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## Tourism and related services — Heritage hotels — Equipment and service requirements

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html)

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

Recent years have seen an increase in the demand for and availability of heritage hotels, as they attract the attention of cultural tourists, who choose them as their preferred accommodation, and hotel investors and developers.

These hotels are a symbol of the history, art and architecture of their era. Hence, in order to both preserve their cultural heritage and allow tourists to enjoy the distinctive qualities and ambience of a traditional way of life, it is necessary to determine requirements and recommendations for heritage hotels. In addition, it is necessary to establish criteria for the preservation of buildings and for rendering services to guests in the anticipated manner.

The architecture of the property to be considered for this category should not normally be interfered with. Any extension, improvement, renovation or change to the existing structure should be in keeping with the traditional architectural styles and construction techniques, harmonizing the new with the old.

The criteria determined in this document will help the operators of heritage hotels provide services to interested customers (mostly cultural tourists) in a historical environment.

This document aims to conserve historical buildings.

There are other International Standards for accommodation dealing with other topics (e.g. quality, sustainability, accessibility for all) in hotels. Therefore, where no specific criteria are defined, general services defined in ISO 21401, ISO 21902 and ISO 22483 may be used.

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# Tourism and related services — Heritage hotels — Equipment and service requirements

## 1 Scope

This document establishes the requirements and recommendations related to the equipment and services applicable to heritage hotels in order to provide quality services in a traditional style.

This document emphasizes the harmonization of the equipment, furniture and service provision style with the historical period to which the heritage hotel belongs. It does not deal with the equipment or services of other types of hotels.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### **converted building**

building with considerable artistic heritage value, used as a *heritage hotel* (3.3) after having implemented the necessary changes

Note 1 to entry: There are some procedures and instructions for these changes in each country in order to maximize the conservation of the heritage value of such buildings.

### 3.2

#### **heritage building**

building with historic, cultural, architectural, artistic and/or aesthetic background recognized by a competent authority, which requires conservation

### 3.3

#### **heritage hotel**

licensed hotel established in valuable historical buildings such as caravanserai, castles and historical houses for tourist accommodation

Note 1 to entry: In some cases, boutique hotels and historical hotels<sup>1)</sup> can be considered heritage hotels, if the buildings conform to 3.2.

Note 2 to entry: [Annex A](#) includes a sample application form for approval of a heritage hotel project.

1) Historical hotels are historical buildings that have been designed, equipped and used as hotels.

**3.4  
rehabilitation plan**

comprehensive plan consisting of architectural and repair plans as well as schedules of improvements to accessibility for people with disabilities (if applicable), of maintenance, management and implementation for a *heritage hotel* (3.3)

**3.5  
sustainability policy**

intentions and direction of an organization, related to sustainability (in its environmental, social and economic aspects), as formally expressed by its top management

[SOURCE: ISO 21401:2018, 3.41, modified]

## 4 Requirements

### 4.1 General requirements and recommendations

**4.1.1** Any building selected to be converted to a heritage hotel shall be able to offer services to the guests.

**4.1.2** Converting the heritage building to a heritage hotel shall not require major changes that would possibly damage the original building but should include changes that improve the accessibility conditions of the building (if applicable). If there is not a competent authority who rules this, a detailed rehabilitation plan containing all permitted changes, limitations and prohibitions while converting the building to a hotel, as well as any subsequent rehabilitation or restoration, shall be developed and followed by the heritage hotel management. The restoration principles shall be considered in this plan.

**4.1.3** An integrated maintenance plan shall be developed. This plan shall be considered for any changes while converting the building and while operating the heritage hotel. A responsible person shall be appointed to monitor this.

**4.1.4** The feasibility study, carrying capacity and preservation of heritage elements shall be endorsed by the competent authority.

**4.1.5** Protection of the surrounding area of heritage and historical buildings shall be ensured.

**4.1.6** The principles of sustainable development, preservation of the environment and respect of the carrying capacity shall be specifically considered in the rehabilitation and operation of a heritage hotel.

**4.1.7** A sustainability policy should be considered by the management of the heritage hotel.

**4.1.8** Carrying capacity for converted buildings should be defined.

NOTE ISO 21401 can be a useful guide for this purpose.

**4.1.9** The elements of traditional and indigenous culture shall be considered in rehabilitating and operating heritage hotels.

**4.1.10** The access to heritage hotels shall ensure the preservation of heritage buildings.

**4.1.11** Decorative elements shall be harmonized and consistent with the style of the heritage hotel.

**4.1.12** New technology shall be incorporated and used in such a way as to ensure the comfort and convenience of the guests without altering the structure or the style of the building.



**4.1.13** Bathrooms shall observe the structure and conditions of the heritage building, while adapting to ensure access and use by people with a range of disabilities (if applicable).

**4.1.14** The preservation and maintenance of the building, facilities and equipment shall be observed in accordance with the conditions of heritage buildings.

**4.1.15** Conservation service providers shall be qualified. Instructions for conservation shall be submitted to service providers.

**4.1.16** The kitchen shall be established observing the conditions of the heritage building. If additional equipment and facilities are needed, these can be adjacently located.

**4.1.17** The service provision shall recognize and reflect the heritage style and the building condition (e.g. serving food and beverages according to the related era using dishes and equipment of the same style).

**4.1.18** Facilities and services for people with any kind of disability should be provided. At least one equipped and accessible room should be provided. If the heritage hotel is unable to provide such services to guests, this shall be advertised before booking (e.g. via website, brochures, advertisements, e-mail).

NOTE ISO 21902 provides details on accessible guest rooms.

**4.1.19** If some services are outsourced, instructions related to quality of services and conservation of the building shall be given to the service provider.

**4.1.20** Heating, cooling, lighting and ventilation systems shall conform to the rehabilitation and maintenance plan.

**4.1.21** The corrective actions taken shall be recorded with the date of occurrence.

## **4.2 Equipment requirement**

### **4.2.1 Facade, external appearance of building**

**4.2.1.1** There shall be a clear, legible and undamaged sign referring to the hotel displayed on the building, observing architectural style in both the local language and English.

**4.2.1.2** While designing the landscape (e.g. gardens of the hotel), the main elements of original landscape shall be kept or restored.

**4.2.1.3** The facade and structural elements shall conform to the architecture of the heritage building and rehabilitation plan.

### **4.2.2 Lobby, front desk and other common areas**

The main entrance shall conform to the architectural design of the heritage hotel. The lobby and other common areas shall be furnished, decorated or both according to the related era.

### **4.2.3 Rooms, bathrooms and toilets**

**4.2.3.1** Installation of bathrooms depends on observing the rehabilitation plan.

**4.2.3.2** The size of rooms and bathrooms depends on the conditions of the building and the rehabilitation plan.

4.2.3.3 If rooms are equipped with a television, this may be hidden or not visible.

4.2.3.4 Traditional art, furniture and designs should be considered in the decoration of the rooms (e.g. beds, cupboards, carpets).

4.2.3.5 Local and traditional products should be used in bedding (e.g. linen, pillows, mattresses).

4.2.3.6 The lighting system of the rooms shall conform to the rehabilitation plan of the heritage hotel.

4.2.3.7 The directory book of services and tariffs shall be designed using traditional arts.

#### 4.2.4 Facilities and equipment related to complementary services

4.2.4.1 If ballrooms and restaurants cannot be placed in the heritage hotel, the same services may be arranged somewhere near the heritage hotel.

4.2.4.2 Shops, exhibitions and workshops of traditional arts and handicrafts should be provided in a suitable area in the heritage hotel.

4.2.4.3 The heritage hotel shall provide a laundry service. If a laundry service cannot be provided in the hotel, it shall be outsourced.

### 4.3 Service requirements

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#### 4.3.1 Information services

The heritage hotel shall clearly define and communicate the services available as well as their prices to guests through different means, such as a website and brochures. At least the following information shall be available on the website:

- a brief description of the building and its history;
- postal address and directions;
- parking information;
- carrying luggage service information;
- catering information;
- sightseeing and destination information;
- shopping services and souvenirs;
- availability of exchange services;
- additional services provided, such as excursions and day trips;
- information related to the accessibility of the facilities (e.g. availability of lifts), possible limitations for people with disabilities or both.

#### 4.3.2 Staff

4.3.2.1 In addition to items related to hotels in general, all staff shall be trained according to their role in the heritage hotel. Training shall include at least the following:

- a) information related to the history of the building or heritage hotel and its conservation;

- b) specific sustainability issues (with special emphasis on energy saving);
- c) specific emergency plan;
- d) giving a tour of the hotel to visitors, guests or both.

**4.3.2.2** Information about the history of the heritage hotel as well as information about local tourism attractions shall be given to the guests by appropriate, informed and well-trained staff.

**4.3.2.3** Appropriate trained staff shall be designated to give a tour to guests to explain the characteristics of the building.

**4.3.2.4** Staff in contact with guests shall speak English, another foreign language understandable to their guests or both. The level of language skills should depend on the role and position of the staff.

**4.3.2.5** Staff shall have knowledge of the importance of the building and its conservation.

**4.3.2.6** The uniform of staff in contact with guests should be of a traditional or local design. The staff shall be identifiable.

### 4.3.3 Food and beverages

**4.3.3.1** The heritage hotel shall provide food and beverages and offer local options, international options or both.

**4.3.3.2** If there is a traditional ceremony for the preparation and serving of local food and beverages, this should be performed for the guests.

**4.3.3.3** Room service for food and beverages can be provided. Serving food and beverages in a traditional way according to the hotel style is recommended.

NOTE ISO 21621<sup>2)</sup> provides further details on traditional restaurants.

### 4.3.4 Ancillary services

**4.3.4.1** If there is no possibility of including ancillary services (e.g. business centre, gift shop, medical services), these can be provided in a suitable location within or near the heritage hotel, so that the building and its architecture are unaffected and unchanged.

**4.3.4.2** Assessment of basic and technical requirements of heritage hotels should be done every 5 years (see [Annex B](#)).

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2) Under preparation. Stage at the time of publication: ISO/FDIS 21621.