

**1)** Make a reservation in advance- You might be ok just showing up to the hostel without prior booking, but there have been many horrible stories of travelers being stuck when they arrive to their new destination because all the hostels are 100% booked. The last thing you want to do is pay extra for a hotel or sleep outside. This is very important during the high travel season. To reserve a hostel you have to usually pay a small deposit using your credit card.

**2)** Hostel ratings- Most hostel booking sites have a section showing all hostel ratings such as:

- Price
- Location
- Cleanliness
- Safety
- Fun meter
- Staff

It is important to look at all the ratings but just as important is looking through all the past comments made by travelers who have stayed in your prospective hostel and taking into account their likes or dislikes.

**3)** Location is Key- when looking for what hostel you might want to book it is a good idea that you take location into account. It is usually a good choice to stay downtown or in a central location. You want to be located in or next to the following:

- Public transportation
- Food markets
- Bars and restaurants
- Sight seeing
- Safe area

**4)** Things to bring- Hostels vary from what kind of accommodations and extra facilities they supply for their guest. Below is a short list of recommended items to bring when staying in hostels:

- Earplugs
- Alarm clock
- Waterproof slippers or shoes for the shower
- All bathroom utilities such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, towel, etc
- Zip-lock bags
- Set of locks
- Small flashlight
- Swiss army knife

**5) Safety-** It is important to have your backpacks locked up at all times. Most of the hostel rooms have lockers in them, so make sure to bring a secure lock. If you have two bags it is a good idea to lock all your valuable items like your money, passport, travel passes, and camera into the locker and place your second bag full of clothes under your hostel bed. Also if one of your hostel roommates that you do not know is causing trouble, doing illegal drugs, or is acting shady it is your responsibility for your own safety to go tell a hostel employee.