Smart Pineapple

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Direct Booking Blueprint

90-Day Direct Booking Blueprint – Quick Start Guide

Objective

Grow direct bookings, build guest loyalty, and increase lifetime value through a clear, 12-week, phased marketing plan centered on email, paid media, and strategic automation.

Why This Blueprint Matters

Think of this as your go-to game plan for the whole team. Whether you're in marketing, guest services, management, or design, everyone's working from the same playbook—making it easier to boost direct bookings, wow guests, and build lasting relationships.

No more just talking strategy—this guide breaks everything down into clear steps, with tables, timelines, and ready-to-use templates. That means you can launch campaigns faster and with way less hassle.

You'll always know where you stand, too. Each phase comes with its own KPIs and tactics, so you can easily spot what's working, improve as you go, and keep hitting your goals.

And when someone new joins the crew? They'll feel right at home. This guide makes onboarding simple and helps every campaign look and feel consistently on-brand from day one.

Your Bonus Included

Along with this blueprint, you're also getting a Bonus AI Toolkit – Direct Booking Meta Prompts.

These professionally crafted AI prompts have been enhanced for clarity, context, and output precision—making them easy to plug into ChatGPT or other AI tools.
They're designed to help you:

- Refresh and personalize campaigns year-round
- Keep tone, style, and direct-booking focus consistent

- Save hours of brainstorming and copywriting

You'll find them in the appendix at the end of this guide, ready to use immediately.

How to Use This Guide

All section names, triggers, and email titles match for easy cross-referencing. Start with the big-picture strategy in Phases 1–7, then dive into the Email Templates and Bonus AI Toolkit to implement with confidence.

1. Campaign Phases & KPI Targets

Phase	Weeks	Primary Goal	Key Tactics & Channels	KPI Targets
List Building	1–3	Build high-intent email & pixel audience	FB/IG lead ads, OTA guest reactivation, opt-in bonus	Opt-in: 5–10%, Booking: 1–2%
Nurture & Conversion	4–6	Warm leads, highlight direct booking benefits	Insider tips, social proof, booking incentive emails	Open: 15–25%, Booking: 2–3%
Urgency	7–9	Trigger action with scarcity/seasonal FOMO	Flash sale campaigns, date-limited offers, countdown ads	Booking: 3–5%, Fill 80%+ target dates
Loyalty & Advocacy	10–12	Drive reviews, referrals, repeat bookings	Post-stay review ask, VIP/rebooking offer	Reviews: 40%+, Repeat: 15%, Referrals: 5%

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2. Guest Segmentation

Segment by:

- Stay Type: Family, couple, group, remote worker, special occasion
- Source: Direct vs. OTA guest
- Booking Trigger: Seasonal/holiday/event traveler, last-minute searcher

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3. Acquisition Channels

Core Lead Drivers:

- Facebook/Instagram Lead Ads – $20/day local/drive-market targeting
- Instagram Stories ads – countdown or seasonal promo
- OTA Reactivation Campaign – email lapsed OTA guests with a direct booking bonus
- Website Exit Popup – incentive for first-time visitors
- UGC Contest – collect leads and user content

4. Automation & Sequencing

Phase/Trigger	Delay	Email Name	Segment	Goal	Next Step
List Building	Immediate	Welcome 1	All New Leads	Welcome, property intro, opt-in reward	Email 2 @ +3 days
List Building	+3 days	Welcome 2: Insider Tips	All New Leads	Build familiarity/trust	Email 3 @ +3 days
List Building	+3 days	Direct Booking Benefits	All New Leads	Highlight perks vs. OTAs	—
Nurture/Urgency	+2 hours	Cart Recovery 1	Abandoned Cart	Recover potential booking	Cart Recovery 2 @ +24h
Nurture/Urgency	+24 hours	Cart Recovery 2	Abandoned Cart	Final prompt with urgency	—
Urgency	Week 7+	Limited Dates Flash Sale	Warm Leads	Fill last availabilities	Loyalty flow start
Loyalty/Advocacy	Post-stay	Review/Referral Request	Recent Guests	Collect reviews, referrals	VIP/return offer

5. Visual & Design Brief

Touchpoint	Hero Image	Secondary Image	Style/Mood	Brand Guidelines
Welcome	Property exterior, dusk	Guests enjoying amenities	Bright, authentic	Palette, logo, fonts
Nurture	Local culinary scene	Amenity close-up	Editorial, engaging	Brand typography rules
Urgency	Empty lounge chair + FOMO	Booking calendar visual	Vibrant, time-limited	Highlight CTA visually
Loyalty	Guest testimonial	Review stars or guest photo	Trust-building, cozy	VIP color tones

6. Testing & Optimization Plan

Phase	Test Variable	Hypothesis Example	Metric to Track
List Building	Subject: Perk vs. Curiosity	Perk-first line drives more opens	Open/Opt-in %
Nurture	CTA: "Book Now" vs. "Check Dates"	Softer CTA gets more engagement	CTR
Urgency	Scarcity wording vs. discount wording	Scarcity produces faster bookings	Bookings %
Loyalty	Timing of referral request	+1 day post-stay outperforms +3 days	Referral rate

Always test:
- 2 Subject lines
- 2 CTA labels
- 1 Visual variation per campaign.

7. Campaign Calendar Snapshot

- **Week 1:** Lead ads live, Welcome 1
- **Week 2:** Insider Tips Email + Social Proof content
- **Week 3:** "Why Book Direct" email
- **Week 5:** Cart Recovery sequence + incentive
- **Week 7:** Flash Sale/Countdown urgency
- **Week 11:** Review/Referral email
- **Week 12:** VIP/Return guest offer

8. Automation & Email Mapping Table

Step	Campaign Phase	Trigger / Event	Email Template Name	Purpose / Key Message
1	List Building	New inquiry/Download	Welcome & Incentive	Welcome, nurture opt-in, special booking perk
2	List Building	3 days after inquiry	Insider Local Tips	Share local secrets, insider info, and travel tips
3	List Building	6 days after inquiry	Social Proof & Guest Stories	Highlight guest testimonials, foster trust
4	List Building / Nurture	10 days after inquiry or engagement	Direct Booking Benefits	Spotlight exclusive perks for booking direct
5	Nurture	Views availability, shows intent	Booking Intent – Reminders/Early Bird	Encourage booking, highlight flexible dates and rates
6	Nurture	Started booking but left (abandon)	Cart/Enquiry Abandonment	Recover incomplete bookings, answer objections
7	Nurture	24h after abandon email	Cart Recovery 2 / Final Reminder	Final nudge— scarcity, urgency to complete booking
8	Urgency	Flash sale start, gap/shoulder dates	Seasonal/Flash Sale	Limited-time seasonal promo for quick wins
9	Urgency	Low-occupancy week flagged	Hidden Gem/Shoulder Week Feature	Promote peaceful, quiet weeks to fill softer demand
10	Loyalty/Advocacy	After booking, pre-stay	Pre-Stay / Welcome Back	Prepare guest, share details, upsell (if desired)
11	Loyalty/Advocacy	Day after checkout	Post-Stay Review Request	Request feedback, encourage honest reviews
12	Loyalty/Advocacy	7–14 days post-stay	Referral & Repeat Offer	Prompt referral and incentivize return bookings

9. Appendix – Email Templates

Email Name	Subject Variants	Preview Text	Body Copy (with personalization)	Image Cue	CTA
Welcome 1	"Welcome to {{PropertyName}}" / "Plan Your Escape"	Kickstart your {{Location}} getaway	Hi {{FirstName}}, welcome! Here's a thank-you gift for joining...	Hero: Exterior at sunset	Book Now
Welcome 2 – Insider Tips	"Insiders Save More!" / "Live Like a Local"	Local tips for {{Season}}	Get the best of {{Location}} with our handpicked ideas...	Lifestyle/local scenery	Explore Now
Direct Booking Benefits	"Why Book Direct?" / "Skip the Fees"	Unlock exclusive perks	Here's why direct guests like you enjoy even more...	Mix of property + guest	See Perks
Cart Recovery 1	"Finish Your {{Location}} Stay" / "Your Room Awaits"	Your getaway is waiting	Come back and confirm – rooms are filling quickly...	Calendar close-up	Resume Booking
Cart Recovery 2	"Last Chance to Book" / "Only 2 Left"	Time's almost up...	We'd hate for you to miss this – book now before it's gone...	Empty chaise, bold FOMO	Book Now
Review/Referral Request	"How Was Your Stay?" / "Share Your Story"	Help future guests choose	We loved hosting you! Your review helps other travelers...	Guest testimonial scene	Leave Review

Email templates:

Tip: Adjust subject lines, personalization fields, and local details as needed for your property's tone and offers. These templates are designed for easy copy-paste into your CRM or ESP, honoring optimal timing, urgency, and hospitality best practices.

Email 1: Welcome & Incentive

Trigger: New inquiry/Download

Subject Lines:

Welcome to {{PropertyName}}!

Your Escape to {{Location}} Starts Here

Preview Text:
Unlock a special welcome perk for your next stay.

Body Copy:
Hi {{FirstName}},
We're excited to welcome you to {{PropertyName}}! To celebrate, here's a special {{incentive}} just for you. Picture beach mornings and local flavors—your getaway begins now.
Ready to start planning?

Image Cue:
Hero image: Property at golden hour, smiling guests.

CTA:
Book Now

Email 2: Insider Local Tips

Trigger: 3 days after inquiry

Subject Lines:

Live Like a Local—Explore Our Favorites

{{FirstName}}, Unlock {{Location}} Secrets!

Preview Text:
From sunrise spots to secret dining, here's your inside track.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
Our team has rounded up local gems—hidden beaches, sunset hikes, must-try food.
Want to taste {{local specialty}} or discover a view only locals know? Your adventure's
just a click away!

Image Cue:
Lifestyle shot: Guests dining at a local spot.

CTA:
Discover Tips

Email 3: Social Proof & Guest Stories

Trigger: 6 days after inquiry

Subject Lines:

Why Guests Love Us (Stories Inside!)

Find Out Why {{PropertyName}} Guests Return

Preview Text:
See what recent guests are raving about.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
We love sharing guest stories. Here's what {{Testimonial_GuestFirstName}} had to say:
"{{ShortTestimonial}}"
We can't wait for you to make your memories here.

Image Cue:
Guest selfie, tagged testimonial with property view.

CTA:
See Guest Experiences

Email 4: Direct Booking Benefits

Trigger: 10 days after inquiry or post guest engagement

Subject Lines:

> Here's Why You Should Book Direct

> Unlock Exclusive Guest Perks!

Preview Text:
More value, more flexibility, better rates—find out how.
Body Copy:
Hi {{FirstName}},
Booking direct with us means:

> Best price guarantee

> Local-only perks

> Flexible dates

> Priority support
> Make your next trip seamless (and save).

Image Cue:
Graphic overlay: "Book Direct & Save"

CTA:
Book Direct Perks

Email 5: Booking Intent—Reminders/Early Bird

Trigger: Shows interest/views availability

Subject Lines:

      Ready to Plan Your Stay?

      Your Dream Dates Are Still Open

Preview Text:
Book soon to secure the best options.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
We noticed you're eyeing a getaway—great choice! Dates like yours fill quickly during {{Season}}. Reserve now for the best rates and flexibility.

Image Cue:
Calendar overlay, highlighted available dates.

CTA:
Check Availability

Email 6: Cart/Enquiry Abandonment

Trigger: Started to book but did not complete

Subject Lines:

      Almost Yours—Complete Your Booking

      Don't Miss Out on Your {{Location}} Escape

Preview Text:
Secure your spot before it's gone.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
Your preferred stay is waiting. Rooms are limited for these dates. Have questions or need help? Hit reply—we're here for you!

Image Cue:
FOMO: sunset/empty deckchairs on property.

CTA:
Resume Booking

Email 7: Cart Recovery 2 / Final Reminder

Trigger: 24 hours after previous abandonment email

Subject Lines:

 Last Chance to Secure Your Stay

 Only a Few Spots Left!

Preview Text:
Act fast—availability is almost gone.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
We'd hate for you to miss the perfect trip. This is your final chance to book those dates—after this, the calendar fills fast.

Image Cue:
Countdown graphic, urgent CTA color.

CTA:
Complete Booking

Email 8: Seasonal/Flash Sale

Trigger: Start of campaign or when filling gap dates

Subject Lines:

> {{Season}} Flash Sale: Save on Your Stay!

> Limited-Time Offer—Book by {{EndDate}}

Preview Text:
Exclusive deals for select dates—act fast.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
Our {{Season}} Special is here—save {{% or $}} for a limited time only. Secure your spot and enjoy more for less in {{Location}}.
Image Cue:
On-brand: guests enjoying the season (e.g., beach, autumn colors).
CTA:
Unlock Offer

Email 9: Hidden Gem/Shoulder Week Feature

Trigger: Promote low-occupancy week or unique stay

Subject Lines:

> Discover This Hidden Gem Week

> Quiet Getaway? These Dates Are Perfect

Preview Text:
Experience {{PropertyName}} when it's most peaceful.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
Looking for tranquility? Week of {{DateRange}} is calm, beautiful, and still available. It's our best-kept secret!

Image Cue:
Empty patio, serene view, calming palette.

CTA:
Book a Peaceful Escape

Email 10: Pre-Stay/Welcome Back (For Booked Guests)

Trigger: After booking, upcoming stay

Subject Lines:

Your Stay is Around the Corner

Get Ready for {{PropertyName}}!

Preview Text:
Confirming your details and insider info.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
Your {{PropertyName}} adventure starts soon! Here's all you need for arrival, plus our local tips for a perfect trip. Need anything? Just reply.

Image Cue:
Guest tote/package by front door, welcome sign.

CTA:
View Your Stay Details

Email 11: Post-Stay Review Request

Trigger: Day after checkout

Subject Lines:

How Was Your Stay?

We'd Love Your Feedback!

Preview Text:
Help future guests with your honest review.

Body Copy:
Hi {{FirstName}},
Thank you for choosing us! Could you take a minute to share your experience? Your feedback means a lot and helps future guests pick the perfect stay.
Image Cue:
Happy guest photo, review star overlay.

CTA:
Leave a Review {{Link to where you would like the review.}}

Email 12: Referral & Repeat Offer

Trigger: 7–14 days post-stay

Subject Lines:

Return & Save, or Share With Friends!

Loved Your Stay? Spread the Word & Get {{Reward}}

Preview Text:
Invite friends or plan your next adventure.

Body Copy:

Hi {{FirstName}},
Did you love {{PropertyName}}? Share your referral link and both you and your friends get exclusive perks. Or, book your next visit now and enjoy returning guest savings!

Image Cue:
Group guest photo, "VIP Return" graphic.

CTA:
Get Referral Perks / Book Again

Bonus AI Toolkit – Direct Booking Meta Prompts

Below are the original prompts, enhanced for clarity, context, and greater output specificity—making them more actionable and user-friendly for hospitality marketers in vacation rental direct booking campaigns.

General Instructions for All Prompts

- **How to Use:** Copy and paste your actual content (e.g., email, testimonial, offer description) in place of the placeholder. Replace all bracketed variables (e.g., {{propertyType}}, {{Location}}) with your own details before submitting to ChatGPT or another AI tool.

- **Tone Guidance:** Always maintain a welcoming, guest-focused tone with subtle urgency and direct booking emphasis.

- **Personalization**: Where applicable, use {{FirstName}}, {{BookingDate}}, or other dynamic fields, as suited to your CRM/email platform.

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1. Seasonal Email Refresh (Urgency & Atmosphere)

Act as a senior hospitality copywriter for a {{propertyType}} in {{Location}}.

Task: Rewrite the following email for {{season/event}}. Keep the offer, CTA, and blueprint phase goal intact. Add seasonal atmosphere, sensory details (sights, smells, sounds), and locally relevant hooks.

Output Requirements:

- Two subject line options (max 45 characters each)
- One preview text (max 70 characters)
- Updated body copy with {{FirstName}} personalization
- One image suggestion—specify mood, color tones, setting, and action, matched to the season/event

Paste your email below:
[PASTE EMAIL]

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2. Social Media Adaptation (Scroll-Stopper Mode)

Act as a social media strategist for a vacation rental brand focused on direct bookings.

Task: Transform the following email into:

- Three Instagram captions
- Three Facebook captions
  Each max 80 words, formatted for platform best practices.

Output Requirements:

- Each caption must open with a strong attention hook
- Include one brand-unique benefit or emotional appeal
- Close with a strong booking CTA (direct booking focus)
- Specify preferred formatting (clarify hashtag, emoji, mention use as desired)
- One image idea per caption—detail subject, mood, style, and color palette per brand's visual style guide

Paste your email below:
[PASTE EMAIL]

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3. Ad Headline & CTA Variations (High-Impact Testing)

Act as a Facebook/Instagram ad specialist for vacation rentals.

Task: For the offer below, create:

- Five ad headlines (max 8 words each; blend curiosity, scarcity, and clear benefit)
- Five CTA button labels (max 3 words; action-oriented)

Output Requirements:

- Keep all outputs inviting and hospitality-driven

Paste your offer description below:
[DESCRIBE OFFER]

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4. Guest Persona Tailoring (Segmentation Power-Up)

Act as a hospitality marketer personalizing copy for a {{guestPersona}} (e.g., families, couples, solo travelers, digital nomads).

Task: Rewrite the email below to match {{guestPersona}} travel motivations & desires. Reference demographic/psychographic details, travel habits, interests, booking triggers.

Output Requirements:

- Updated body copy with imagery/examples directly relevant to {{guestPersona}}
- Two subject line variants (max 45 characters each)
- One image suggestion—describe subject, mood, and activity relevant to persona

Paste your email below:
[PASTE EMAIL]

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5. Testimonial Story Embedding (Social Proof Boost)

Act as a hospitality storyteller.

Task: Seamlessly embed the guest testimonial below into the provided email, making it part of the narrative. Ensure a conversational, warm tone.

Output Requirements:

- Updated email with integrated testimonial
- Two subject line options hinting at the story (max 45 characters each)
- One image suggestion—describe scene, emotional mood, and color palette that align with testimonial story

Paste both testimonial and email below:
Testimonial: [PASTE TESTIMONIAL]
Email: [PASTE EMAIL]

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6. Visual Brief Creation (Brand Consistency)

Act as a brand designer for a premium vacation rental.

Task: Suggest three image concepts for the campaign below. For each:

- Specify hero image subject & style (property, lifestyle, or local scene)
- Secondary image idea (location, interaction, or close-up)
- Color tones & mood (e.g., bright/beachy, warm/cosy, adventurous/natural)
- List type/category for images (property, lifestyle, local)

Paste campaign description below:
[DESCRIBE CAMPAIGN]

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7. Micro A/B Testing Plan (Conversion Focus)

Act as an email marketing strategist.

Task: For the campaign below, design a mini A/B testing plan:

- Two subject line variants (max 45 characters each)—include a brief hypothesis for each
- Two CTA text variants (max 3 words each)—include hypothesis
- One image variant—with a test hypothesis for visual impact
- One clear success metric to track (e.g., open rate, click-through rate, bookings)

Paste campaign description below:
[DESCRIBE CAMPAIGN]

Want to go deeper?

Smart Pineapple works with short-term rentals, boutique hotels, and tourism brands ready to grow—without breaking rules or burning out.

Contact me kay@smartpineapple.ai

 Smart Pineapple

Smart Pineapple is a woman-owned consultancy focused on AI, marketing, and strategy for hospitality and tourism. We believe in supporting local economies, advancing education, and elevating independent properties and destinations through purposeful innovation. Smart Pineapple is a brand of Pineapple Innovate Inc.

Website: https://www.smartpineapple.ai
Contact;_hello@smartpineapple.ai

Disclaimer

The strategies, tools, and recommendations provided in this worksheet are intended to offer general guidance and inspiration for property owners, managers, and hoteliers. While we strive to provide accurate and up-to-date information, we cannot guarantee specific results or outcomes. We encourage you to tailor these strategies to your unique circumstances and to seek professional advice where necessary. By using this worksheet, you acknowledge that the implementation of any strategies or actions is at your own discretion.