

How AI travel agents and the booking sites see the Woodstock Inn

Prepared by Ethan Hawkes · public information only, gathered 19 October 2026 · [PDF version](#)

Bruce, it was good to meet you at the Chamber happy hour. A growing share of trips now start with a traveler asking an AI assistant, and those assistants are starting to book rooms for people. I wanted to see what they say about the Inn when someone asks the way a guest would, and how your direct rate compares with the booking sites on a few winter dates. Below is what I found and five small fixes. I haven't contacted anyone at the Inn, and there's nothing to buy here.

The short version

The assistants already like you. Asked as a guest would ask, Google's AI Mode named the Inn first for both a romantic winter weekend and a ski-and-spa trip. Claude put it first for ski-and-spa but second for a romantic weekend, left it out of a family Thanksgiving answer, and credited the Inn with Manchester's ski areas.

The gaps are price and the path to booking. The price the AI quoted didn't come from you. One answer cited a third-party reservations site. And the booking engine behind your Book button is set up to keep automated visitors out, which is the door AI booking agents now try to walk through.

Each fix is small. None of the five below takes more than a day of work or needs new software.

1. What the AI trip planners say

I asked as a traveler would. Google's AI Mode put the Inn first both times. Claude was more mixed.

QUESTION ASKED	IS THE INN NAMED?	PRICE IT QUOTED	OTHERS IT SUGGESTED
"Plan a romantic winter weekend in Woodstock, Vermont. Where should we stay and what will it cost?" (Google AI Mode, 2:10 pm)	Yes, first: "the quintessential place to stay." It mentions the fireplaces, spa, afternoon tea, sleigh rides and the Red Rooster.	"\$440 to \$800+ per night"	On The River Inn (~\$217), The Woodstocker B&B, Castle Hill Resort
"Ski and spa weekend near Woodstock in February: best resort and price?" (Google AI Mode, 2:15 pm)	Yes, "the absolute premier choice." It mentions Saskadena Six, the Nordic Center and the spa.	"\$450 to over \$800 per night," plus a daily resort fee	Twin Farms (\$2,000+), Killington Grand (\$350–600)
The same three questions, including "can you book it?" (Claude with web search, 2:21 pm)	Romantic weekend: second, as the "splurge" after Jackson House Inn. Ski-and-spa: first. Family Thanksgiving: not named.	"\$450–1,355 per night." It said it couldn't book, and sent the guest to your site <i>or</i> Tripadvisor/Booking.com	Jackson House Inn, The Shire, Stratton, 506 On the River, Mountain Top

Perplexity asked me to sign up before it would answer. I couldn't capture ChatGPT, or Google on the Thanksgiving question, in this pass. Those are listed in the evidence notes, so nothing here depends on them.

Claude got the facts wrong. It told the traveler the Inn offers "downhill access to Bromley and Stratton and cross-country trails at Hildene." Those are all in Manchester. It never mentioned Saskadena Six or your Nordic Center, and every source it cited was Tripadvisor, Booking.com or vermont.com, not woodstockinn.com. That's what happens when an assistant can't find the facts on your own site.

The good news is that the assistants mostly describe the Inn the way you'd want. There are two gaps. The **price** they quote comes from somewhere other than you (see section 2). And one of the sources Google's answer cited was **ReservationDesk.com**, a third-party reservations site, shown next to your own package pages.

2. Direct rate vs. the booking sites

Parity means your own site is never more expensive than Expedia, Booking.com or Google Hotels for the same room and date. When an OTA is cheaper, the guest books there and you pay 15–25% commission on a booking you could have had direct.

This part is still in progress. I planned three dates: a December weekend, a midweek night in Christmas week and the February ski weekend. My browser kept timing out, so I captured only one direct search. It showed a two-night minimum on the December weekend, with rooms starting at \$1,159 a night before tax for 11–13 December. I haven't yet confirmed which rate plan that price belongs to, and I don't have the OTA side yet. I'll send the full side-by-side table separately rather than guess at it here.

One thing worth knowing already: AI Mode told travelers "\$440 to \$800+." If the live weekend rate is well above that, guests arrive already expecting a lower price, and the booking sites are where they'll look for it.

3. Can an AI agent find and book you directly?

CHECK	WHAT I SAW	WHY IT MATTERS
Does woodstockinn.com block AI agents?	No. robots.txt is the standard Drupal file, and every AI assistant's crawler I tried got the home page normally. There's also an llms.txt, which is ahead of most hotels.	Good. The assistants can read you.
Machine-readable facts (schema.org)	The home page says "this is a Resort" and gives the address, phone and map pin. It doesn't give a price range, star rating, amenities, check-in times, pet policy, resort fee or a "book here" action.	When those facts aren't on your site, assistants take them from other sites. That's how a reseller ends up as the cited source.

CHECK	WHAT I SAW	WHY IT MATTERS
The booking engine (Sabre SynXis, via Preferred)	The engine's robots.txt tells every automated visitor except Google's hotel-ads checker to stay out.	This is a Sabre-wide default, not something the Inn chose. But it's the door an AI agent needs to reach to book direct. In a live test published by Hospitality Net on 18 Oct 2026, AI agents completed checkout at Marriott, IHG, Accor and Choice. Whether they got through depended on bot settings like this one.
Stale links	The home page still links a package with an arrival date of 11 Dec 2025.	Agents follow links literally. An out-of-date link can lead an agent to report "nothing available."
Google Business Profile	Strong: 4.6★ from about 1,500 reviews, listed as a 5-star hotel, with call, directions and website links all present.	This is what Google's AI Mode shows on its hotel card. Keep it current.

4. Five fixes, each a day of work or less

These are ranked by how much direct revenue I'd expect each one to protect.

1 Give the assistants your price, so they stop guessing it.

Add a "rooms from \$X" line and a price range to the site's machine-readable data, and to each seasonal package page, and keep it current. Today AI Mode quotes "\$440–\$800+" from sources other than you. Whatever number it shows sets the guest's expectation before they ever reach your site. **Web developer · half a day**

2 Ask Preferred / Sabre about AI-agent access to the booking engine.

The SynXis engine's robots.txt turns away every automated visitor except Google's ad checker. The large chains' engines already let AI agents reach checkout. One question to your Preferred account manager: "What is our setting for AI booking agents, and can it be opened for search and booking?" **One email · 15 minutes**

3 Fill in the hotel facts that agents look for.

The home page's schema says "Resort," with address and phone. Adding star rating, amenities (spa, pools, golf, Nordic Center, Saskadena Six), check-in and check-out times, pet policy, the resort fee and a "Reserve" link to the booking engine means assistants quote your page instead of a reseller's. They'll also stop crediting the Inn with Manchester's ski areas. While the developer is in there, add the sitemap line to robots.txt. **Web developer · half a day**

4 Clear out stale package links.

The home page still links a package with an arrival date of 11 December 2025, and Google's answer cited your package pages directly. A quick pass to update or remove expired dates keeps agents from concluding "not available." **Marketing · 1–2 hours**

5 Make sure "Official site" wins on Google.

One AI answer cited ReservationDesk.com for the Inn. Confirm that the SynXis connection to Google Hotels (free booking links and the official-site price) is switched on and showing your best public rate. Then the first booking link a guest or an agent sees is yours. **Revenue manager · 1 hour**

Prepared by Ethan Hawkes. Everything here comes from public web pages, viewed signed out wherever possible, on 19 October 2026 between 2:08 and 2:45 pm ET. Prices change by the hour, so treat each figure as a snapshot. AI answers also vary from one run to the next, and Google's answers were captured on a signed-in account. No one at the Inn was contacted, nothing was booked, and no personal details were entered anywhere.

Method and evidence