



Remember back in the days before you got smart about puffing cigarettes while filling your lungs with killer smoke? All restaurants and bars were clouded with choking air. Even at work, you had to share the nicotine-loaded environment.

We go way back to the real early days, when movie houses, cars, buses, trains and planes allowed smoking. Most restaurants encouraged addicts to puff out clouds of poison as you tried to enjoy your meal. Girls in shorts clomped through bars, clubs and dining rooms cooing, "Cigars, cigarettes, cancer?"

Some states are beginning to protect travelers by banning smoking totally in hotels. Wisconsin and Michigan have already put such laws into effect, and others consider doing the same. However, in most states, smoking is still totally allowed, or some rooms and public areas are set aside for smokers only. That's a help, except when puffing smokers wander the non-smoking lobbies and outside garden and pool areas.

Although the ranks of smokers have dropped considerably in recent years, due to campaigns and nature's way of getting rid of them, cigarettes and cigars are still fouling the air in many hotels. In some cities, such as Las Vegas, smoking bans just never worked.

Gambling away your family's food money while destroying your lungs is just too deeply ingrained in the tradition.