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Hotel Hotsheet
Megg Mueller Schulte

Rub a dub dub ... who stole my tub?

Most stories on hotel bathtubs report about grand, sunken, marble Calgon-take-me-away amenities that we all dream of lounging in to soak our cares away. But not this one.

Hilton Hotels is trying out some all-shower hotels in response to guest feedback, [The Charlotte Observer](#) reports. Seems folks on the road aren't indulging in long, luxurious bubble baths. More likely, they are rushing in and out of the shower, heading to that next meeting. Two of Hilton's properties, the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif., and the New York Hilton, are testing shower-only rooms to gauge guest response. Hilton has no plans to completely sink the tubs, but if you want a bathtub in your room, make sure you ask for one. So far, there haven't been any complaints about the lack of tubs.

Hilton President Mark Hart tells *The Observer*, "There was this old wives' tale that women like to take baths on the road," Hart explains. "At a resort, with a separate shower, with marble tile and candles, maybe. But that isn't what we give customers."


Marriott is also experimenting with shower-only rooms, in select locations — meaning not the ones that cater to groups of European travelers as they tend to like baths more than Americans.

So all this has me wondering ... who uses bathtubs? I agree that for regular business trips, I rarely indulge in a soakfest, but if I were to stay in a fancy resort with a big ol' tub, you can bet I'd climb in. Anyone like bathtubs better? Let me know which you prefer, tubs or showers, and I'll run the informal survey results next week. E-mail me at travel@usatoday.com

And another thing ...

What we will pay for: It seems we're feeling something is missing from our hotel rooms, and in some cases, we're willing to pay for it. At least that's what an online survey from Harris Polls found out last month, [Hotel Online](#) reports. Over half of the 2,339 adults surveyed think at least one product or service is missing from their hotel stays. And it's not clean sheets, or a super-plush mattress. The item mentioned most often was high-speed Internet access or a computer in the room. Since comfortable mattresses ranked third on the list, it

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would seem we're more concerned with surfing than sleeping. I'm still lobbying for real cream for my coffee, but that didn't even make the list.

A sweet smelling room: Ghiradelli Square in San Francisco is a big tourist draw. The historic chocolate factory turned shopping center could become even easier to visit, as its owners have announced they hope to build a hotel atop the former factory, [Biz Journals.com](#) reports. The plan has to be approved by the city, and the owners will be looking for an operator for what they hope will be a 90-room property. Stay tuned, chocolate lovers...

Take a look before you book: Best Western will offer 360-degree online tours of its hotels by the middle of next year. Web users will get five virtual tours and eight still photos for each of the chain's 2,400 North American properties, according to [Hotel Business.com](#).

And get double points: [Best Western](#) is also launching a reward program for its Gold Crown Club International program. From Sept. 6 to Dec.14, members will earn either double points or double miles with each qualified hotel stay.

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Megg Mueller Schulte is an assistant travel editor at USATODAY.com. Her column runs every Wednesday. She can be reached at travel@usatoday.com.

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