have heard it is fleabag motel, with dirty sheets, paint falling off the walls, and even cockroaches.



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in the same league – of similar quality; approximately the same value or same level of achievement

* After winning first place in several speech contests, Abdi demonstrated that he is in the same league as the other state competitors.

luxurious – grand and expensive; very pleasant and comfortable

* The bride wore a luxurious silk wedding gown covered with beautiful lace and real pearls.

modest – simple and reasonably priced; not large or expensive

* “You don’t need the newest and biggest car, and besides, a modest car is all you can afford,” my sister told me.

boutique hotel – a small, pleasant hotel that offers personal service; a hotel that is usually smaller and nicer than common hotels

* The boutique hotel on Main Street has all its room decorated with items from Victorian England.

bed and breakfast – a private home that provides a place to stay and serves breakfast in exchange for payment; a home with a few rooms where a home-cooked breakfast is included in the price of the stay

* Miriam had a large beautiful old house, and her sister loved to cook so they planned to open a bed and breakfast.

vacation rental – a home in a nice location that people can rent when they take a vacation; a place someone can rent to get away from home for pleasure

* Last summer, the Martinez family chose a vacation rental because they could have more privacy and space than a hotel.

to appeal to – to interest or attract; to possess positive qualities that win people’s interest

* Near a university, you will find many shops that appeal to students.

adventurous spirit – willingness to try new, difficult, or dangerous things; an interest in new or exciting activities

* Only someone with an adventurous spirit would bicycle across several continents.

inducement – an action intended to persuade someone; something that encourages a person to do something

* None of the workers were interested in moving to another city until the company offered a financial inducement.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which would be the best place to stay for a person who likes “roughing it?”
 - a) A cabin
 - b) A boutique hotel
 - c) A bed and breakfast

2. What does Jamal mean when he says his adventurous spirit just needs the right inducement?
 - a) He will try something new when it is his idea.
 - b) He will try something new on their next vacation.
 - c) He will try something new with appropriate encouragement.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

cabin

The word “cabin,” in this podcast, means a small, simple house made of wood. Sometimes cabin refers to an old fashioned home; sometimes it is a simple place to stay when on vacation: “The first thing the family did when they moved to the area was cut down trees to built a cabin.” Or, “The summer cabins for rent in the park did not have electricity or running water.” A cabin is also a small room on a ship where people can sleep: “Each cabin on the ship had two beds, so every sailor had a roommate.” Another meaning for cabin is the area where people sit on an airplane: “The crying baby could be heard throughout the cabin, and so every passenger knew there was an unhappy baby on the plane.”

modest

In this podcast, the word “modest” means simple, not expensive, or not a lot: “The young family bought a modest home because that was all they could afford.” Or, “He earns a modest salary and therefore finds it difficult to save money.” Also, modest means not bragging about one’s own abilities or accomplishments: “The modest professor did not talk much about his awards or research, but the university was eager to make known his successes.” Finally, modest can be used to describe clothes or behavior that does not try to attract other people’s interest: “Carol advised her friend that the dress she had on was not modest enough to wear to the business meeting because it was too short and too tight.”



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CULTURE NOTE

Though we usually think of a hotel as a place to stay when traveling, some hotels are themselves the “attraction” (thing that draws attention). Such hotels are called “destination hotels” because staying in the hotel is the reason that people travel there.

There are several kinds of destination hotels that might help a person feel closer to nature. “Tree house hotels,” which use trees as a part of their buildings, might be found in a “rainforest” (thick forest in tropical areas), “wildlife refuge” (a place where animals live in their natural environment and are kept safe), or national park. For example, in one hotel, one of the rooms is built on the top of a living tree!

Around the world, there are cave hotels which are built into natural holes in the sides of cliffs or hills, and may even have rooms underground. There are also ice and snow hotels, in which the furniture and decorations are made of ice and snow, and need to be rebuilt each year.

A few people have built hotels under the water. An underwater hotel in Key Largo, Florida requires “scuba diving” (using special equipment to breathe under water) in order to enter. A hotel in New York City called “The Library Hotel” is organized according to the “Dewey Decimal System,” the number system used to organize books in U.S. libraries. Each room has a different theme or topic, including mathematics, music, and poetry.

Other destination hotels were built for a different use. In Long Beach, California a ship called the RMS Queen Mary is now both a museum and a hotel. The Queen Mary was a famous ship that crossed the Atlantic Ocean and its passengers sailed in luxury. Some people also believe that the ship is “haunted,” and have seen ghosts and heard strange noises while staying on the Queen Mary.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – a; 2 – c



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 382: Types of Hotels and Accommodations.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 382. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development, located in the beautiful City of Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. You can go there and download a Learning Guide for this episode. The Learning Guide contains all of the vocabulary and definitions for the main words of this episode. It also includes sample sentences using the words in new sentences. You will also find comprehension checks, additional definitions not found on the audio portion of this episode, cultural notes, and a complete transcript of this episode – everything we say you can find on the Learning Guide.

This episode is called “Types of Hotels and Accommodations.” It's a dialogue between Jamal and Erin talking about the different places you can stay, and how we describe those hotels and other places in English. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Jamal: Have you found a place for us to stay in Chicago?

Erin: I'm still exploring the options. Instead of a run-of-the-mill chain hotel, I thought we could do something different.

Jamal: How different?

Erin: I thought we might stay in a cabin near the lake.

Jamal: A cabin? That sounds a little too rustic for me. My days of roughing it in hostels or fleabag motels are over. A cabin sounds like it would be in the same league.

Erin: Oh, I don't know. There are some very nice cabins, and even if they're less than luxurious, I don't mind staying in a modest place. We can't afford an expensive boutique hotel, you know.



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Jamal: I know that, but there are a lot of other options. We could stay in a bed and breakfast or a vacation rental. Remember the bed and breakfast we stayed in in Montreal?

Erin: Yeah, that was nice. Okay, you win. I was trying to appeal to your adventurous spirit.

Jamal: My adventurous spirit is still here. It just needs the right inducement.

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Jamal asking Erin, “Have you found a place for us to stay in Chicago?” Erin says, “I’m still exploring the options.” “To explore the options” means to learn more about the choices that you have, to gather information about what is available. This is not the sort of thing you want to hear from, for example, your girlfriend! You say, “Honey, would you like to go to dinner with me?” And she says, “I’m exploring the options.”

But, Erin is exploring the options for places to stay in Chicago. She says, “Instead of a run-of-the-mill chain hotel, I thought we could do something different.” A couple of expressions there, the first is “run-of-the-mill,” all one long expression. The phrase “run-of-the-mill” means ordinary, typical, nothing special. It’s often used to describe things that are not very interesting, not very special. A “chain hotel” is a hotel that is one part of a larger group of hotels owned by a large company. For example in the United States, you can find chain hotels such as the Hilton, the Sheraton, the Ramada Inn – there are many different chain hotels in the U.S. and in other countries.

Jamal says, “How different?” meaning how different of a hotel are you looking for. Erin says, “I thought we might stay in a cabin near the lake.” A “cabin” (cabin) is a small, simple house, usually made of wood. It usually refers to a vacation home that is near a lake or in the mountains. When I was growing up, back in Minnesota, my parents had a small cabin in the northern part of the state, near one of Minnesota’s 10,000 plus lakes. Many of my brothers own small cabins near lakes that are an hour or two hours north of Minneapolis/St. Paul where they live, and these are places where they go with their families on the weekends to relax. “Cabin” has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for some more explanations.

Jamal says, “A cabin? That sounds a little too rustic for me.” “Rustic” (rustic) means simple but a little too rough, a little too difficult to be in. We often use this expression in talking about places outside of the city, rural areas. For example,



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people who like to go camping in tents, that would be very rustic. Jamal says, “My days of roughing it in hostels or fleabag motels are over.” “To rough it” means to live without the “modern comforts,” or the modern things that we expect in a house such as, for example, running water and indoor toilets. These would be “modern comforts,” things that we enjoy. “To rough it” would mean to go, usually, on a vacation and not have some of those things available to you.

Jamal says, “My days of roughing it in hostels or fleabag motels are over.” A “hostel” is a place where people can sleep when they are traveling. You usually share a bedroom with other people; you also usually share a bathroom. These are cheaper places. Hostels are popular with college students. It was very popular, when I was in college, for students to travel to Europe and they would stay in “youth hostels,” hostels that were for men and women under the age of 25 or 26. It was cheap, and of course, they could meet other 25 and 26, and under, men and women when they were there.

Jamal does not want to stay in a hostel; he doesn’t want to stay in a “fleabag motel” either. A “motel” is like a small hotel. It comes from the idea of a “motor hotel,” meaning a small place usually located near a main freeway or highway. Motels are smaller, cheaper, a little less comfortable. “Fleabag motels” are cheap, but also dirty and unclean motels, not a very comfortable place. The term “fleabag motel” is a very negative one.

Jamal says to Erin that a cabin sounds like it would be in the same league – in the same league as a hostel or fleabag motel. The expression “in the same league” means of similar quality; approximately the same level or type. Erin says, “Oh, I don’t know. There are some very nice cabins, and even if they’re less than luxurious.” She starts by saying, “Oh, I don’t know,” which is a way of disagreeing, in this case with Jamal. She’s not saying she doesn’t know, she’s saying, “I don’t think you’re correct.” She says, “There are some very nice cabins, even if they’re less than luxurious.” “Luxurious” is very comfortable, often very expensive. You go to some of the expensive hotels in Las Vegas and they’re very luxurious. Well, that’s what people tell me; I’ve never been to one!

Erin says, “I don’t mind staying in a modest place.” “Modest,” here, means simple and cheaper, not big and expensive: “modest.” “Modest” has a couple of different meanings; again, take a look at the Learning Guide for this episode for some more explanations. Erin continues, “We can’t afford an expensive boutique hotel, you know.” A “boutique hotel” is a small, pleasant hotel; it’s usually not part of a chain. It’s nicer than a more common hotel, and of course, more expensive. You can find boutique hotels in most big cities; New York and Los Angeles have many different boutique hotels, so does San Francisco.



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Jamal says, “I know that,” I know they can’t afford an expensive hotel, he’s saying, “but there are a lot of other options. We could stay in a bed and breakfast or a vacation rental.” A “bed and breakfast” is usually a private home that has different rooms for people to stay in, and in addition to getting a room and a bathroom you usually get a simple or small breakfast. Bed and breakfasts are usually not very big, somewhere between one and perhaps five or six rooms for people to stay in, so it’s more like staying at someone’s house. A “vacation rental” is someone who has a home or an apartment or a condo that they rent on a weekly or monthly basis – you can rent it for a week, you can rent it for a month. Vacation rentals have furniture, beds, and chairs, and so forth in them, and you essentially rent somebody’s condo or apartment for a week, or however long your vacation is. I’ve done this many times. My wife and I have gone on vacation to many different cities, and we usually look for a vacation rental because it’s nice to have a kitchen and to be in a part of town that is not necessarily where there are a lot of tourists.

Jamal then says to Erin, “Remember the bed and breakfast we stayed in in Montreal?” Erin says, “Yeah, that was nice. Okay, you win,” meaning you’re correct, I agree with you. “I was trying to appeal to your adventurous spirit.” “To appeal to something” is to interest or to attract something. I am not very appealing to most of the attractive women I see. That’s because I have a face that is made for radio, or podcasting – it’s better if you don’t see me!

Erin was trying to appeal to Jamal’s “adventurous spirit,” meaning his willingness to try new or difficult things. Jamal says, “My adventurous spirit is still here. It just needs the right inducement.” An “inducement” is an action that you take to “persuade” someone, or convince someone, to do something – to encourage them to do something. In the U.S., sometimes airlines sell too many tickets for the plane, and they need to find people who are willing to “give up their seats,” to take a different flight – a different plane – later in the day. They usually offer you a free ticket or some money as an inducement, trying to get you to do what they want you to do – encourage you to do something.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

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Jamal: My adventurous spirit is still here. It just needs the right inducement.

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by the adventurous spirit, Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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