

After a long flight, you've just checked in to your hotel room. It's very late, and before going to bed, and you'd like some orange juice. You're too tired to walk back down the hall to get one from the machine, so you open the cute little glass-front cooler in your room.

While you're getting your juice, you take out a bag of cookies, too. Nice little snack before you hit the sack. Right? Of course, if you're willing to pay 15 bucks from the room's minibar for it. If you had bought them from the hallway snack and soda dispenser or downstairs hotel gift shop, the total would have been \$5. The same two items purchased in a grocery store would have cost a grand total of \$2.25.

You may have booked the room at a discount price through the internet or special hotel ad, but whatever savings you may have made could be eaten away by being clueless about extra charges. When you check in to your hotel room, be aware of such expensive amenities as the mini bar, outside phone call charges and other add-ons that can make your check-out experiences an unexpected pocketbook shock.

Submitted by Sharon J. McCartney □