



Mirror, Mirror!

Mirrors add a touch of glamour, depth, or romance to hotel rooms. Who did not check themselves in the mirror before leaving their hotel room?

Genesis^{1,2}

The earliest mirrors (or 'looking glass') were pieces of polished stone, like obsidian. Obsidian mirrors dated 6000 BC were found in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey).

It was not until the 1st century AC that mirrors started to be made with glass though. During the Renaissance years in Europe, mirror makers developed a fire-gilding technique that produced an even and highly reflective coating for glass

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror>

² <https://www.telepro.be/decouverte/histoire-les-origines-du-miroir.html#:~:text=Les%20premiers%20miroirs%20sont%20vieux,obsidienne%2C%20un%20verre%20volcanique%20naturel.>

mirrors. The back of the glass was coated with a tin-mercury mixture and the mercury was evaporated by heating the piece. By the 16th century, Venice was the center of mirror production using this technique. Venetian mirrors in richly decorated frames served as decorations for palaces throughout Europe and were very expensive. For example, in the late 17th century, the countess de Fiesque reportedly traded an entire wheat farm for a mirror, considering that it was a bargain!

In 1835, German chemist Justus Von Liebig discovered that silver could be deposited on glass. This 'silvering' process allowed glass makers to get rid of the tin-mercury mixture, which was toxic, and to make mass manufacturing of mirrors much easier. The invention of the ribbon machine in the late Industrial Revolution allowed modern glass panes to be produced in bulk.

Myths and Symbolic Meanings^{3,4}

Mirrors are associated with different myths and have various symbolic meanings. For instance:

- Breaking a mirror is said to result in 7 years of curse. Why 7 years? Because in Antiquity, Romans considered that individuals evolved through 7-year life cycles.
- Narcisse, an ephebe in the Greek mythology, was extremely handsome. However, according to the prophecy he was not allowed to see his own face. One day, as he was thirsty, he leaned over a pond of water, saw his reflection and fell in love with it, to the point where he let himself die of inertia. Narcissism (self love) was a concept that Freud elaborated based on this myth.

³ <https://www.boite-a-design.com/content/31--la-symbolique-du-miroir#:~:text=Le%20miroir%20%3A%20symbole%20de%20la,personne%20qui%20se%20regarde%20dedans.>

⁴ <https://thehuntmagazine.com/life-style/history-of-looking-glass/#:~:text=Freestanding%20mirrors%20that%20can%20be,to%20lose%20their%20reflective%20qualities>

- In China, mirrors are a symbol of matrimony. A mirror that breaks in half means that one of the partners cheated on the other. Mirrors also important for the Feng Shui, to ensure family wellness.
- In Buddhism, mirrors are seen as magic and sacred tools. They are the symbol of the greatest knowledge: mirrors know everything.

Mirrors in hotels^{5,6,7,8,9}

Mirrors on the walls have been popular since the unveiling of the great hall of mirrors at Versailles in 1678. They greatly add to the sparkle and apparent size of any room and are commonly used by hotels and motels for these purposes.

What about mirrors on the ceiling of hotel/motel rooms? The first reference is the “love motel” or “player bedroom” with mirrors over the bed. Beyond that, not much.

While the origins of this feature are unknown, the reflective look was huge in the 1970s, during the sexual revolution period. One theory behind why mirrors are hanged above beds is that guests like to view themselves during intimate moments. Many people find that having a mirror on the ceiling above their bed heightens the experience of lovemaking 😊. Actually, a number of hotels throughout the world (especially in Paris and Japan) boast this feature, selling these rooms as love nests.

Wherever mirrors are positioned in hotels, it takes staff to keep them sparkle clean. Unfortunately, staff shortage is the number one issue in the Hotel Industry. This is why offering an electronic tipping solution like **Tip&Go** makes

⁵ <https://lovethemaldives.com/faq/what-is-the-mirror-rule-in-hotels>

⁶ <https://www.hotels-and-discounts.com/the-many-theories-behind-why-there-are-mirrors-on-the-ceilings-of-motel-rooms/>

⁷ <https://www.artsjournal.com/aestheticgrounds/mirror-mirror-on-the-ceiling-why-foster-eliasson-mvrdv-and-others/>

⁸ <https://www.bhg.com/mirrored-walls-ceilings-comeback-7099921#:~:text=One%20you%20might%20not%20have,or%20ceilings%20in%20their%20descriptions.>

⁹ <https://www.love-loc.fr/categorie/chambre-miroir-plafond>

good sense as it can increase staff earnings by up to 30%, therefore increasing the odds that they will stay in the business 😊.

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