



H O N E S T C R E T E

The 10-Point Honest Audit of Your Hotel's Website

A FIELD CHECKLIST FOR SMALL HOTELS ON THE CRETAN COAST
SCORE YOURSELF IN TWENTY HONEST MINUTES

No jargon. No pitch until the last page. Just the ten checks that
decide whether your website earns bookings or leaks them.

01 Your photos versus your rooms ☐

Dark phone pictures undersell a lovely property; 2014 wide-angle glamour oversells it and buys you bad reviews. Both cost money. Recent, honest, bright photos are the single highest-return fix on any hotel site.

TEST IT: Open your own gallery next to your Booking.com gallery. Which one would you book?

02 One clear reason to book direct ☐

If your site offers the same price and terms as the OTAs, the OTA wins, because it has the guest's card on file. Direct needs one visible reason: a better rate, a perk, or friendlier flexibility, stated on the first screen.

TEST IT: Find your best rate on Booking, then find the direct-booking reason on your own homepage. Time both.

03 The five-second phone test ☐

Most of your guests first meet you on a phone, on beach wi-fi. In five seconds they should see what you are, where you are, roughly what you cost, and a button to book. Everything else is decoration.

TEST IT: Hand your phone to someone who has never seen the site. After five seconds, ask what this hotel is and what they would tap.

04 Count the clicks to a booked room ☐

Every extra screen between the homepage and confirmed dates leaks bookings. More than three steps, or a form that asks for a fax number, and the guest quietly returns to the OTA tab that never closed.

TEST IT: Book a dummy stay on your own phone, on mobile data. Count taps, count fields, note where you sighed.

05 Speed on Greek summer 4G ☐

A heavy slideshow that loads beautifully on your office wi-fi takes eleven seconds on August 4G at a beach bar, and the guest is gone by second four. Speed is not a technical vanity metric; it is booked rooms.

TEST IT: Run PageSpeed Insights on your homepage, mobile tab. Under 60 means you are paying for traffic you then lose.

06 Reviews that are recent, and yours ☐

A 2019 testimonial says more than it means to. Fresh reviews with dates, shown on your own site, do the selling for you, and answering the critical ones politely sells even harder than the praise.

TEST IT: Find the newest guest review visible on your website. How old is it?

07 Answers before questions ☐

Parking, distance to the beach, family policy, late check-in after the delayed flight: if a guest has to email you to learn these, half will not. Your inbox already knows the questions; your website should answer them.

TEST IT: List the five questions you answer by email every week. Check how many are answered on the site in under thirty seconds.

08 English that sounds like a person ☐

Auto-translation plus phrases like unforgettable moments in the heart of paradise reads as noise. One honest paragraph about who runs this place and what it is genuinely like outsells a page of brochure language.

TEST IT: Read your homepage aloud in English. Would you actually say these sentences to a guest at check-in?

09 One property, one story ☐

A site that tries to welcome party groups, honeymooners and toddlers at once describes nobody, and the guest cannot tell if it is for them. The properties that win online say clearly who they are for, and accept who they are not.

TEST IT: Ask a stranger to look at your homepage for twenty seconds, then describe your hotel in three words. Are they the three you wanted?

10 You hold your own keys ☐

Domain, hosting, booking engine, Google Business Profile: if a developer who vanished in 2021 controls any of these, you have a problem waiting for August. Ownership of the basics is not technical, it is commercial.

TEST IT: Could you change the phone number on your website and your Google profile today, without calling anyone? If not, start there.

Now count the ticks.

- 8 – 10 You do not need me. Genuinely. Keep the photos fresh and carry on.
- 4 – 7 You are typical, and typical leaks bookings to the OTAs every week. Most of your gaps are quick, unglamorous fixes with obvious returns.
- 0 – 3 Your OTA commissions are quietly paying for this gap, season after season. The good news: from here, everything you fix shows up in direct bookings.

If you want it fixed rather than diagnosed:

I build honest, fast websites for small hotels on this coast, from Heraklion: flat setup, a small monthly fee that includes real updates, and no lock-in, because you will hold your own keys (see point ten). Featured placements on my guides are editorial and cannot be bought; this is a separate, straightforward service.

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