

## Why book Direct with an owner?

It seems that everyone has heard of AirBnb, many people even refer to vacation properties directly as an AirBnB. We don't operate an AirBnB, we own and operate luxury vacation rentals for families and guests looking for more flexibility and room to spread out to enjoy their vacation. Because we value our guests and truly want them to have the best experience possible we always encourage booking directly with owners when making vacation plans.

Currently AirBnB and other vacation rental platforms add a "service fee" between 12-20% of the rental rate to every reservation booked on their platform. The fee is often dynamic so it can change from day to day or from one property to another. Some booking sites even hide the fee so you don't realize you're paying a premium just to book on their platform!

The major listing sites use misleading claims such as "million dollar guarantees" and scare tactics warning customers that owners can't be trusted and your money is at risk if you book direct. It is true that there are TONS of scam artists out there posting fake ads on sites like Craigslist, but this doesn't mean you have to pay an outrageous "service fee" to protect yourself and your vacation dollars. The booking giants want a chunk of your vacation money and they'll say what ever they have to in order to collect, but just do a search and see how many guests have been left high and dry from AirBnB or VRBO when their rentals were cancelled last minute or were not what was advertised!

### So, how do you go about booking direct to save money and protect yourself at the same time?

- 1- Use Facebook. Lots of owners have their own pages for their vacation rentals. You can search by name or area. Also check for regional "groups" like Ask Park City. You will find many owners on these groups and you can post what you're looking for or ask recommendations.
- 2- Use StaySavr to unveil owner contact info on VRBO. You can use their look up tool by entering VRBO listing at [www.staysavr.com/look](http://www.staysavr.com/look) and find the owner's name and phone number.
- 3- Use the major Listing sites to search for properties you like:
  - a. Make note if the owner has given the property a "name"... Like **Adventure Cabin** at Black Bear Lodge or **Adventure Loft**. Then go to Google and search for the name, chances are the owner has a website that will allow you to book direct without added service fees.
  - b. If you're using Google's Chrome browser, simply right click on the main photo of the house and select "search Google for image" to find the image on the web. There is a good chance the owner uses the same images on their direct booking site.
- 4- It's easy for a scam artist to copy listing details and photos to Craigslist but only a "real owner" is going to take the time to build and maintain their own property website. It is easy to identify the true owner of a property, simply go to the county's website and look up the property address in the tax records and you will see the name of the owner.

Once you've found the owner's contact information or website, ask if you can save money by booking direct. Most legit owners are set up to take credit cards online and your credit card company protects you exactly the same way as they do when booking on VRBO or AirBnB. **You don't need to pay extra for a fake guarantee!** Some owners offer additional discounts if you pay by personal or e-check. If you're comfortable with the owner or have booked with them before see if this is an option and if they will pass the credit card transaction savings on to you. We only allow repeat guests to pay through Venmo or check to help protect us both and we always provide a link to verify our identity with tax records before processing any payment.

<https://property.summitcounty.org/treasurer/treasurerweb/searchResults.jsp?searchId=0>  
<https://property.summitcounty.org/treasurer/treasurerweb/searchResults.jsp?searchId=1>

Below is a current example of the "service fees" you'd pay booking with AirBnB or VRBO. That's a lot of money that you could be spending on an Adventure while on vacation. Now that you see how easy and safe it is to book direct we hope you'll **Look but Don't Book** your vacation on an online travel agency.

### AirBnB

**\$410** per night  
★4.97 (34 reviews)

Dates: 1/6/2021 → 1/13/2021

Guests: 1 guest

\$410 x 7 nights	\$2,870
Cleaning fee	\$150
Service fee	\$426
Occupancy taxes and fees	\$461
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,907</b>

**Reserve**

You won't be charged yet

### VRBO

Booking summary X

✔ Your dates are available

Check In: Jan 6	Check Out: Jan 13
Guests: 2 guests	

\$410.00 x 7 nights	\$2,870.00
Cleaning Fee	\$150.00
Service Fee	\$287.00
Lodging Tax	\$403.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,710.77</b>

### Direct Booking

**\$3,423.77** for 7 nights

Charge Details	
7 nights	\$2,870.00
Cleaning Fee based on \$150.00 per stay	\$150.00
Utah/Park City Hospitality and Sales Tax	\$403.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,423.77</b>

# Learn How to #BookDirect

Google the name of the owner/manager or the name of the property.



Contact the owner through Facebook, their own website, or a no-fee listing site.



Do your homework. Check reviews and the history on listing sites for longevity.

Make sure there is a written agreement defining the rental period and rate.



Don't wire money, use cash payment apps, or send money orders.

