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What Hosts Need to Know About Airbnb's Winter Release

By Nell McPherson - Nov 15, 2021 at 3:58PM

KEY POINTS

- The increasing mobility ushered in by the remote-work boom is changing the way people travel.
- New features on Airbnb's platform will make it easier for guests to find the exact type of property they're looking for.
- Airbnb's expanded protection plan offers hosts more perks.

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Airbnb is about to roll out a flurry of intriguing changes to its platform. Here's a look at how hosts can benefit.

The pandemic has changed the way so many of us live and work. For some, that's meant seeking out more space, both indoors and out. Others have learned they'll be able to work from home indefinitely. And a growing number of that group are becor

digital nomads -- workers looking to take full advantage of their remote status by exploring the world rather than holing up in their home offices all year.

In fact, in the first quarter of this year, **Airbnb (ABNB 0.59%)** reported that the number of stays people were booking for 28 nights or more had almost doubled from the same quarter of 2020. That long-term booking number probably will decline because some people were only remote temporarily. But it still reflects a huge change in the way people think about travel. Rather than getting away one or two weeks a year, living more flexibly is becoming a lifestyle for some.



IMAGE SOURCE: GETTY IMAGES

Of course, this has not gone unnoticed by the folks at Airbnb. After evaluating how the company and its hosts might take better advantage of these trends, Airbnb has made more than 50 changes to its hosting program. Many are better versions of features that were already available on the platform, but several are new. Let's jump in and explore a few of the highlights and look at how Airbnb hosts can make the most of them.

Focusing on what makes your property unique

With longer stays, an increasing number of guests will be looking for something very specific in the properties they're considering. A visit of just a few days often means spending more time out and about. Guests settling in to get some work done are likely to care more about the details of the property they're renting. And now, Airbnb is offering four new home types for guests to browse:

- **Ski-in, ski-out:** Have a property next to the slopes? Guests can now find it with a click, bundle up, and get out there.
- **Off the grid:** If you have a retreat where guests can really disconnect and escape the complexities of modern living, it just got a lot easier for them to find you.
- **Luxe:** The opposite of off the grid, these homes are impeccably designed and feature top-notch everything, including luxury amenities and services. A verification process ensures that all homes listed as luxe qualify.
- **Offbeat homes:** Travelers often wish to stay somewhere unique, but it can be hard to find those properties in a search. Not anymore. Whether your place is allegedly haunted or is a repurposed giant potato (seriously, it's a thing), the type of guests who would love that can now find you easily.

We can't delve into every platform upgrade here, but here's a peek at a few more that could help the right guests find your property.

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Verified Wi-Fi speed

Hosts can test and verify their property's Wi-Fi speed within the Airbnb app. This way, guests planning to work while renting will know that the speed rating isn't simply based on the host's opinion of what's fast.

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Translation engine upgrade

In the video about this rollout, Airbnb Chief Executive Officer Brian Chesky pokes fun at how terrible the company's old translation program was and demonstrates the improvements the company is introducing. This will be a valuable feature for international hosts.

Accessibility review

If your property is designed for guests who have special needs, you'll be able to list your property's accessibility features and display a photo of each. A thorough review process ensures that these guests will find everything they expect.

Protecting hosts' investment

Airbnb's protection plan for hosts already included $1 million in both liability and damage protection, as well as an income-loss protection plan. AirCover, as the program is now called, will also include the following for hosts:

- Pet damage protection.
- Deep cleaning protection.
- A 14-day claim filing window.
- Faster reimbursements.
- A faster track to becoming a Superhost.

Take advantage of Airbnb's new features

Short-term rental investors went through some dark times at the height of the pandemic, but things are looking up. More people are getting away from home and staying longer, and these new features can help hosts put their properties in front of the right customers. Hosts will want to do a deep dive and make sure they're getting all they can out of what Airbnb is offering.