
H o t e l

SHORTLIST

THE CURATED COLLECTION

FOR TRAVEL DESIGNERS AND CONSORTIA · OCTOBER 2026

Know whether the hotels you recommend have earned their rating.

Every review, on every platform, for the properties your reputation rides on, so you hear about the cockroach from us, in writing, before a client calls you from the lobby.

01 What a good rating hides

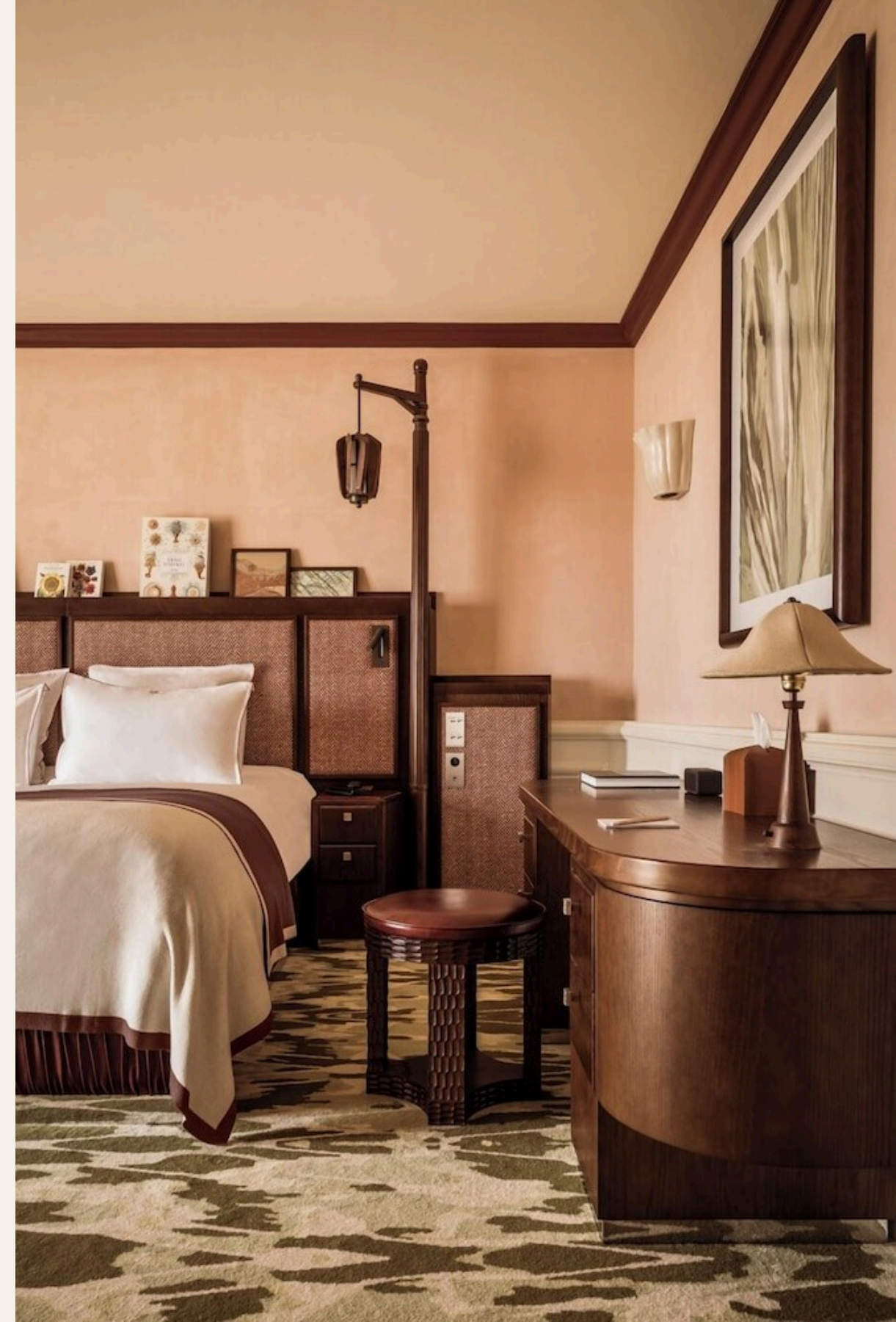
03 Six real dossiers

05 What you get

02 The product

04 When a busy hotel goes quiet

06 Price per property



The rating is an average. Your holiday is not.

A five-star hotel in Barcelona still scores 4.5 on Google. In July a guest found a cockroach in its spa pool. That review sits among almost three hundred, and nobody has the weeks it takes to go through them all.

We do. In October 2026 we investigated every Google review of every hotel in our collection. The table is what we found hiding under good ratings.

Share of hotels with at least one documented report.

Only the best were investigated: four- and five-star hotels scoring 9.0 or more on Booking.com and 4.5 or more on Google. Several thousand of them.

Hidden fees	72.7%
Aggressive or hostile staff	46.8%
Nightlife or street noise	43.8%
Thin walls	35.1%
Photos that lie	34.3%
Broken air conditioning	34.0%
Safety hazards	30.7%
Billing that looks like fraud	22.3%
Mould	13.4%
Bedbugs	6.3%
Cockroaches	4.5%
Reviews bought or coerced	2.2%
Owners who turn on guests	1.1%

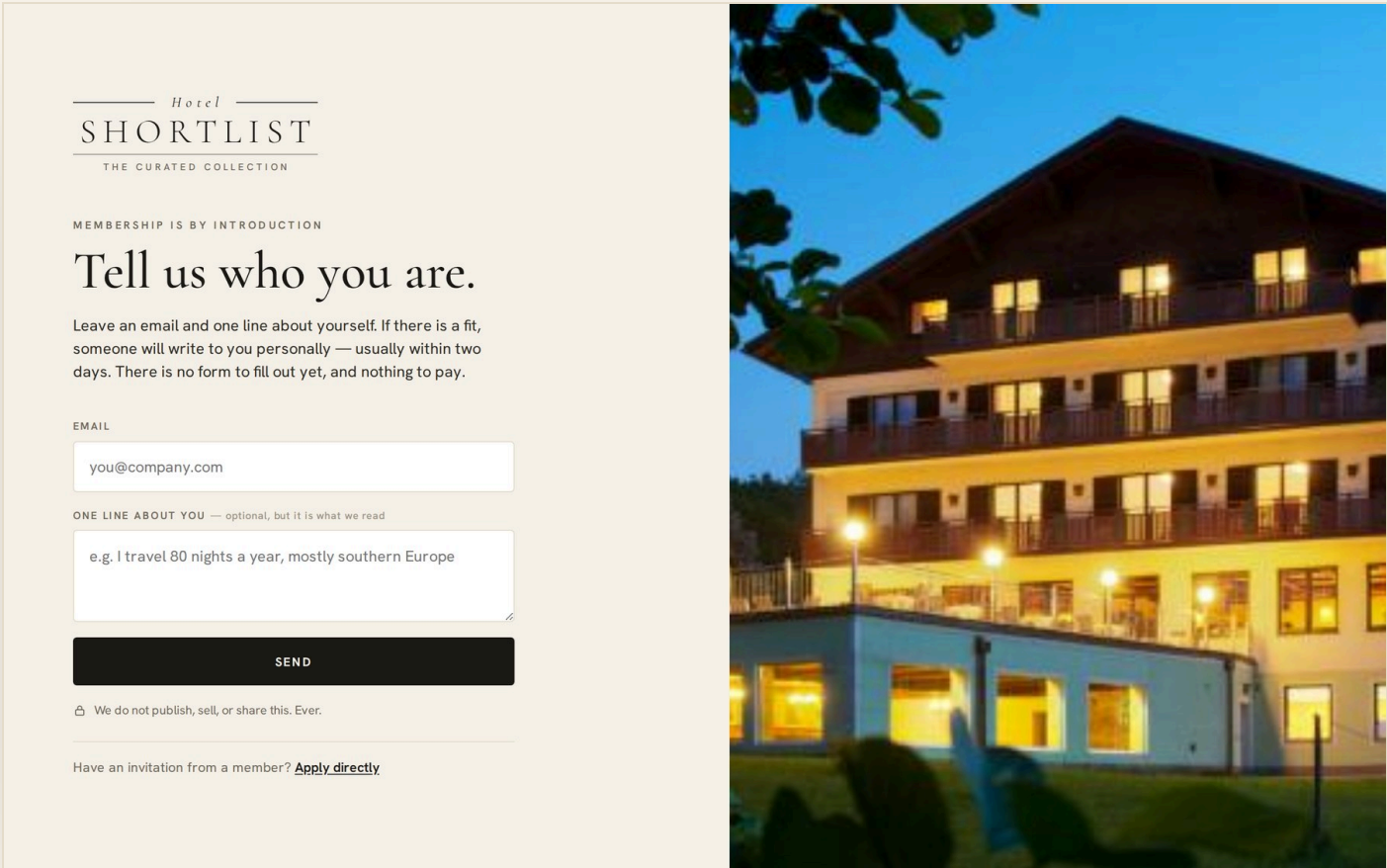
WHO WE ARE

A private members' club for people who are tired of being lied to by a 4.7.

Hotel Shortlist is a private members' club. The hotels in it are not advertised to us, not paid for, not pitched. They are chosen by a forensic due-diligence engine that investigates everything guests have written about a property, and by a founder who then goes and checks.

Friends and family only. If nobody inside knows you, there is no way in. You can ask for an introduction, and every one gets an answer.

WHO WE ARE



hotelshortlist.com/intro — ask for an introduction.

Three things. We do them in this order.

I

Investigate everything

Every review, every year, in whatever language it was written. We date each complaint, count how often it recurs and check whether the reviews themselves are genuine. One bad review is noise. Fourteen is a fact.

2

Give a verdict

On the shortlist, flagged, or not recommended. With the evidence: the actual reviews, quoted, dated, linked. Solid enough to stand up as evidence, should anyone ever need it.

3

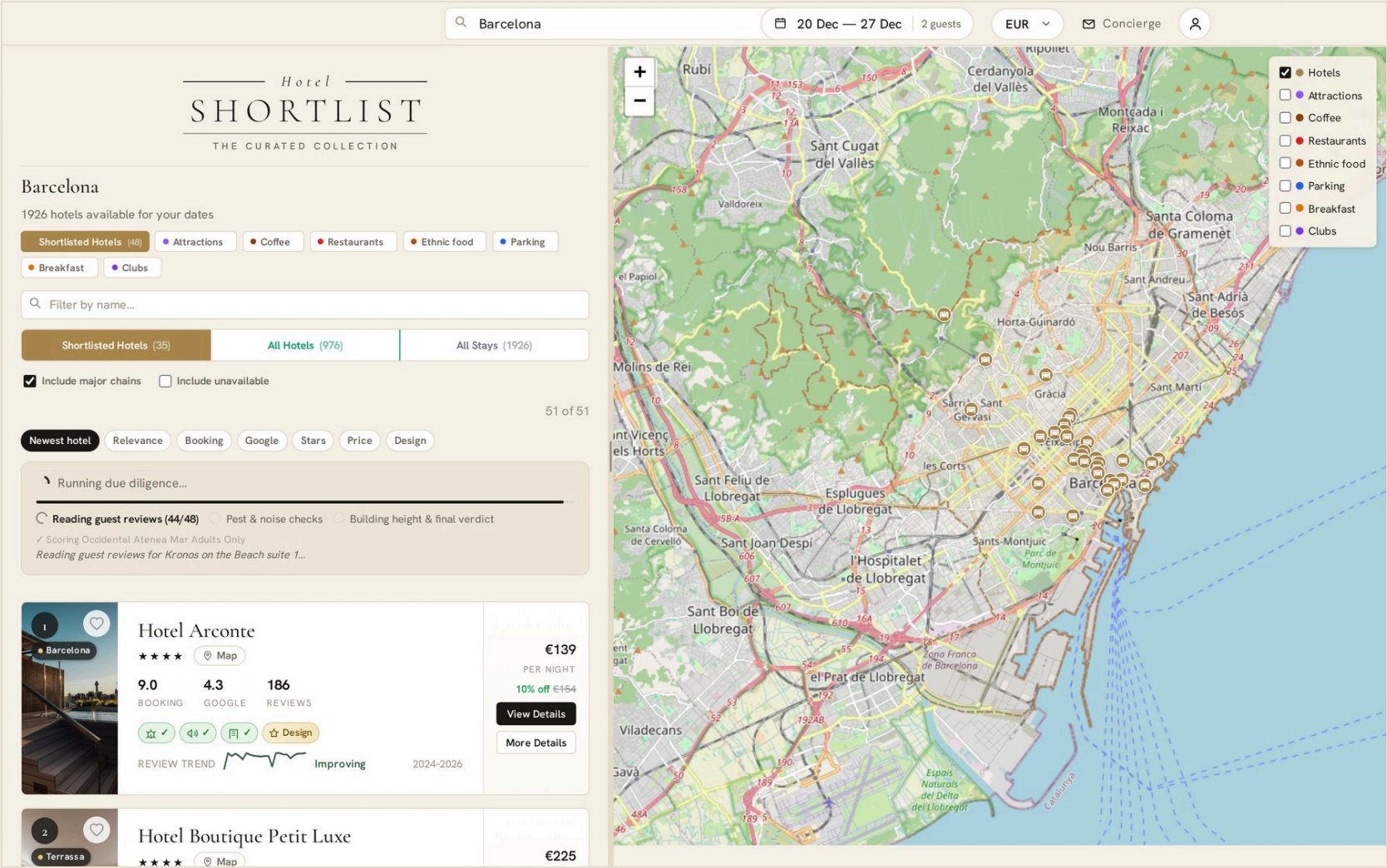
Book it at our rate

Members book through the club at rates usually a few percent under what Booking.com charges for the same bed on the same night.

Search a city. Every hotel already investigated.

Pick a city and dates. The map and the list fill with every hotel that has rooms, and the due diligence runs live in front of you: guest reviews, pest and noise checks, whether it is a tower block or a major chain, a final verdict.

Each card carries a review-trend sparkline. Improving, stable or declining, before you open anything.



Impossible to get anywhere else: the verdict is stamped on the card.

PASSED · DESIGN AND FAMILY TAGS EARNED FROM WHAT GUESTS WROTE

17

Sant Cugat del

METT Barcelona GL A Leading Hotel of the World

★★★★★

Map

MAJOR CHAIN

9.1

4.5

196

BOOKING

GOOGLE

REVIEWS

✓

✓

✓

Design

Family

REVIEW TREND

Declining

2025-2026

€256

PER NIGHT

17% off €310

View Details

More Details

23

Barcelona

BLESS Barcelona New Opening 2026

★★★★★

Map

MAJOR CHAIN

9.2

4.7

2,896

BOOKING

GOOGLE

REVIEWS

✓

✓

✓

REVIEW TREND

Declining

2018-2026

€341

PER NIGHT

6% off €362

View Details

More Details

FAILED · STRONG HEADLINE SCORES, STAMPED AND MOVED DOWN THE LIST

37

Barcelona

ABaC Hotel Boutique 5 GL

★★★★★

Map

PEST REPORTS FOUND

9.2

4.5

299

BOOKING

GOOGLE

REVIEWS

✗

✓

✓

REVIEW TREND

Declining

2019-2026

1x pest

€296

PER NIGHT

8% off €324

View Details

More Details

41

Barcelona

Olivia Balmes Hotel

★★★★

Map

BED BUGS REPORTED

9.2

4.8

2,724

BOOKING

GOOGLE

REVIEWS

✗

✓

✓

REVIEW TREND

Stable

2016-2026

2x pest

€187

PER NIGHT

11% off €210

View Details

More Details

A hotel is on the shortlist only if it clears every rule.

Four or five stars, and guest scores that clear our own bar. The exact thresholds stay with us.

No documented pest report. One cockroach, one bedbug, and the card is stamped.

Noise measured, not guessed. We count the share of guests who could not sleep. Past our limit, the hotel fails.

Tower block or major chain? We tell you before you book. Some members want one. Most do not.

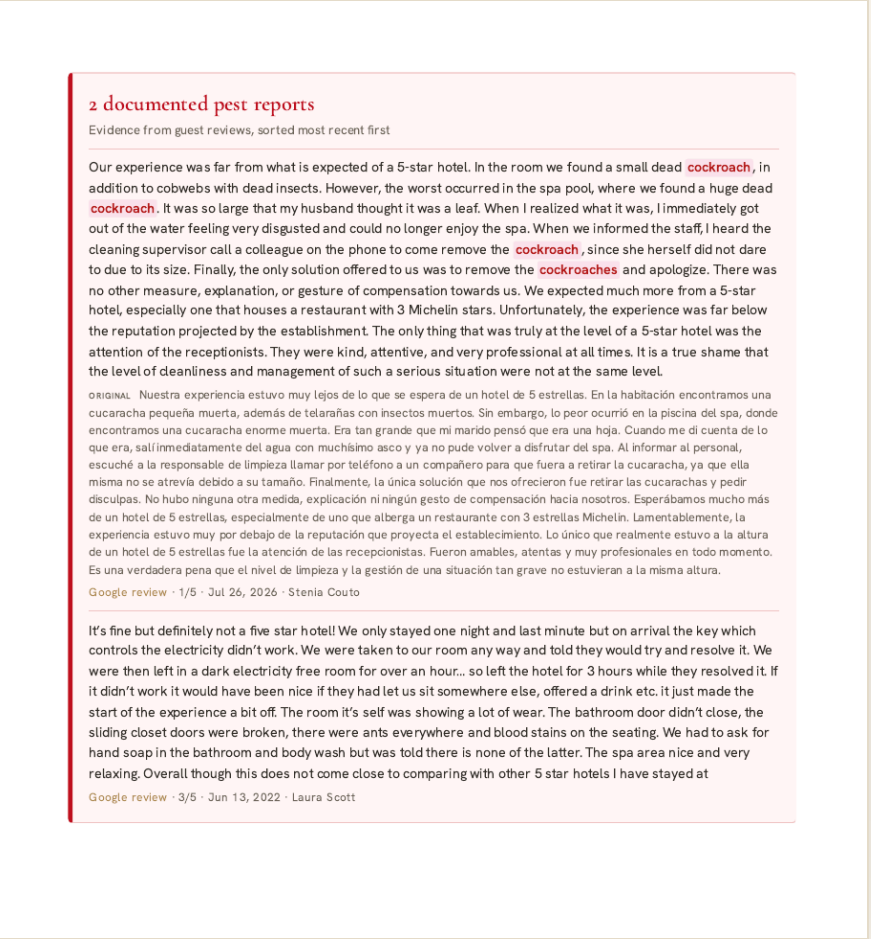
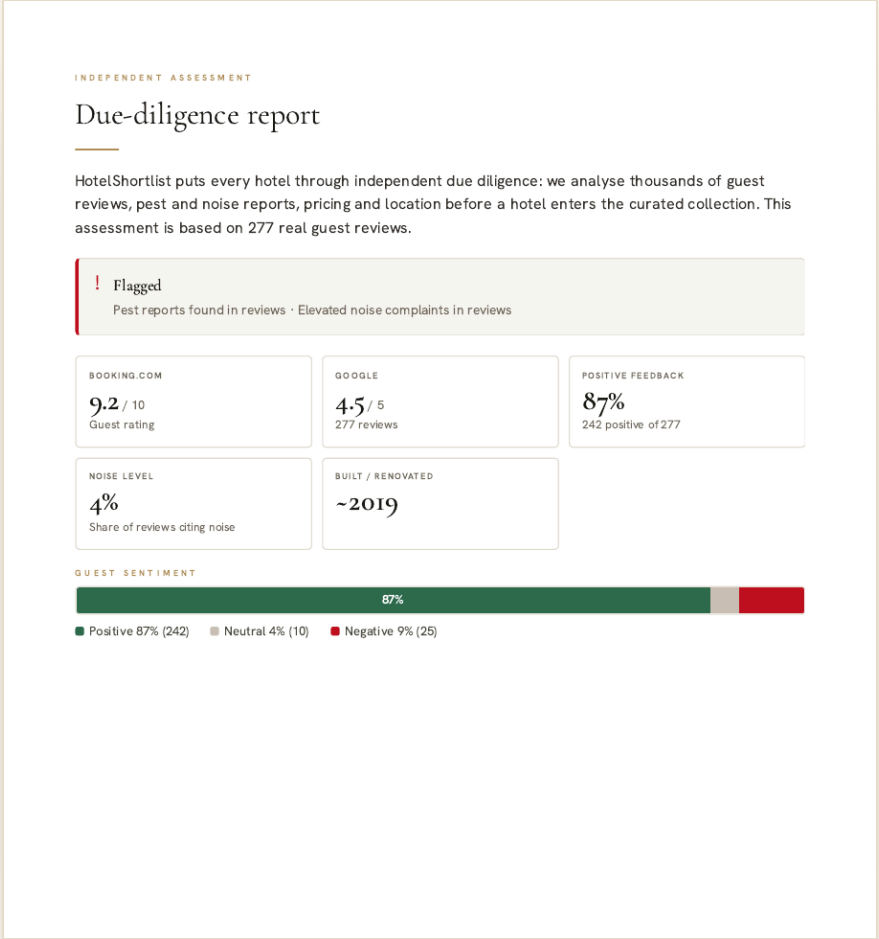
Statistical relevance. A score only counts when enough guests stand behind it. A perfect 10 from a handful of reviews is not evidence.

9.2 BOOKING SCORE	4.5 GOOGLE RATING	277 TOTAL REVIEWS	★★★★★ STAR RATING	~2019 BUILT / RENOVATED
4% NOISE MENTIONS				
Parking assessment: <i>Problematic — Multiple guests report difficulty finding spaces, expensive rates (€40/day mentioned), unclear entry instructions, and limited availability with surrounding areas also full.</i>				
Gym & fitness: <i>Basic — Dedicated fitness area described as small with basic equipment available; Located adjacent to spa facilities requiring advance booking; One guest mentioned 'fitness' and gym but noted lack of detailed equipment variety</i>				

Open any hotel: build or renovation year, noise share, a parking verdict and a gym verdict, each written from what guests actually said.

Open a hotel. Get the dossier.

Each hotel costs fifty cents of research credit and returns a written report: the verdict, the scores, what guests love, what to watch for, every pest, theft or safety report quoted verbatim with its date, and a month-by-month rating chart.

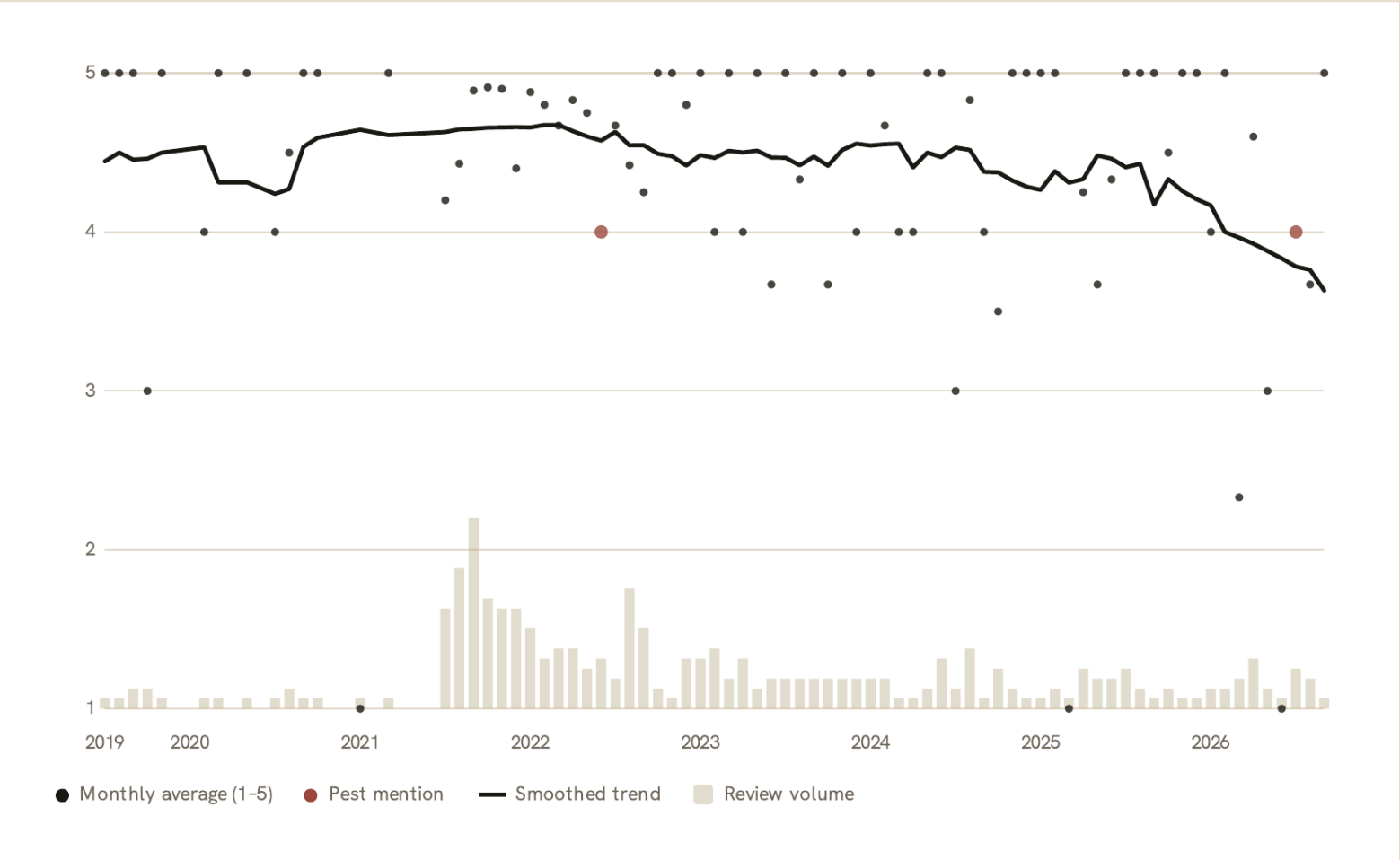


WHAT THE CHART SHOWS

Google says 4.5. This year says 3.8.

An all-time average hides the direction of travel. ABaC's reviews averaged 4.6 in 2021 and 2022. In 2026 they average 3.8, and a guest found a cockroach in the spa pool in July.

Every dossier carries this chart. The drop shows up here while the headline score still says 4.5.



ABaC Hotel, Barcelona, from the real dossier. Dots are monthly averages, red dots months with a pest report, the line the smoothed trend, bars the review volume.

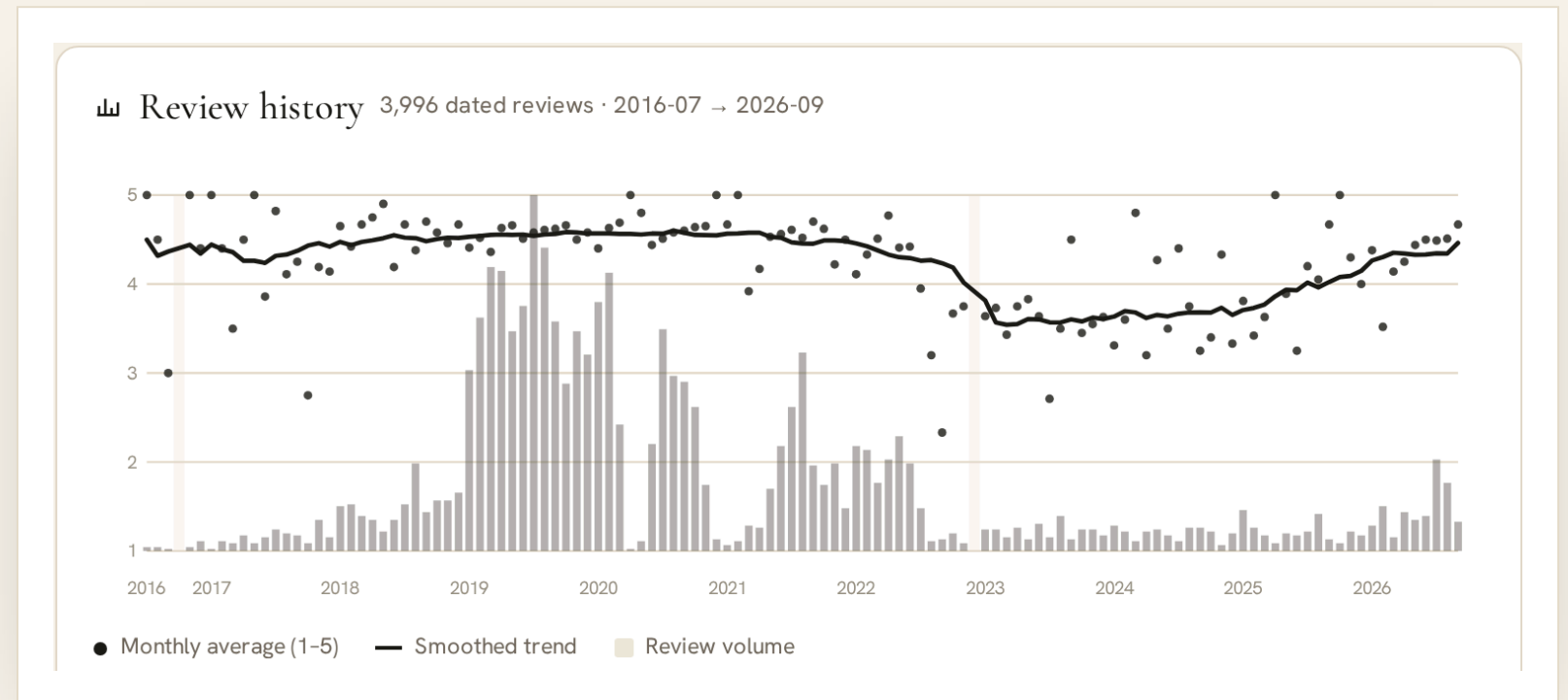
WHEN A BUSY HOTEL GOES QUIET

A hundred reviews a month. Then, almost none.

This hotel collected over a hundred reviews a month in 2019. In late 2022, long after the pandemic dip, they nearly stop, and when they come back the rating sits almost a point lower.

Often a gap like this is innocent. When it is not, we can usually recover what went missing, and in the rare case it ever matters, it holds up as evidence. Mostly, it just means you know.

REVIEW HISTORY



From a real dossier: 3,996 dated reviews. Dots are monthly averages, the line the smoothed trend, bars the review volume.

WHAT WE SAVE YOU FROM · SIX REAL DOSSIERS

Six Senses Residences, Courchevel 1850

GOOGLE 4.6 · 131 REVIEWS

Jewellery worth 107,449 euros taken from a ground-floor residence through a window left on ventilation. Insurer offered 15,000. No cooling in a 1,200-euro-a-night residence.

ABaC Hotel, Barcelona

GOOGLE 4.5 · 278 REVIEWS

A cockroach in the spa pool that a guest first took for a leaf. Mushrooms growing from rotted parquet in a 300-euro room. Michelin-starred restaurant downstairs.

Mandarin Oriental, Milan

GOOGLE 4.7 · 2,114 REVIEWS

A Patek Philippe stolen from the room. Mosquitoes. Seven euros for a jug of hot water. Glass in a guest's foot. Moved out of the room at midnight for plumbing.

La Fantaisie, Paris

GOOGLE 4.5 · 518 REVIEWS

Concrete falling into the garden restaurant for three years. Homophobic slurs from the rooftop bar staff. Theft from the luggage room. Mice in the pastry case.

Savoy Dolomites, Val Gardena

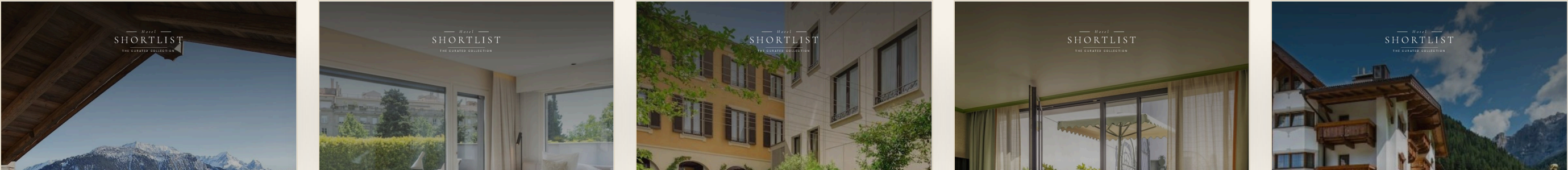
GOOGLE 4.6 · 172 REVIEWS

The owner screams at guests. Unused nights billed anyway. Returning guests after ten years "must correct our previous review by 180 degrees."

Grand Hotel Rimini

GOOGLE 4.5 · 2,930 REVIEWS

Bedbugs, cockroaches and ants in a 1920s palace. Music until three in the morning. Beach loungers at 85 to 125 euros a day.



Five of the six have a finished Hotel Shortlist dossier, shown above. Every line is a quoted guest review, dated and linked. Pests are named, never pictured.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Housekeeping robbed me and my siblings; \$60, \$40, and 90% of my wallet missing."

FOUR SEASONS GEORGE V, PARIS · GOOGLE 4.8 · 7,383 REVIEWS

"Monkey scratched our child. Rabies shots. Five-centimetre cockroaches."

JW MARRIOTT SANYA · HEADLINE CASE

"Staff threw our luggage out of the window."

LE GRAND HÔTEL, COURCHEVEL 1850

Every quote is a guest review we can show you, with the date and the link. Ask.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"The owner threatened to kill our dog."

TOMA PIRTS · OWNERS TURN ON GUESTS AT 1.1% OF HOTELS

"Air conditioning will be fixed next month." For years. Thirty-one complaints."

HÔTEL LE MAGNIFIQUE

"A used needle in the spa."

RAFFLES THE PALM, DUBAI

WHAT YOU GET · THE MEMBERS' VERSION AND YOURS

The same investigation. Every platform, every month.

Members' version

Google



once a year

Shortlist Watch, for travel designers and consortia

Google Booking.com Tripadvisor Expedia Agoda Trip.com



every month

A full Reputation Intelligence Brief on each property, then a monthly digest across every platform: the whole review history, and what changed since the last one. Swap any hotel for any other, every month.

Pay per property, per month. The more you watch, the less each one costs.

YOU WATCH

PRICE PER PROPERTY, PER MONTH



Per property, per month, in euros. Any number from 3 to 100, on the same smooth scale: no tiers, no jumps. Try your own number at hotelshortlist.com/connect/luxury-advisors.

ONE MORE THING

Our flag is public. Better you find it first.

When we flag a property, the flag is visible to anyone who looks. Your clients research obsessively. If one of them finds our page on a hotel you recommended, they will forward it and ask why.

We would rather you found out from us, in a private report, than from a lobby.

PUBLIC FLAG

NOT RECOMMENDED

ABaC Hotel Boutique 5 GL

BARCELONA · GOOGLE 4.5 · 278 REVIEWS

Pest reports found in reviews · Elevated noise complaints in reviews

Two documented pest reports, one in the spa pool. Twelve noise complaints: metal clanking at night, a light fitting that clicks every ten seconds, no blackout curtains.

Hotel

SHORTLIST

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Give me five names.

Your five most-recommended hotels, checked in full, in a private report, inside a week, free. If they are clean, you have your judgement confirmed in writing. If they are not, you hear it from me long before you hear it from a lobby. Either way, it doesn't cost you anything.

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Watch the film: hotelshortlist.com/connect/luxury-advisors

