

How to Choose the Perfect Retreat Location

1. Does this location support the *transformation* I'm offering my guests?

If your retreat promises calm but sits next to a busy road, this will negatively impact your Retreat experience.

- Does the environment reinforce the outcome? (healing, creativity, adventure, etc.)
- Would someone *feel* the shift just by arriving?

2. How easy (or stressful) is it to get there?

Your guests will likely arrive at the airport travel weary, so considering their onward journey to your Retreat venue is important.

- Where is the nearest airport?
- What is the average travel time, and are transfers from the airport to the venue complex or comfortable? (And at whose cost: yours or the guest?)
- Do guests need detailed guidance or coordination?

3. Is the venue aligned with my target market's expectations?

The “**Clarifying Your Target Market**” template will help you understand exactly what travel experience your guests are expecting. (Or will tolerate).

What does your location or venue provide for your guests:

- Boutique luxury vs rustic simplicity?
- Private rooms vs shared?
- WiFi expectations?
- Is it a private resort or are they immersed in a local community?
- Will you or your guests need daily transportation?

4. What is the *true* capacity—and does it match my business model?

Venues often stretch their numbers. (For example, they may offer accommodation for 20 people, but this may be based on shared rooms, or bunked beds, which may not be in line with your Retreat offering.)

- Ideal vs maximum occupancy?
- Does the space feel spacious or cramped at full capacity?
- Can you scale profitably at that size? (More on this when we get to Financial Planning in Step 4.

5. Are the common spaces actually functional for your activities?

A beautiful space that doesn't work is just expensive decoration. Are common spaces furnished to your needs? If your guests will need to write in journals during any group sessions, then a room where there are pillows as chairs and the floor is used as a table may be uncomfortable.

- Is there a dedicated area for workshops, yoga, or group sessions?
- Is it weather-proof (rain backup plan)?
- Good acoustics, lighting, seating?

6. What level of support does the venue provide?

This is where your Retreats will either run smoothly or burn you out with decision fatigue.

- Is there on-site staff? If not, you will need to consider bringing your own staff that will help you execute your Retreat seamlessly.
- Do they help with meals, cleaning, logistics?
- Have they hosted retreats before? This is a VERY important question to answer to ensure the venue's staff already have an understanding of the kind of support your guests will need.

7. Does the food experience meet guest expectations?

Meals and food choice at your Retreat is as important as the venue. Hungry people are not happy people, so the following considerations are deal-breakers if the answer to any of the below is not a strong "yes".

- Can they accommodate dietary needs?
- Is the quality consistent?
- Is it nourishing, memorable, or just "fine"?

8. What hidden costs could affect your pricing?

The "perfect" venue can tip your profit margins. A venue experienced in hosting Retreats will be able to provide you with a pricing list that explains all their services that are included in the rental fee, and costs that are added or optional.

Pay attention to the taxes, as these change greatly from country to country.

- Are there additional transportation costs?
- Are staff tips, taxes, service fees added to the final bill, or are these charged up front?
- What activities, equipment, or extended use of room rentals add extra charges?

9. What risks could disrupt the experience?

Your Retreat guests will be excited to take part in this experience, and will often express optimism, but it is your responsibility to do your due diligence and check for any challenges or disruptions that could affect the impact the Retreat will have on your guests. (Remember your focus: How do you want your guests to *feel*?).

- Is there a risk that weather patterns could affect your Retreat? (Does your location have a monsoon season you should be aware of?)
- Are there any noise pollutants? (construction on the venue next door, nightlife across the street, wildlife)?
- Are there any safety concerns?
- Ask about the reliability of electricity and water. A location in a “hidden paradise” might occasionally struggle to provide these.

10. Would *you* be excited to spend a full week there?

This is important. You will be busy, hosting your Retreat, so there is an element of the location that has to serve you as well. Imagine yourself as a guest, AND consider your time there as the Retreat host:

- Does the space inspire you?
- Can you envision your ideal guest thriving there?
- Would you proudly market it?

Here is how to decide fast if the location is the best for your Retreat:

If a venue checks these 3 boxes, you’re likely in a strong position:

- **Aligned** with your retreat promise
- **Accessible** without friction
- **Operationally supportive** so you’re not doing everything yourself