

Subject: Feedback for recent rental (sent to Airbnb)

Date: May 20, 2015 at 4:07:44 PM PDT

After checking in at 11 pm we realized that the toilet was clogged and the A/C did not cool down the very small room. A heat wave was in the forecast. We reported the problems immediately to the host but instead of taking care of the problems, the host went during the next day to the apartment (which we really could not use due to the problems) and decided that everything was in perfect working condition, after which he told us that he was going to be away for the next 5 days but that he would leave keys with a friend. He did not provide contact information for that friend and didn't follow-up with our calls/Emails for help. When we returned to the apartment that afternoon, we found the same problems. We notified Airbnb and were told that we have to pay for the 2 nights we were forced to use the apartment (had no other place to stay), despite the fact that the reported problems qualify for Airbnb's own definitions as "valid travel issues". Left on our own, we had to scramble and use precious vacation time to find the least expensive, acceptable hotel in NYC, which was twice as much than this studio that we paid for in January. The apartment was misrepresented in its description (it is not good enough for an A/C to just blow warm air) and was not properly maintained. Truthful representation and absence of "valid travel issues" are basic requirements for hosts... The strong plunger that we bought unfortunately didn't help. The lack of a functional toilet made the place inhabitable. You can see at the links below some videos and pictures that we took while in the apartment. Also not mentioned in the description is the noisy major construction project in progress under the window with work that starts at 8 am. Problems might occur but when the host doesn't take the opportunity to rectify them with a sense of urgency, it can ruin your vacation and cause huge, unexpected expenses. Based on this experience I would suggest that you look for another place that is represented truthfully by a host who cares and will not abandon you.

<https://youtu.be/UwxgqcE5Ns4> ----Toilet 1 Movie Taken by Samsung Tablet on 5/8 at 2:28 PM PDT; please note that the tank was full for the second flush (would had not been if there was a water pressure issue)

<https://youtu.be/1E0DgWgdbcM> ----Toilet 2 Movie Taken by Samsung Tablet on 5/7 at 5:44 PM PDT

<https://youtu.be/aWA7ndLRsGY> ----Toilet 3 Movie taken by regular camera the first night after our arrival

https://plus.google.com/photos/110792405203541608005/albums/6148489551790959649?authkey=CLjJ5bDoy5e_NA photographs

Airbnb's reply:

Jacob L, May 21, 09:03:

My name is Jake and I hope this message finds you well and at ease. We believe in free speech, transparency, and clear communication. Our community is built on trust, and trust comes from

honest conversation. We believe reviews allow our users to share their experience with the community and reinforce the transparency of the site by assisting fellow travelers and hosts in making informed decisions when booking. When we find that these fundamental aspects of our community have not been adhered to, we will step in to ensure the spirit of our community is upheld.

Based on the information we have seen, we have determined that it is in our community's best interest to remove the review you posted of XXX because it breaches our policies and standards in regards to the links and images you posted in regard to a private Airbnb case. You may view our policies on reviews here: <https://www.airbnb.com/support/article/546?topic=253> You may also find below an excerpt from this article regarding reviews: Reviews

Genuine reviews are the cornerstone of our community. We prohibit:

- Reviews that do not represent users' personal experience.
- Reviews unrelated to the actual reservation (ex: political, religious, or social commentary).
- Content that endorses or promotes illegal or harmful activity or violence, or is profane, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, threatening, or discriminatory.
- Content that violates another person or entity's rights, including intellectual property rights and privacy rights (ex: publishing another person's full name, address or other identifying information without permission).
- Content that is proven to be used as extortion.
- Content that refers to an Airbnb investigation.

Please take care to follow these guidelines in your future Airbnb transactions. If you don't, you may be subject to a range of actions, including restrictions, suspension and/or termination of your account. By posting a review, you agree to follow the Airbnb guidelines and policies that Airbnb may enforce in its sole discretion.

We appreciate the time you've taken to talk to our team about your experience. Please let us know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Jacob L

www.airbnb.com/help

My answer to Airbnb's reply.

Subject: Re: Airbnb: Airbnb Customer Service

Date: May 21, 2015 at 11:50:04 AM PDT

To: response@airbnb.com

I am not sure if I understand you correctly: if a guest has a bad experience, then they are prevented from posting it? Is this how you “ensure that the spirit of your community is upheld”?

I only posted the reality that we have encountered and reported only the truth, supported by evidence. I posted only “genuine” experiences. What are then the reviews good for, how can one rely on them if negative experiences are not published? How can one trust your website as far as reviews are concerned? Is this what you are referring to when you are talking about “reinforcing transparency”? Are you saying that you are building trust in your community by covering up negative experiences like ours? Are you saying that any negative experience is a “private Airbnb case”?

What is that you consider not true or not genuine or that does not represent our personal experiences out of what I reported? Are you saying that a host can get away with anything that is defined unacceptable even by Airbnb while the guest is expected to pay for the damage caused by the host’s negligence? What’s wrong with posting a link that shows the real problems that we have encountered? Isn’t that part of the actual experience? Do your guests understand that you do NOT publish reviews with negative experiences? I didn’t, but I was very naive trusting you before you “stepped in”.

As if injury would not be enough, you added insult: you are threatening me because I wanted to publish the truth: "Please take care to follow these guidelines in your future Airbnb transactions. If you don't, you may be subject to a range of actions, including restrictions, suspension and/or termination of your account. By posting a review, you agree to follow the Airbnb guidelines and policies that Airbnb may enforce in its sole discretion.". Please be specific and tell me which statements from your guidelines I didn't follow.

I find it very hard to believe my eyes as I read what you sent me. Please address all my questions.