

# Competitive benchmark

Hotel case study project 1 :Jeff Miller

## Objectives:

- Learn how best in class desktop websites solve the problems we are trying to solve.
- Understand the conventions we should follow.
- Highlight best practice that we should emulate.

## Tasks:

- Identify four websites to benchmark against.
- Define which aspects of their software you want to look at.
- Review each by taking screenshots with plenty of commentary to explain what is happening and why it is note worthy.



Hotels.com

priceline.com

KAYAK

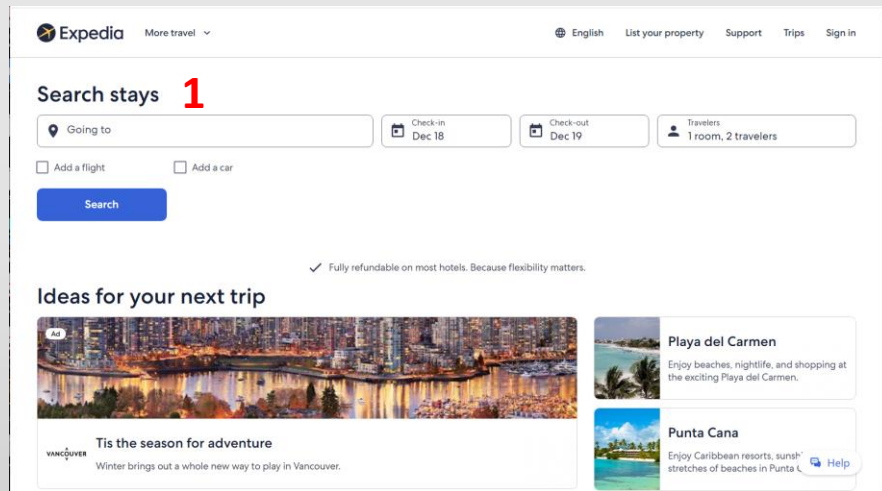
## Website search categories:

- Homepage
- Search and select
- Booking process results
- Payment and confirmation



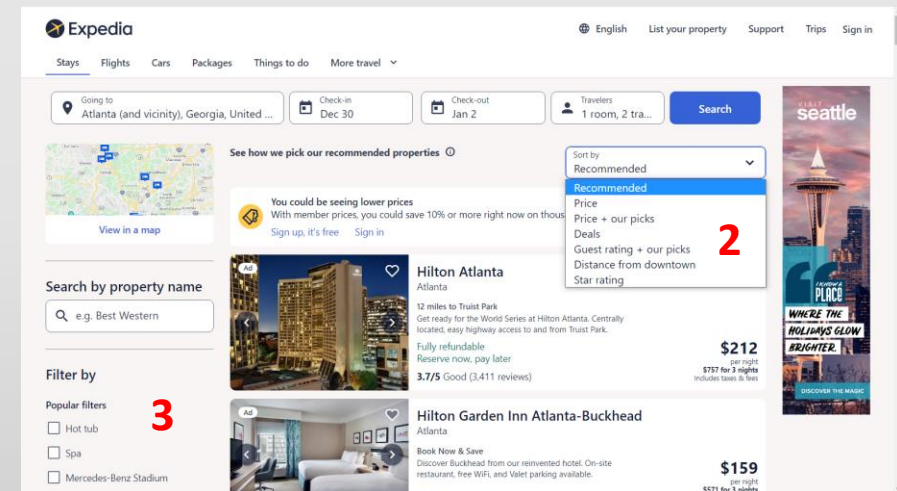
Expedia Group, Inc. is an American online travel shopping company for consumer and small business travel.

## Expedia.com homepage



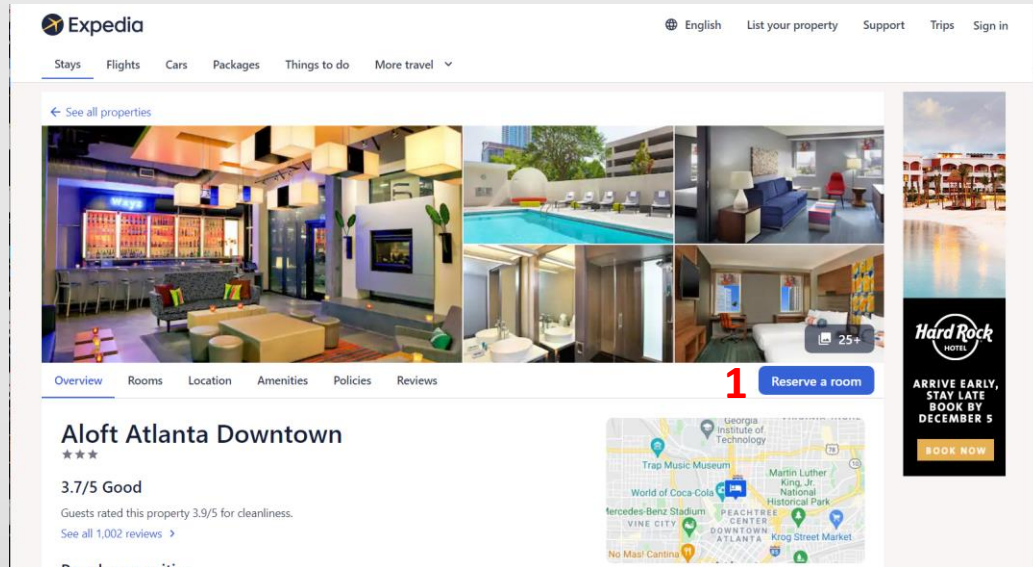
- 1 The Expedia.com homepage gives the user an opportunity to search for a hotel according to location, check-in and check-out dates and allows the user to select the number of rooms and travelers.

## Expedia.com search results



- 2 It also includes a drop-down list with specific criteria as seen in the above screenshot.
- 3 The results page included a list of amenities on the left side of the page as seen above. When the user clicks an amenity, the page automatically scrolls back to the top of the page. The user then must scroll back to where they were and continue scrolling to choose another amenity. This happens each time an amenity is selected and becomes time consuming and frustrating for the user.

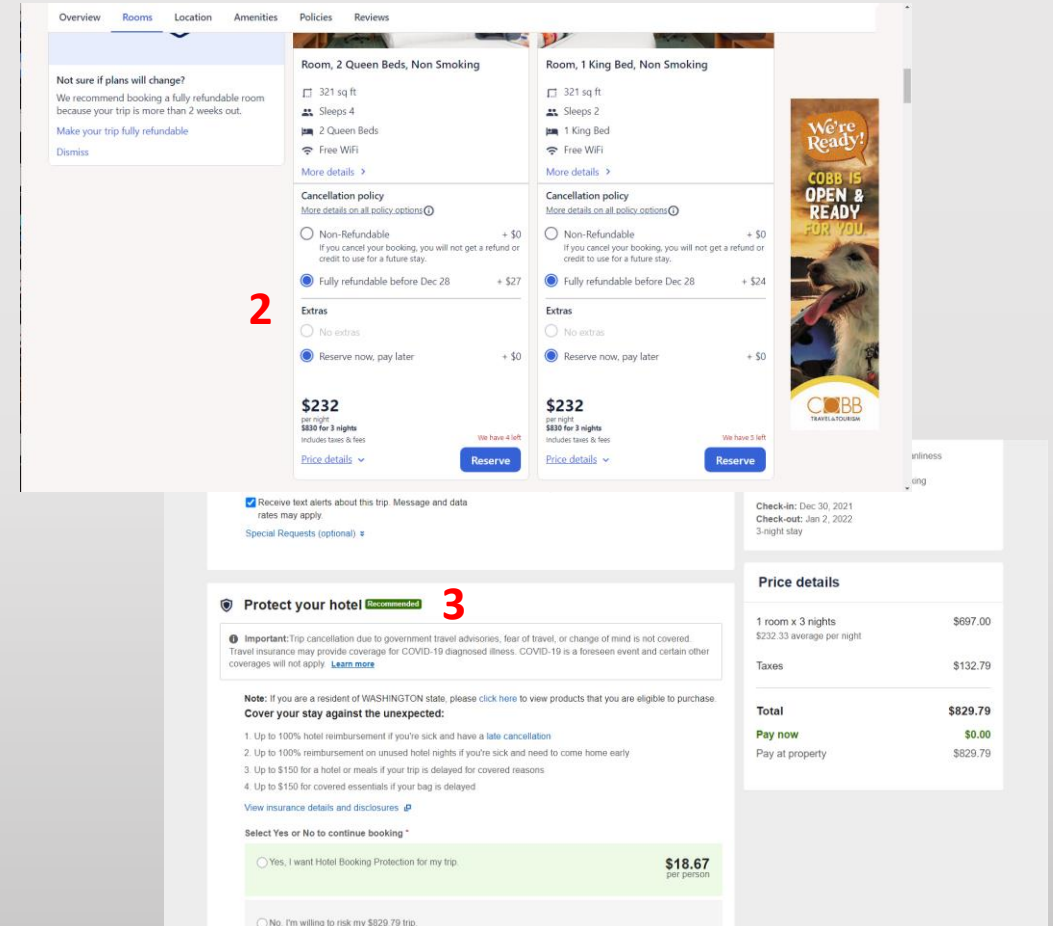
# Aloft Atlanta Downtown Hotel homepage



1 The Reserve a room button is obvious and easily directs the user to the reservation page. Once clicked, it takes the user to the Rooms page to make a reservation.

2 On bullet point 3 of the previous slide the list of amenities was mentioned. Within that list was an option to select a refundable room in case the user's plans should change. However, once on the Rooms page the user must again select a refundable room, at which time they are charged an additional fee of \$27.00.

3 The payment process is user friendly and easily processed. There are other options for the user to select such as Protect your hotel for \$18.67, which ensures that if you cancel beyond the cancellation date or check-out early, you are not charged the regular fee.

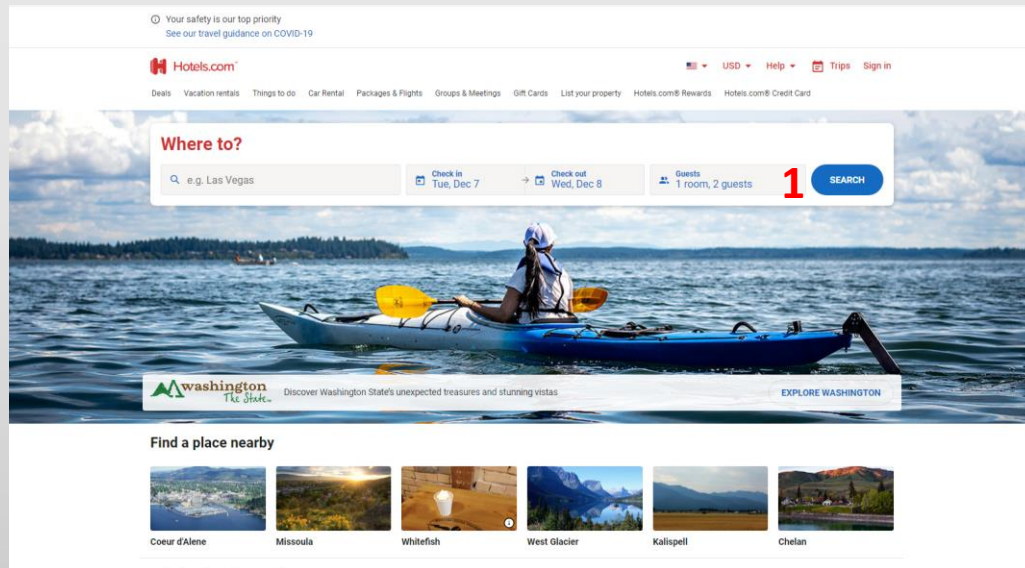


**Summary:** The overall experience was understandable, providing the user reads through the options and information provided throughout the search. Some information provided was not necessary for the task of booking a hotel room.

# Hotels.com

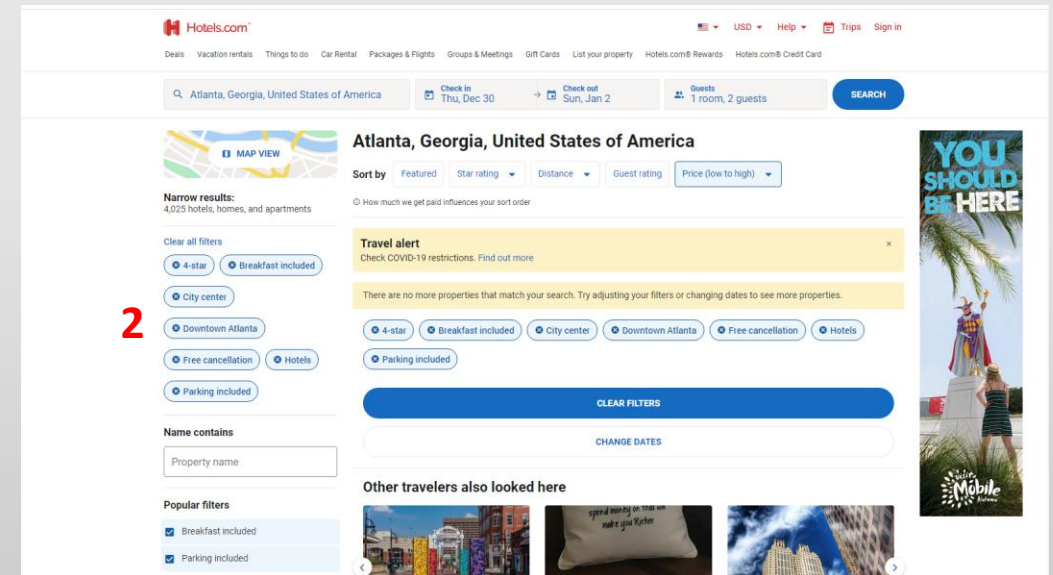
Hotels.com offers hundreds of thousands of bookable properties in more than 200 countries, ranging from international chains and all-inclusive resorts to local favorites and bed and breakfast, together with all the information needed to book the perfect stay.

## Hotels.com homepage



1 The Search button leads the user to a page that allows them to personalize their search.

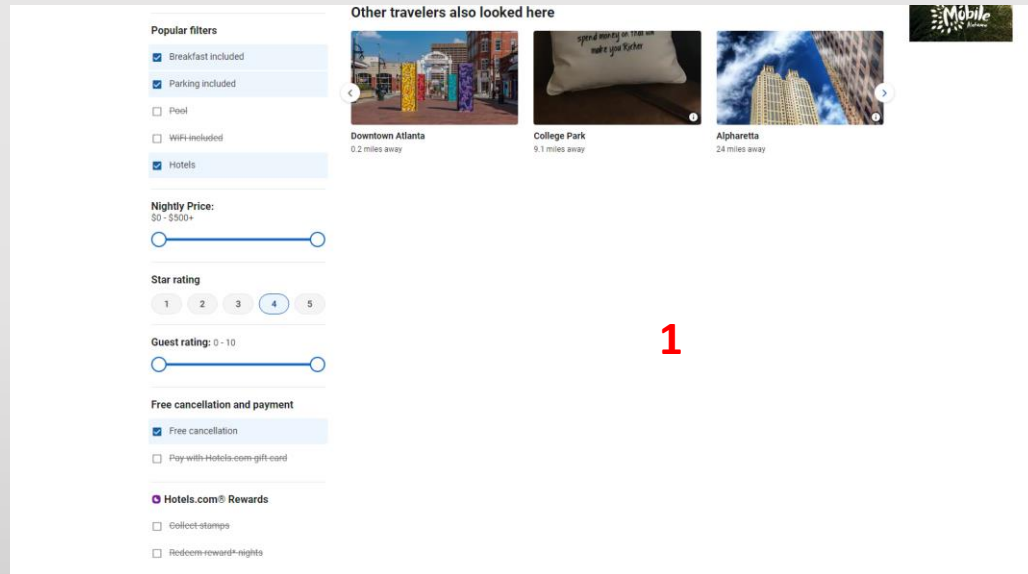
## Hotels.com search results



2 The user is then able to select specific criteria as seen above. However, each time you click an option the page automatically scrolls to the top. Although this seems cumbersome and inconvenient, it allows the page to update with the hotels that fit the criteria selected.

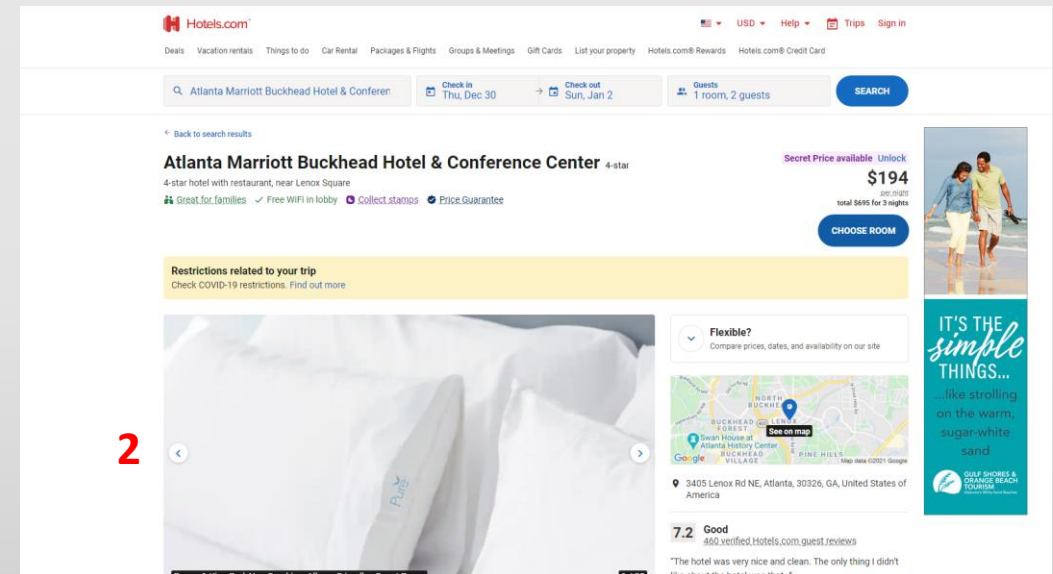
# Atlanta Marriott Buckhead Hotel and Conference Center

## Search results for the Atlanta Marriott Buckhead Hotel and Conference Center



1 As the user selects options as seen in the screenshot on the previous slide, the user continues to scroll to select additional options. As seen above, there is quite a bit of negative space on the page from the images to the footer of the page. It seems like a lot of unused space that could have been used to provide additional information on the hotel and the surrounding area.

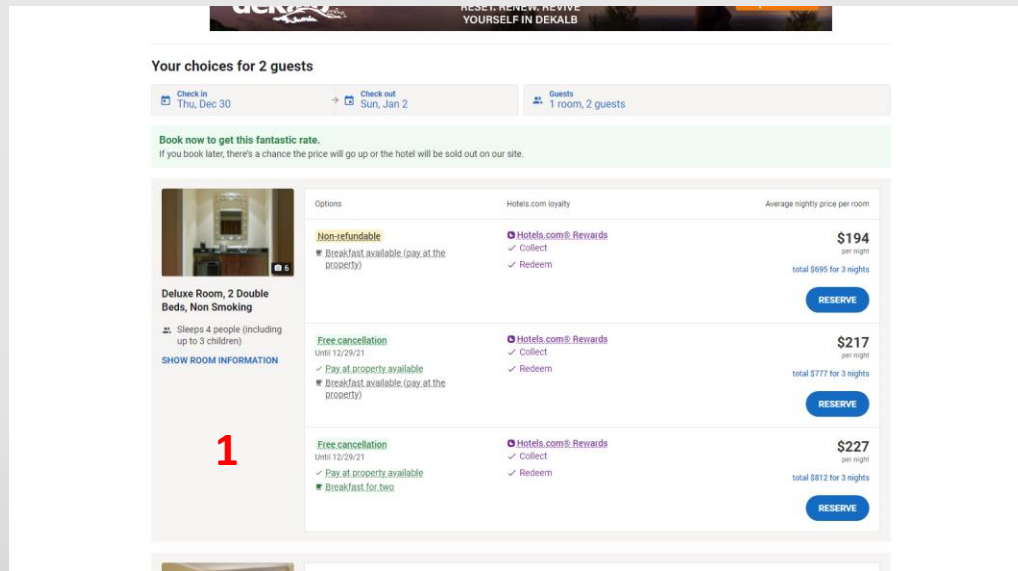
## Additional search results



2 After selecting the criteria and clicking to proceed, the user is brought to the above page where they allowed to click the Choose Room button. The image on this page is not visually appealing and could have been a more engaging image. Otherwise, the functionality thus far is a good user experience.

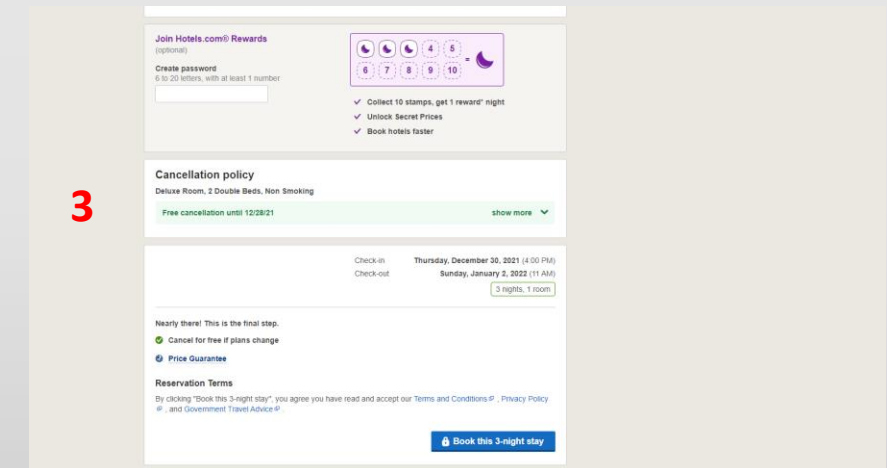
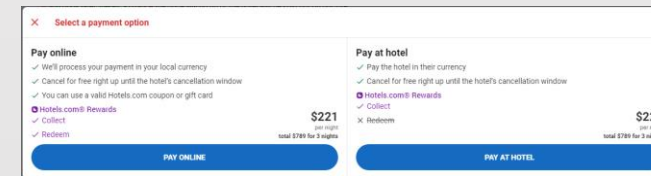
# Atlanta Marriott Buckhead Hotel and Conference Center

## Room options and pricing



1 After selecting, Choose Room, the user is lead to a page that provides even more options such as free breakfast, which the user had already chosen while selecting the criteria on the previous pages. It gives various prices for non-refundable, refundable, and free breakfast. These filters had already been chosen, so it seems redundant that they continue to provide these options.

## Payment options



2 After selecting, Choose Room, the pop-up message for payment type is clear and well designed for the user experience.

3 After completing the text fields with personal information and payment information, the user can scroll down to see the above view which includes an option to join hotels.com rewards, the cancellation policy, and the final button to book the room, which has a good user flow and creates a good experience at the end of the booking.

**Summary:** The overall experience was understandable and provided a good user experience compared to Expedia.com. Although, there is room for some improvement, the overall experience was understandable and easy to navigate.

## priceline.com homepage

priceline.com<sup>®</sup> Hotels Cars Flights Bundle + Save Cruises MEMBER Hi, Jeff My Trips Help USD

Where to? Atlanta, GA Check-in - Check-out 12/30/2021 - 01/02/2022 Rooms & Guests 1 Room, 2 Adults Update Search

Popular Filters Sort Buckhead Area Hartsfield Airport (ATL) North Free Cancellation New Cleaning Protocol Kitchen Pay Later

Property Themes Luxury Comfort Business Friendly Spa & Wellness

Rate Options Free Cancellation (3) Pay Later (2)

Guest Rating 5+ 6+ 7+ 8+ 9+

Set Your Budget \$199 to \$257 per night \$198 avg. per night

\*The average retail price for Dec 30 - Jan 02 in Atlanta, GA

Showing 3 hotels in Atlanta, GA | \$198 avg. per night List View Map View

Free Cancellation x \$199 - \$257 x 1 bed x Downtown Atlanta x Free Breakfast x Clear Filters

**Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Atlanta Downtown**  
Downtown Atlanta View Map  
✓ Hot Buffet Breakfast Included, Free Internet Acco... Amenities  
✓ Free Cancellation Available  
\$314  
**\$228**  
\$684 for 3 nights  
Choose your room

7.3 109 Reviews | 2.5-STAR HOTEL

Recommended based on your booking history

**SpringHill Suites by Marriott Atlanta Downtown**  
Downtown Atlanta View Map  
✓ Continental Breakfast Included, Free Internet Acco... Amenities  
✓ Free Cancellation, Pay Later Available  
\$317  
**\$229**  
\$687 for 3 nights

1 After selecting the same options as the previous searches such as, Refundable, One Bed, Downtown Atlanta, and Free Breakfast, the user was only left with three choices of hotels. (The above image shows two of the three hotels.)

## Search results for the Holiday Inn Express and Suites

priceline.com<sup>®</sup> Hotels Cars Flights Bundle + Save Cruises MEMBER Hi, Jeff My Trips Help USD

Back to Listings Where to? Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Atlar Check-in - Check-out 12/30/2021 - 01/02/2022 Rooms & Guests 1 Room, 2 Adults Update Search

1/58 See All 58 Photos

**INCLUDED FOR FREE**  
**HOT BUFFET BREAKFAST**

HOTEL DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN ATLANTA  
Georgia Aquarium State Farm Ar PEACHTREE CENTER  
Mercedes-Benz Stadium The Municipal Market  
No Mas! Cantina

**2** Overview & Photos Rooms Amenities Map Reviews

**Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Atlanta Downtown**  
2.5-STAR HOTEL  
111 Cone Street Northwest, Atlanta, GA - Downtown Atlanta View Map  
BOOKED 43 MINUTES AGO 12 people are looking at this hotel  
Share

**Top Reasons to Book**  
FREE CANCELLATION AVAILABLE  
Choose a room with Free Cancellation for

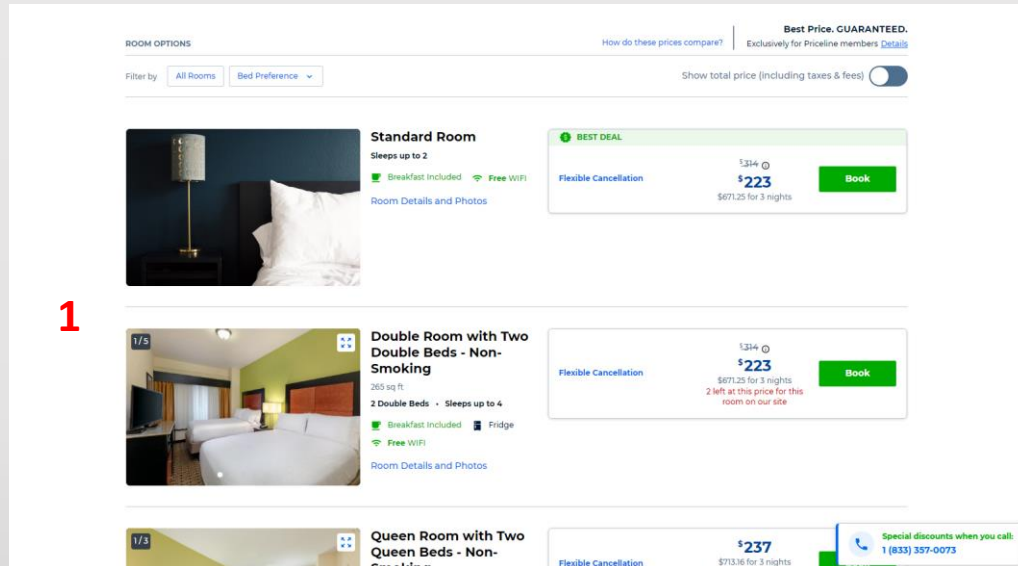
**Overall Experience** 7.3  
CLEANLINESS 8.0

**Top Amenities**  
Free Internet Access Free Breakfast Special discounts when you call: 1 (833) 357-0075

2 The above page provides options for rooms, amenities, a map, and services. Below that are options for the number of beds and room arrangement as seen on the following slide.

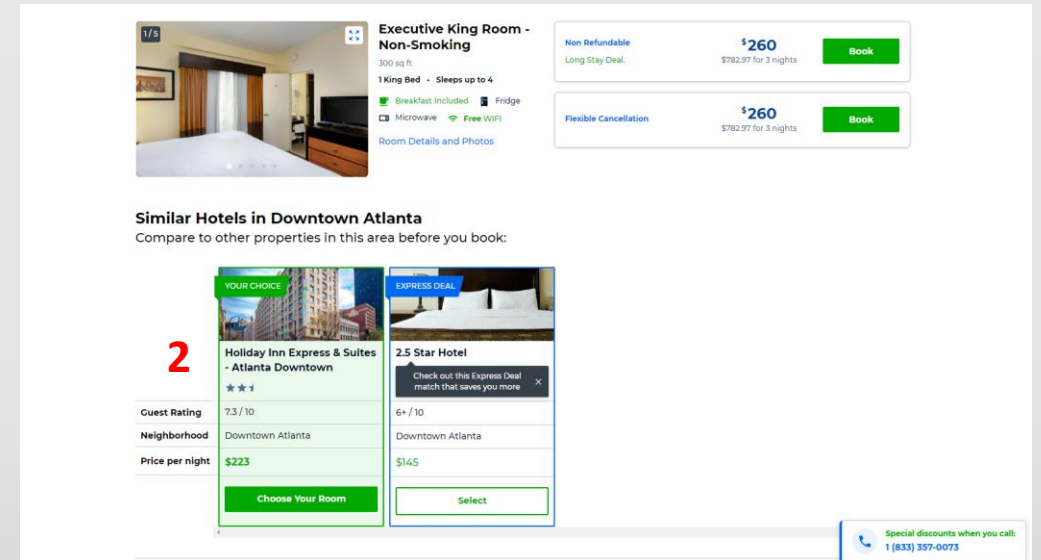
# Holiday Inn Express and Suites, Downtown Atlanta

## Search results for number of beds



1 Above are options for the number of beds and room arrangement.

## Options for selecting Executive King Room Non-Smoking

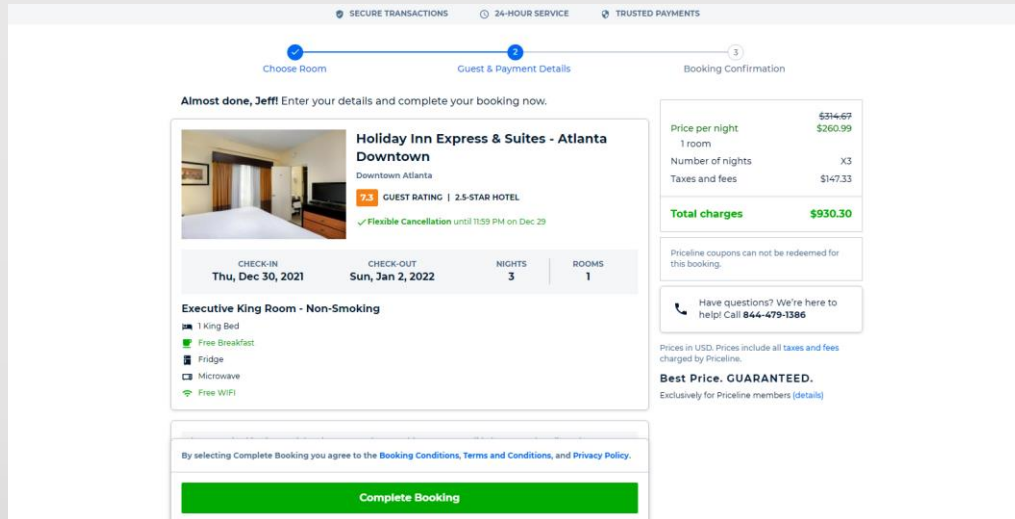


2 Before selecting the Executive King Room + Non-Smoking, There were options for Nonrefundable and Flexible Cancellation, which are priced the same. Below that there are options for Similar Hotels in Downtown Atlanta, however, the label reads, Express Deal with a 2 star rating and price listed at \$145.00 as opposed the room that was selected at \$223.00 per night. It almost seems unfair to the priceline.com higher-end clients to give the user an option to choose a low-end hotel for a much cheaper rate. On the bottom right corner is an option to call for special discounts. These options appear to be prompting the user to select a discounted room with less quality than what they had already selected.



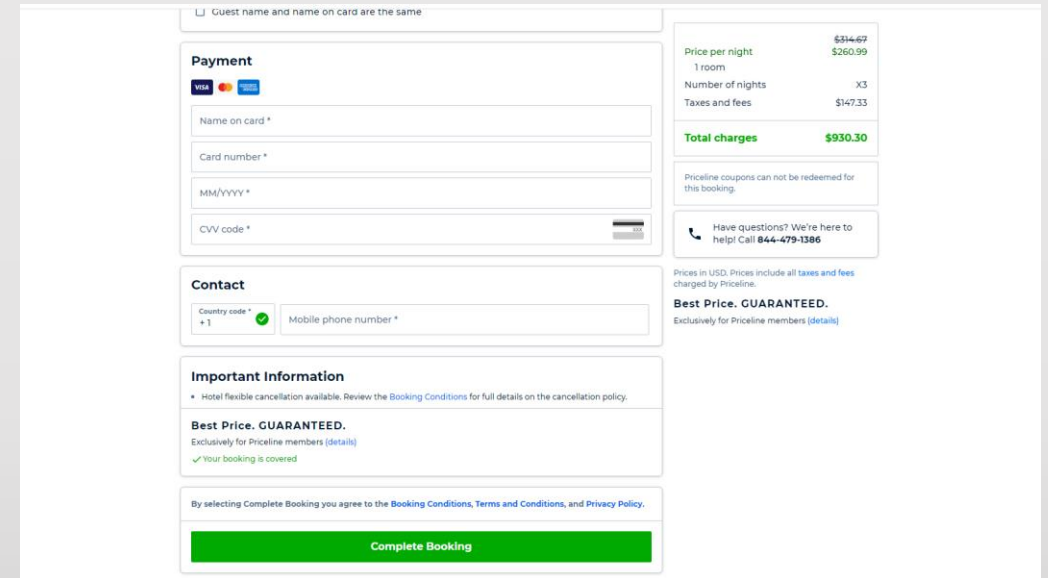
# Holiday Inn Express and Suites, Downtown Atlanta

## Complete booking and payment



1 Above is the Complete Booking page which is clear and concise. The long, green Button is good design as it is very descriptive in its appearance.

## Payment options

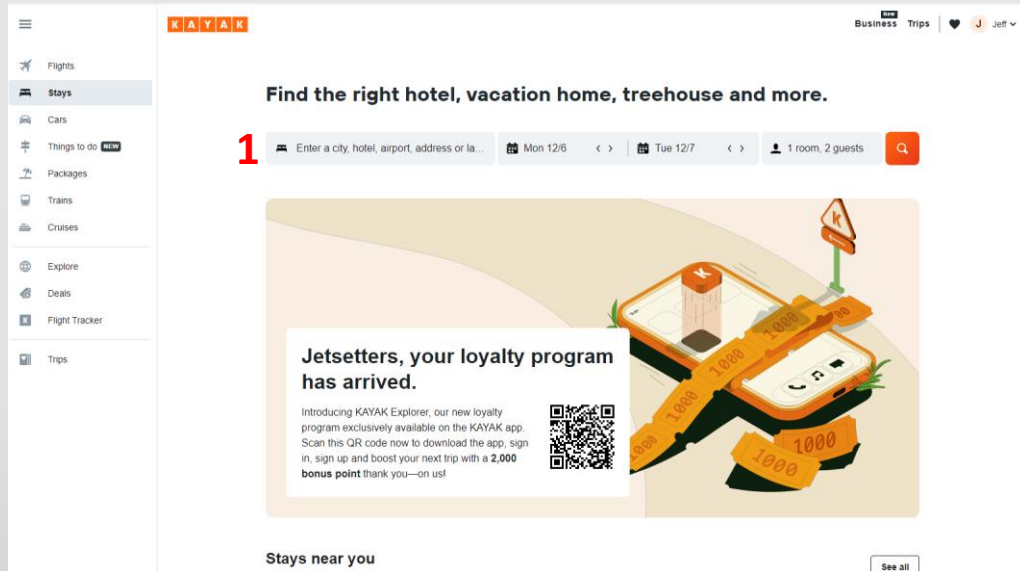


2 The Complete Booking page also includes payment options which are easy to navigate and select.

**Summary:** The overall experience was understandable and provided a good user experience. The booking and payment options were clear and concise making it a good overall experience for the user.

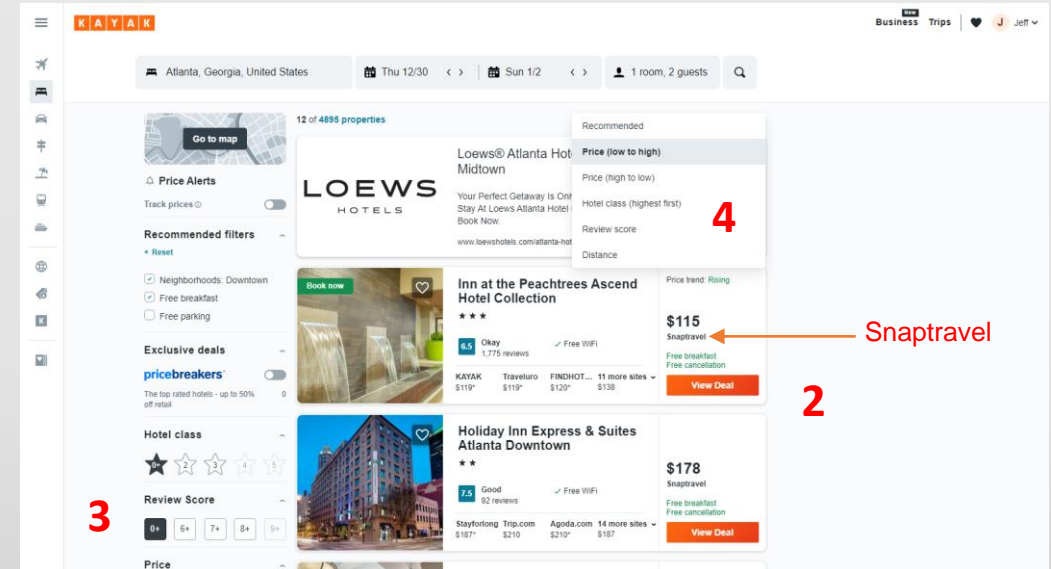


## Kayak.com homepage



- 1 The kayak.com homepage provides options for the user to select a destination, the check-in and check-out dates, and the number of travelers.

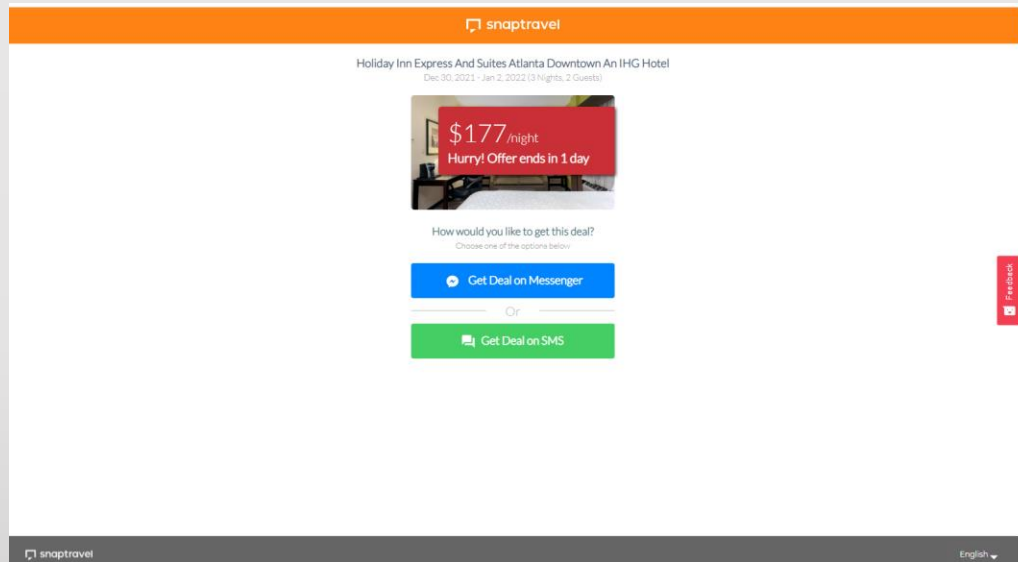
## Kayak.com search results



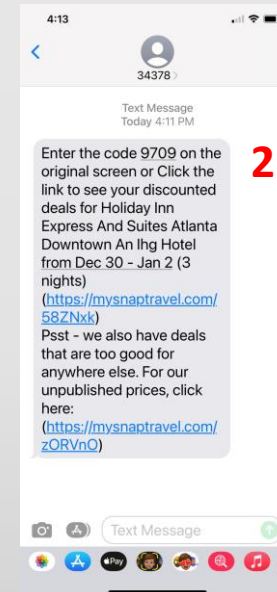
- 2 The kayak.com search results leads the user to a page with a list of hotels to choose from or select specific criteria before choosing a hotel.
- 3 When selecting options, the page did not automatically scroll to the top like the other websites. This made for a much better user experience. It also gives the user a list of all hotels without selecting a specific price range like the other websites.
- 4 There is a drop down menu that lets the user select their pricing options. Under each price the user may question what **Snaptravel** is. After clicking View Deal, the user is taken to the snaptravel page on the following slide.



## Snaptravel pop-up page



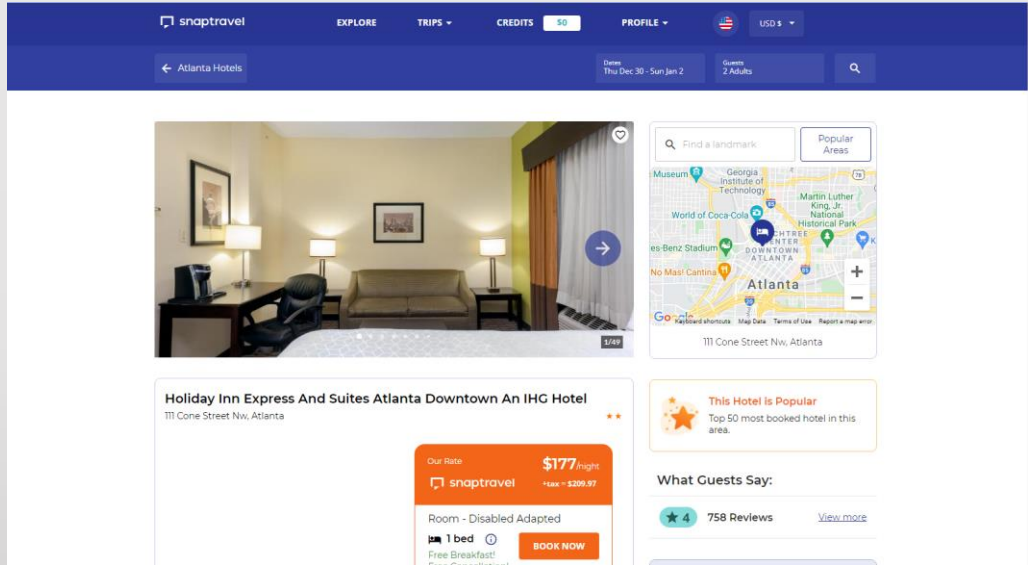
- 1 The snaptravel pop-up page gives the user an option to have an offer sent to them via Messenger or SMS, which many users will not understand, and may be reluctant to select these options.



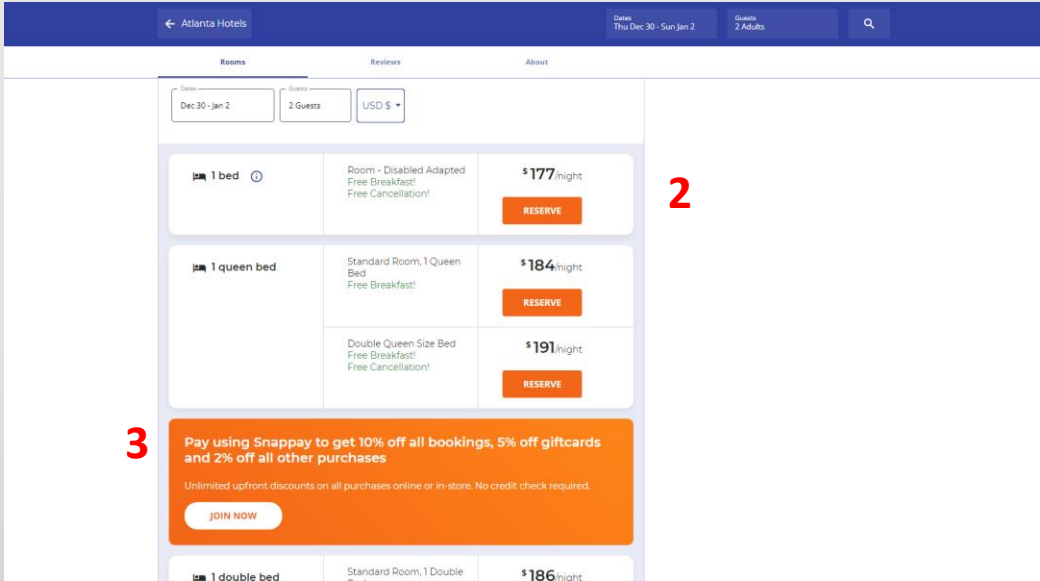
- 2 After selecting SMS, the user received the above text message on their mobile device which includes a code that is entered into a text field on the website.
- 3 This is where it became very confusing for the user. After entering the code and clicking Submit, the user is lead to the page on the following slide.



### Snaptravel results after SMS code applied



1 After selecting SMS, receiving the code, and applying it, the user is brought to the above page which appears to have saved them one dollar on the room.

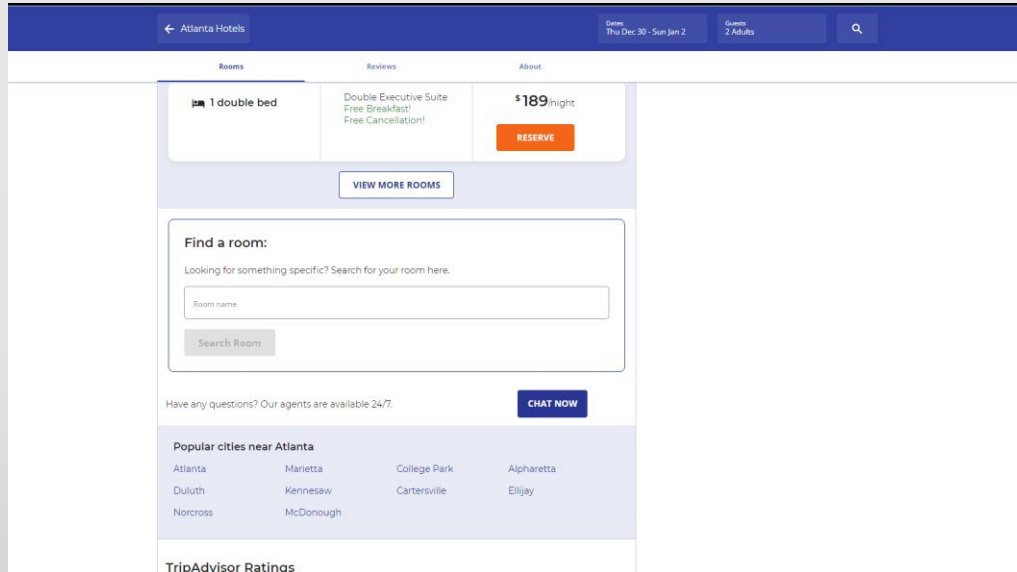


2 The above view is below the previous image when the user scrolls down. Now they are provided with even more options for the number of beds which had already been determined in the original search.

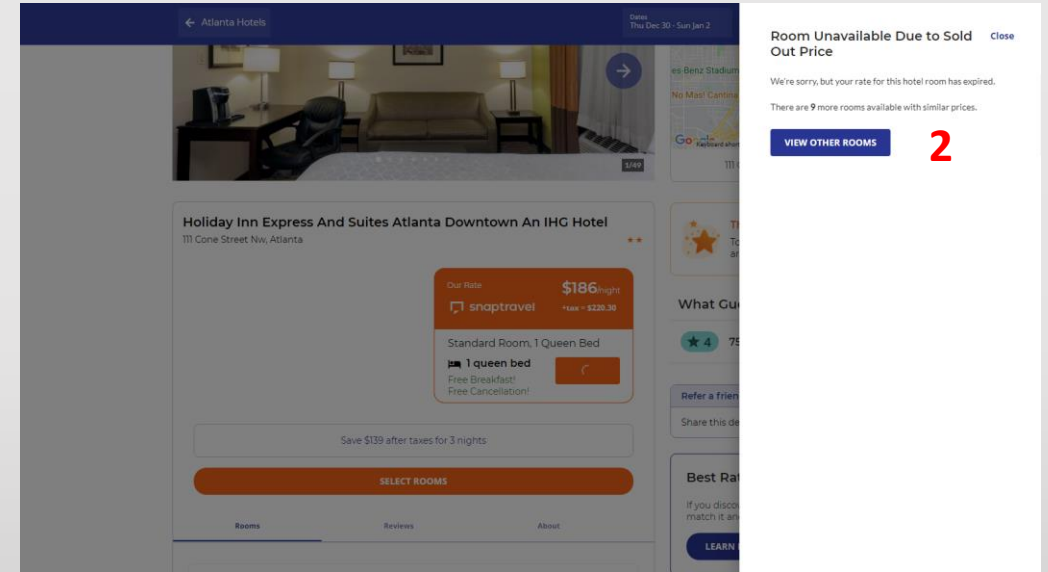
3 Additionally, the user is given an option to pay with snappay which requires signing up for snappay and opening a new account. Below the snappay option are more room options with room sizes, number and size of beds, and free breakfast which had all been specified in the original search. Since the user selected one king size bed to start, none of these options are even desirable.



## Snaptravel results after SMS code applied (continued)



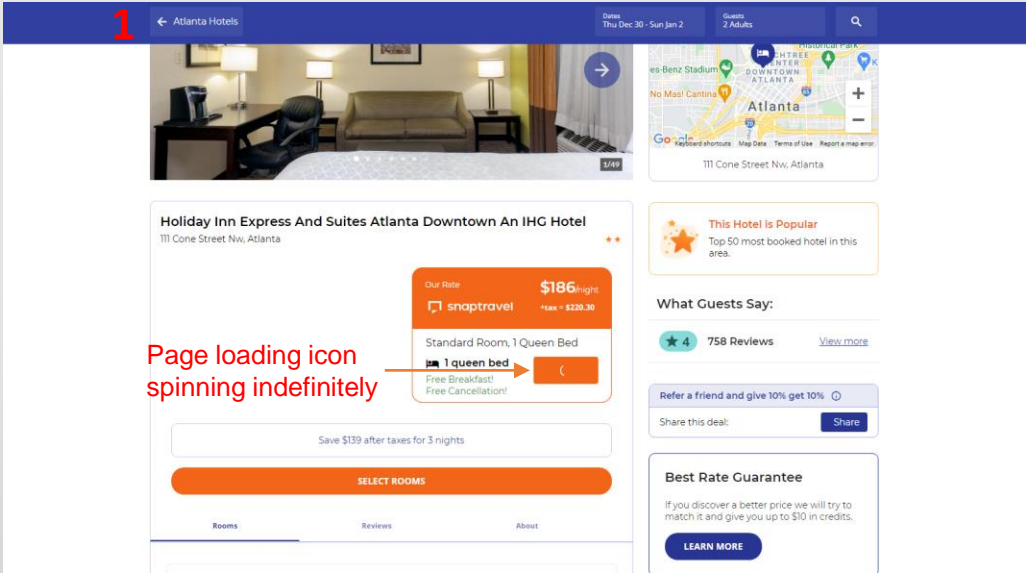
1 After receiving options that are not in line with the search, the user scrolls below the options that are not desirable to be given a Find a Room option which appears to begin a new search and an option to Chat Now. This has taken the user away from their original search. It is very confusing that the search began with kayak.com and when selecting the room of choice, the user is taken to snaptravel where options are not in line with their original search. What began as a very user friendly search, became a confusing experience with snaptravel. Oddly enough, it appears that kayak.com allows this confusion as each original room had snaptravel under it so it appears that the user has no choice but to go from a kayak.com search to a snaptravel search which becomes a very poor user experience.



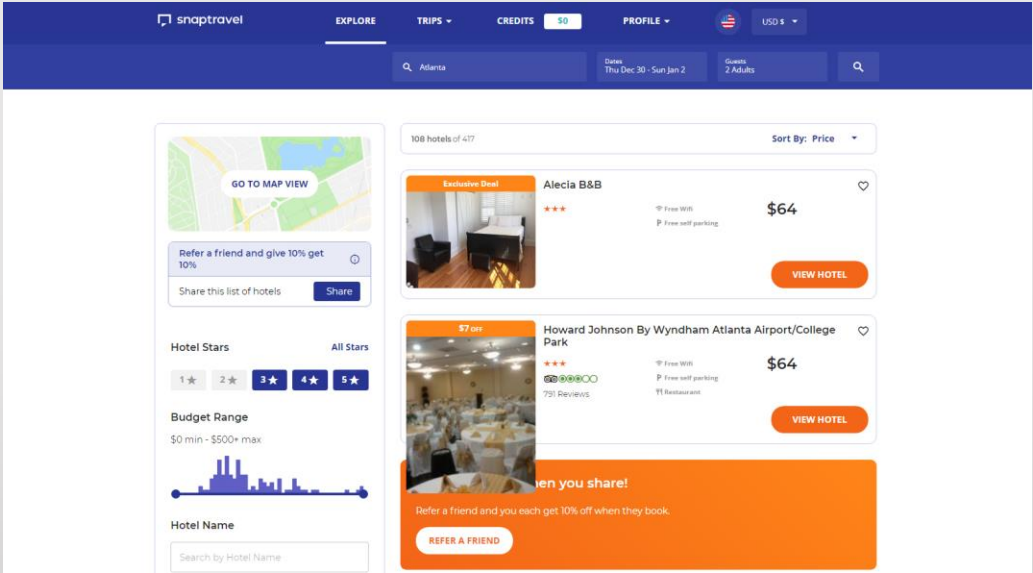
2 Regardless of all the additional offers, the user scrolled back to the top of the page and selected the original room with the queen size bed and free breakfast. Unfortunately, clicking to book the room led to the above pop-up which informs the user that the room is no longer available due to sold out price and prompts them to view other rooms. This search has led to confusion and frustration. The time spent on this search makes for a very poor user experience.



Snaptravel results after SMS code applied (continued)



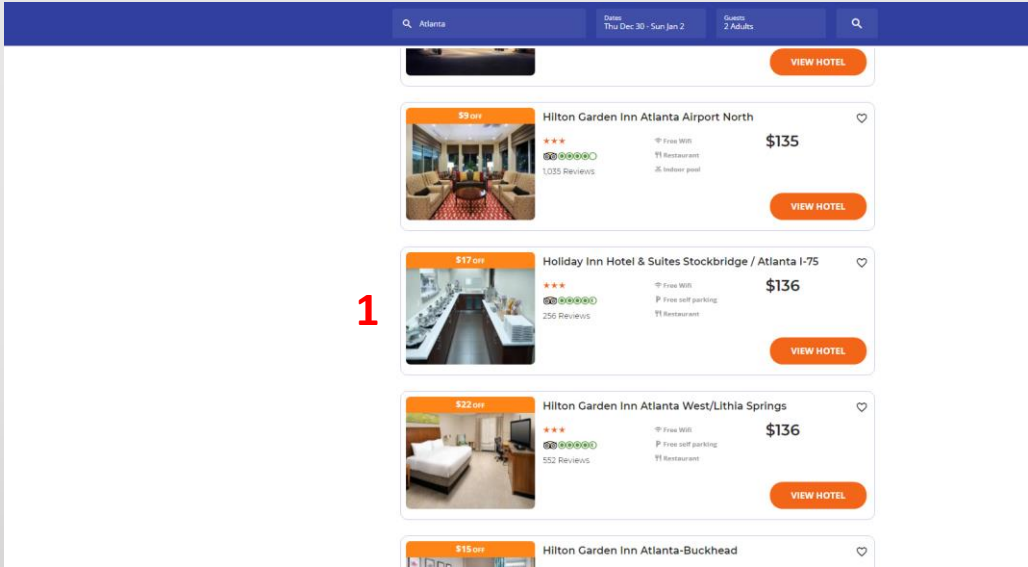
1 After clicking the View Other Rooms option from the previous screen, the pop-up was removed and the original button on the Holiday Express and Suites pictured above became a page loading icon that spun indefinitely. After waiting 15 minutes for the page to reload or provide other options the user selected the Atlanta Hotels button on the top, left portion of the page.



2 After clicking the Atlanta Hotels button, the user was brought to the above page that began a new search beginning with rooms priced at \$64.00. Please note how the bottom image overlaps the modal below it and makes it impossible to read. This demonstrates poor design, development, and deployment. This page scrolled through a list of 50 hotels. Each has a price discount at the top of the image. The prices were listed from \$64.00 per night through \$159.00 per night. None of these options were in line with the original search.



### Snaptravel results after SMS code applied (continued)



**Summary:** The search began with kayak.com and was a good user flow to start. However, when selecting a hotel, the user had no choice to remain on the Kayak.com website and was then taken to the snaptravel website, which appears to be completely different from kayak.com. The search became confusing and time consuming as too many options were provided and too many actions had to be taken. Since booking a room was not a simple task, as it should be, the search ended with confusion and frustration. The user then went directly to the hotel website and learned that the room they had chosen was not available during the specified dates in the original search. It may be that because the room was not available during the specified date that the search became so complicated. It would have provided a much better experience if that had been announced when the hotel was selected for those dates. Overall, the experience was time consuming and confusing. It ended without booking a room through kayak.com / snaptravel.

1 On the list of 50 hotels, The Holiday Inn Express and Suites Downtown Atlanta was not listed. Instead, number 36 on the list is the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites Stockbridge which appears to be at least 30 miles outside of Atlanta.

This is where the kayak.com/snamtravel search ended.