

To those concerned:

In August 2020, I rented a home through StayMarquis, a business with offices in New York City and Southampton, NY. The home we rented was in Watermill, NY.

I am writing to bring your attention to unethical and improper business practices at StayMarquis.

Stay Marquis holds itself out online as a company that represents high quality accommodations. When we rented through them their tag line was "curated homes for the discerning traveler." Their online website stated the following:

HAND SELECTED HOMES

We personally vet every property in our portfolio, ensuring that it adheres to our quality standards, allowing you to "rent without reservation".

In reliance on StayMarquis' representations and photographs of the premises on their site, we booked a three week stay at a rental in Watermill, NY. We agreed to pay \$27,255.72 for the term. We may have paid additional fees. Stay Marquis has not provided me access to the agreement I signed, so I cannot be sure.

At the time we booked, the owner promised to provide a rental permit. He told us it was applied for, he had been approved for it, and he repeatedly told us he was expecting it in the mail any day. He never presented it, and by all indications, it seems he never applied for it. StayMarquis was aware of owner's representations, as StayMarquis stated them to us on more than one occasion. We had asked for the permit to meet town requirements for beach access which were eventually relaxed. However, that the owner and StayMarquis deceived us by telling us that they had a renter's permit is significant.

When we arrived at the house we were shocked. There was a "For Sale" sign hanging out front. We had not been told about that. There was mildew in each bathroom and in every door way. There were bugs in the kitchen. The kitchen counters were filthy; the grout between the tiles on the counter black. There was mold in the garage, where the washer and dryer we would be using were located. The house had a sickly, sweet smell, which we soon discovered was due to the numerous room fresheners plugged into outlets throughout the house to mask the mildewed odor prevalent in the place.

The good-looking living room, dining room and deck furniture featured on the StayMarquis website was not in evidence at the house. Instead, we found couches and an ottoman covered in thin slip covers with broken zippers and with numerous stains on them. In place of the leather-cushioned dining room chairs pictured on the website we found hard metal chairs. One cabinet had broken shelves and was filled with junk. On the inside of one of the kitchen cabinets we found the following ball point pen message scrawled on the wood "be careful, the owner is an asshole." Bed linens were indelibly stained, chair upholstery was rubbed bare, carpets were stained, the television in the living room did not work..... Porch furniture pictured was not there. Unfortunately, we can go on and on. I have attached pictures.

We vacated in distress. My son missed his first week of camp, nearby (his camp was the primary reason we had come to the Hamptons). The owner came by to "clean." A mold removal professional came by and recommended that the owner install air scrubbers to run 24/7 for up to a week clean the air of mold and mildew. The owner painted over the mold in the garage. The owner would not reimburse us to leave while the air was scrubbed. He expected us to stay during the process although we had been advised by the mold removal professional not to. So, the air was not scrubbed.

We had no choice but to return and stay through our lease term, as the owner would not agree to refund us and StayMarquis would not take responsibility, financial or otherwise. Stay Marquis advised us to vacate to enable them to rent the premises to another dupe, in which case they would give us some money back. We did not leave. Our son attended his camp. We were miserable. We had been deceived and cheated. Our vacation was ruined.

In September, we contacted Stay Marquis. We sought compensation, and an apology. Stay Marquis offered us approximately \$3,000 if we would sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement. We did not take their offer.

We write to create a record of the unscrupulous business practices of StayMarquis. They misrepresent the extent of their diligence and curation. They should be sanctioned. And the public should be made aware of their shoddy and deceptive business practices.

I have attached photographs of the conditions we encountered and endured. Unfortunately, they do not capture the odor.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at the email or phone number above with any questions or comments you may have.

Sincerely,

Robin Shanus