

## Trust and Rewards Top the List of What Matters Most to Travelers, New Choice Hotels International Research Shows

*Travelers are looking beyond the nightly rate and prioritizing transparency and meaningful experiences when choosing where to stay.*

NORTH BETHESDA, Md., March 25, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- New research from Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH), finds that travelers today define value through trust, transparency and recognition. For many travelers, the right hotel option is no longer defined by price alone, but the assurance that the stay will deliver on expectations and reward and recognize continued loyalty.

Key findings from the research include\*:

- 64% of respondents say earning rewards enhances the value they receive from hotels.
- 83% say that trust is crucial in determining whether a hotel offers good value for money.
- 73% are seeking a dependable balance of comfort, consistency and cost when choosing where to stay.
- 75% say thoughtful gestures such as great service or small perks influence value more than basic amenities.

"It's clear that today's travelers want to trust that they're choosing the right place to stay," said Jenny Aboudou, Head of Upper Midscale Brands and Customer Success at Choice Hotels International. "Value is about far more than simply cost. It is built by delighting the guest at every turn — delivering meaningful and consistent experiences, along with genuine rewards and recognition for loyalty. Choice Hotels upper midscale brands are designed to provide just that, making it easy for guests to know what to expect, feel welcomed when they arrive, and appreciated for choosing to stay at our hotels again and again."

### Rewards: Building Loyalty Through Recognition

Rewards remain a powerful driver of value, particularly when recognition is accessible and immediate. Loyalty programs offer tangible benefits through discounted stays, savings, reward nights and point perks, while reinforcing that guests' preference and loyalty are appreciated.

Choice Hotels' award-winning loyalty program, [Choice Privileges®](#), reflects this shift. [Enhancements](#) introduced in January allow members to earn elite status starting after just five nights and milestone rewards like bonus points and gift cards every five qualifying nights between tier levels. These updates make it easier for travelers to access benefits sooner and reinforce the value of staying loyal.

### Brand Trust: The New Value Signal

For travelers, trust has become the strongest signal of value, reinforcing that transparency and reliability are central to what guests are looking for. This signals a shift from finding the lowest rate to confidently choosing brands that offer clarity and value from booking to checkout.

At the same time, trust can quickly erode when expectations are not met. **57% of respondents report encountering a "good deal" that was undermined by hidden fees or inconsistent quality by other brands.**

Choice Hotels' upper midscale brands are built to deliver clearly defined, consistent experiences guests can rely on. At Comfort®, trust shows up through dependable brand hallmarks — from a free hot breakfast with signature waffles to cheerful, welcoming spaces and thoughtful touches that signal quality without surprises. Country Inn & Suites® by Radisson delivers trust through warmth and care, offering residential-style guestrooms, cozy public spaces and a free breakfast experience designed to feel intentional and human rather than transactional.

Choice Hotels focuses on delivering transparency and reliability from booking to checkout. Through the [Choice Hotels app](#), guests can see every detail of their stay ahead of time, including a detailed list of amenities, property policies, and expected final costs of their stay, helping guests feel confident in their decision before they even arrive. Combined with consistent on property delivery across Upper Midscale brands, this approach helps ensure that strong value is felt throughout the stay — reinforcing trust through follow-through, not fine print.

### **Guest Experience: Human Moments That Matter**

While fundamentals remain essential — with cleanliness ranked as the most important factor in determining value — travelers say the moments that stand out most are often small but meaningful.

In fact, 75% say that thoughtful gestures, such as outstanding service or small freebies, play a greater role in shaping value perceptions than basic amenities.

Choice Hotels' upper midscale brands deliver these moments through familiar comforts and signature touches, including Seattle's Best Coffee offered at both Comfort® hotels and Country Inn & Suites®, along with warm chocolate chip cookies at check-in at Country Inn & Suites®.

### **What's Next: Shaping Choice Hotels' Evolution**

As traveler expectations evolve, Choice Hotels continues to focus on what matters most: transparency, consistency and meaningful rewards for loyalty.

Travelers are increasingly drawn to brands they trust to deliver what they promise. They value experiences and want to feel recognized for their loyalty early and often — not just after reaching a distant status. Today, value isn't about paying less; it's about choosing a hotel that consistently delivers more.

### **Methodology**

*\*Survey was conducted by Cummins & Partners on behalf of Choice Hotels International. It was administered online to a nationally representative sample of 2,142 U.S. adults aged 18 and older in January 2026. The results are weighted to reflect the overall U.S. adult population.*

### **About Choice Hotels®**

[Choice Hotels International, Inc.](#) (NYSE: CHH), is one of the largest lodging franchisors in the world, with over 7,500 hotels, representing more than 650,000 rooms, in 50 countries and territories. A wide-ranging portfolio of 22 brands that includes full-service upper upscale, midscale, extended stay, and economy properties enables Choice® to meet travelers' needs in more places and for more occasions while driving more value for franchise owners and shareholders. The award-winning Choice Privileges® rewards program and co-brand credit card options provide members with a fast and easy way to earn reward nights and personalized perks. For more information, visit [www.choicehotels.com](http://www.choicehotels.com).

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