

**Booking.com System Used for the Travel Sustainable Program Gains GSTC-Recognized Status**

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council® (GSTC®) is pleased to announce that Booking.com’s system used for the Travel Sustainable program has gained GSTC-Recognized Status, meaning the program is based on presenting and encouraging the use of the full GSTC Industry Criteria. 

Booking.com’s Travel Sustainable program is a global, first-of-its-kind recognition program for travel accommodation sustainability practices. Developed with the support of sustainability experts [Sustainalize](https://www.sustainalize.com/) and validated by the Independent Advisory Group of [Travalyst](https://travalyst.org/), the program enables all kinds of accommodation, including everything from apartments and vacation homes to B&Bs and hotels, to share and transparently display their sustainability efforts to potential guests. On the Booking.com platform, travelers can quickly and easily search for properties recognized by the program using the Travel Sustainable search filter. Each recognized property is shown with a corresponding level, which helps travelers more clearly understand where each accommodation is on its individual sustainability journey. There are currently more than 550,000 Travel Sustainable properties for travelers to choose from globally.

According to [Booking.com’s most recent research](https://globalnews.booking.com/cost-vs-conscience-bookingcom-delves-into-the-dilemma-dividing-sustainable-travel-in-2023/), 76% of travelers say they want to travel more sustainably over the coming 12 months – yet over half (51%) believe there are not enough sustainable travel options and 44% say they don’t know where to find them. Booking.com’s Travel Sustainable program helps these travelers to more easily identify those accommodations that are taking extra steps to make their guests' stay more sustainable.

The [GSTC-Recognized status](https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/accreditation-certification-recognition/) refers to the system itself, indicating that a sustainable tourism standard or system has been reviewed by GSTC technical experts and the GSTC Assurance Panel and deemed the standard or system equivalent to the GSTC Criteria for sustainable tourism. It shows that the set of standards is based on the four pillars of the GSTC Criteria: Sustainable Management, Socioeconomic, Cultural, and Environmental principles.

GSTC Recognition of Standards and Systems does not relate to the process of certification (which is a third-party assessment, through an audit, of a tourism enterprise for conformity to a standard). GSTC Recognition of Standards and Systems does not relate to accreditation (formal verification that a certification body operates in a competent and neutral manner according to international standards of how to properly certify, which is the highest level of assurance).

## Booking.com’s Travel Sustainable program was also recently a winner in [Fast Company’s 2023 World Changing Ideas Awards](https://www.fastcompany.com/90875871/booking-com-travel-sustainable-badge); out of more than 2,000 entries, the company’s Travel Sustainable program was highlighted with the title of “world-changing” for the impact it has had in making it easier for travelers to make more sustainable choices for their trips.

"We launched the Travel Sustainable program to create a credible, globally inclusive sustainability measure that is available to all types of accommodation, whether it’s a treehouse in Costa Rica or a boutique hotel in Amsterdam,” said Danielle D’Silva, Head of Sustainability at Booking.com. “The GSTC's Industry Criteria played an important role from the very beginning in terms of how we set that measure and approached the overall development of the program. For the Travel Sustainable program and all the relevant interconnected systems we have in place at Booking.com to support it to have achieved GSTC-Recognized status is something we are incredibly proud of and encourages us to continue evolving the program further in line with these high standards."

“Booking.com appreciates the value of using the GSTC Industry Criteria as the foundation for their program to drive accommodations to higher levels of sustainability based on their respect for the GSTC Criteria as globally recognized,” says GSTC CEO Randy Durband.

Currently, [15 destination standards](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-destinations/), [21 tour operator standards](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-tour-operators/), [40 hotel standards](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-hotels/), [and 5 systems](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-recognized-standards-for-hotels/) have achieved GSTC-Recognized status. The status offers the market proof that these standards fully include the four pillars of the GSTC Criteria. GSTC Recognition does not address verification and does not ensure if a certification process based on these standards is reliable or not. GSTC Recognition only confirms that the set of standards (that may be used to certify) are equivalent to the GSTC Criteria. GSTC-Recognized standard owners are encouraged to follow and complete the [accreditation process](https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/achieve-gstc-accredited/), which assures that the certification process used to apply the standard meets international best practice, transparency, and rigor. A list of GSTC-Accredited certification bodies is [available here](https://www.gstcouncil.org/certification/gstc-accredited-certification-bodies/).

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**About the GSTC**

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council® (GSTC®) establishes and manages global sustainable standards, known as the GSTC Criteria. There are two sets: [Destination Criteria](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/) for public policy-makers and destination managers, and [Industry Criteria](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-industry-criteria/) for hotels and tour operators. These are the guiding principles and minimum requirements that any tourism business or destination should aspire to reach in order to protect and sustain the world’s natural and cultural resources, while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for conservation and poverty alleviation.

The GSTC Criteria form the foundation for Accreditation of Certification Bodies that certify hotels/accommodations, tour operators, and destinations as having sustainable policies and practices in place. GSTC does not directly certify any products or services; but it accredits those that do. The GSTC is an independent and neutral USA-registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization that represents a [diverse and global membership](https://www.gstcouncil.org/membership/member-search/), including national and provincial governments, leading travel companies, hotels, tour operators, NGO’s, individuals and communities – all striving to achieve best practices in sustainable tourism.

Information for media and the press: <https://www.gstcouncil.org/about/for-the-press/>

**About Booking.com**

Part of Booking Holdings Inc. (NASDAQ: BKNG), Booking.com’s mission is to make it easier for everyone to experience the world. By investing in the technology that helps take the friction out of travel, Booking.com’s marketplace seamlessly connects millions of travelers with memorable experiences every day. For more information, follow @bookingcom on social media or visit globalnews.booking.com.

For more information on Booking.com and sustainability:
<https://www.sustainability.booking.com/>