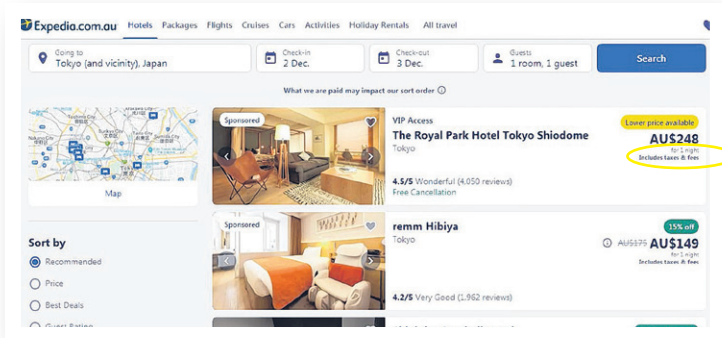


# Navigating online travel booking platforms

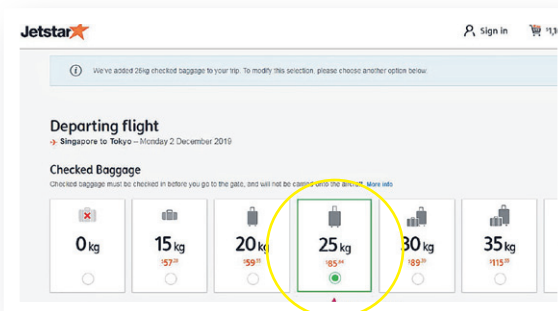
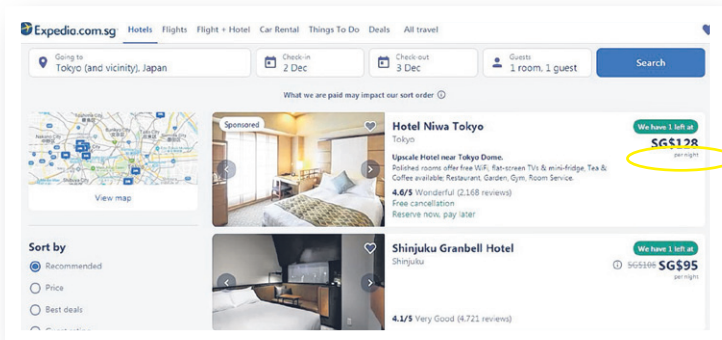
A check by The Straits Times of more than 20 popular online travel agents, hotels and airlines found that advertising and pricing practices flagged by the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore as being potentially misleading were used by the majority of them, to varying degrees. Here are some tips on what to look out for when booking your holidays.



## Drip pricing

Adding charges such as taxes and credit card fees during the booking process, resulting in a final price that is higher than advertised. In Australia, where all taxes and fees are required to be included in the advertised price, search results display all charges upfront, while this is often not the case in Singapore.

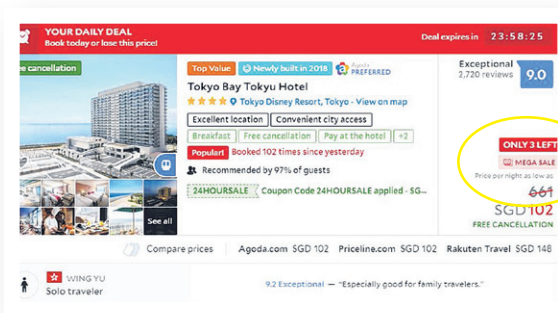
**Tip:** Check for a disclaimer on whether the advertised price is subject to additional fees, and the price breakdown at check-out.



## Pre-ticked boxes

Checkboxes that consent to purchasing add-ons, such as baggage and insurance, which are selected by default.

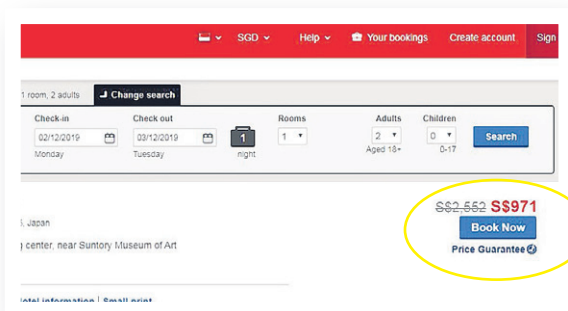
**Tip:** These are usually added on towards the end of the booking process. Make sure that unwanted add-ons are not included in the final price.



## Pressure-selling tactics

Creating a false sense of urgency to make a purchase based on inaccurate information.

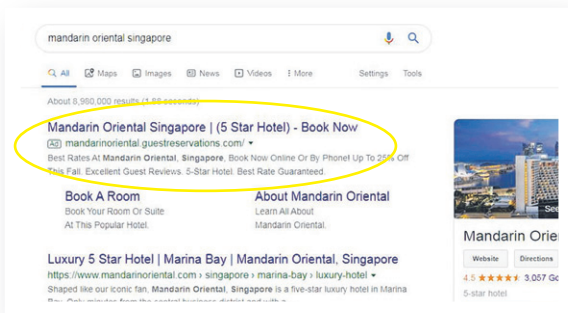
**Tip:** Pop-up alerts on how many others have viewed the same listing may not refer to the exact dates or product in your search. The same applies for rooms or flights advertised as "low in supply", and stock may vary across vendors for the same product. Do not feel pressured into snapping up a deal without researching other options.



## Strikethrough pricing

A higher price crossed out next to a lower price to represent a discount.

**Tip:** The crossed-out price may not be the original price of the exact flight or hotel room being viewed. Check for an information box on what the strikethrough price is based on, or compare with other sites to see if the deal is as good as it is presented to be.



## Mimicking hotel websites

Some third-party travel resellers use marketing tactics that may mislead consumers into thinking they are booking directly with the hotel. They may use URLs that include the hotel name, and pay to appear at the top of search rankings.

**Tip:** Check to make sure you are on the hotel's actual booking site and look out for unspecified fees on third-party sites.