



## Timeline

- 1946** Founding of the brand Best Western: The US-American hotelier Merrill K. Guertin founds together with 66 other hoteliers the hotel chain Best Western with the head office in Long Beach/California. His aim is to recommend hotels to the guests for their further journey in western USA. This idea of "recommendation" is the base for mutual marketing within a with standardized quality brand. The hotels' entrepreneurial independence is supposed to profit from the solidarity of the group. Until today nothing really has changed about this concept for success: independent, quality oriented hoteliers unite in a strong community and use the services of a worldwide well-known brand.
- 1963** With about 700 hotels and more than 35,000 guest rooms Best Western becomes the biggest and most familiar hotel chain of the USA.
- 1966** Best Western merges with Best Eastern, a similar hotel cooperation in eastern USA. Phoenix/Arizona becomes the new head office.
- 1975** Worldwide expansion of the brand: First countries outside the United States are Australia and New Zealand (1975) as well as Mexico (1976) with more than 100 hotels.
- 1977** Best Western is the largest hotel chain worldwide and remains it until today.
- 1978** Expansion of the brand to Europe with the first hotels in Great Britain and Ireland.
- 1980** Best Western grows to 2,654 Best Western hotels worldwide.
- 1981** European expansion goes on: First Best Western hotels open in Austria, Switzerland, France and Sweden.
- 1982** First Best Western Hotels in Denmark and Italy.
- 1984** First Best Western Hotels in Belgium, Finland and the Netherlands.
- 1985** First Best Western Hotels in Spain and Portugal.
- 1986** Best Western starts in Germany: The 29 partner hotels of unitels Hotelkooperation, which was founded about ten years before, join Best Western and operate under the new name Best Western Hotels Deutschland GmbH. Some of the current hotels were part of the group since the very start: the Hotel zur Post in Bremen, the Hotel Rebstock in Würzburg and the Parkhotel Kronsberg in Hanover.
- 1987** First Best Western hotels in Asia (Hong Kong and Singapore).
- 1987** Best Western is present in 38 countries with 3,100 hotels.
- 1988** Gold Crown Club International, the customer loyalty program for frequent travelers, is found and increases to more than 200,000 members.
- 1992** Best Western in 42 countries with 3,300 hotels represented, 1,900 Hotels in North America, 1,000 in Europe and 100 hotels in Germany.
- 1993** A new Best Western logo is launched worldwide.



- 1994** Electronic booking channels become more and more popular: connection of the Best Western booking system to all big airline reservation systems.
- 1995** Germany is responsible for Best Western hotels in Luxembourg.
- 1995** Best Western also expands in Africa (Botswana, Simbabwe, South Africa).
- 1996** Best Western Hotels is one of the first hotel chains worldwide, of which all hotels are bookable online.
- 1997** Worldwide uniform quality controls with consistent standards are launched.
- 2000** Worldwide 4,000 hotels in more than 80 countries belong to Best Western, in Germany, Luxembourg and Poland there are 134 hotels.
- 2000** The German Best Western website is online.
- 2002** Best Western expands to China.
- 2002** Launch of Best Western Travel Card: First electronic hotel voucher.
- 2003** The new category Best Western Premier is launched in Europe and Asia, in this top category 57 hotels in Europe are available.
- 2003** In Germany, Poland and Luxembourg Best Western grows to 145 hotels.
- 2004** Launch of Early Bird Rate on the Internet and of price guarantee program Online Low Rate – Guaranteed: On no other website a better price is bookable than on the company websites.
- 2004** Launch of a free high speed internet access in hotels in the US.
- 2005** The online presence of Best Western is translated in eight different languages: hotel and booking information in English, Spanish, French, Italian, German, Chinese, Japanese and Korean.
- 2005** Start of the service initiative „service ideas“ in all hotels in Germany.
- 2006** Best Western becomes partner of Miles & More, the frequent flyer loyalty program of Lufthansa.
- 2007** Best Western is with 166 hotels the largest hotel group in Germany.
- 2008** 20 years anniversary: The customer club Gold Crown Club International gets renamed into Best Western Rewards and has ten million members.
- 2010** Best Western Hotels Germany grows to 190 hotels and becomes partner of Payback.
- 2011** New worldwide brand strategy: Three hotel categories Best Western, Best Western Plus und Best Western Premier are launched worldwide.
- 2011** Best Western Hotels Germany integrates evaluations of external hotel portals on the website and offers free use of „Best Western to go“ for iPhone, iPad and Android.

- 2012** Best Western Hotels develops an own German mobile website.
- 2012** Best Western is with about 50 holiday hotels in Germany one of the largest brand suppliers in the holiday segment.
- 2013** New fund-raising campaign: Best Western hotels in Germany and Luxembourg collect 50,000 euros of donations for local aid programs with the project ‚The Good Bear‘ in the first year of the campaign.
- 2013** The customer loyalty program Best Western Rewards reaches the 20 million members mark and celebrates its 25th anniversary.
- 2014** Global strategic partnership with online travel agency Expedia.
- 2015** The customer loyalty program Best Western Rewards reaches the 25 million members mark and takes the third place in J.D. Power’s satisfaction survey.
- 2015** Best Western relaunches German website in responsive design.
- 2015** The new lifestyle hotel brand Vib as well as the soft brand BW Premier Collection are launched.
- 2015** Worldwide brand relaunch announced: After more than 20 years the world’s largest hotel group introduces a new brand appearance with completely new logos. From now on Best Western International uses the designation Best Western Hotels & Resorts as master brand.
- 2016** Best Western celebrates its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary: For the brand’s birthday the first hotels receive new logos.
- 2016** Since the beginning of the year, Best Western Hotels Central Europe (BWHCE) headquartered in Eschborn / Germany is in charge of approximately 230 hotels in ten countries: Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland. In addition to its German headquarters in Eschborn there is a regional office in Vienna, Austria.
- 2017** The first hotels of the BW Premier Collection are launched in the region of Best Western Hotels Central Europe: The Harmonie Vienna in Austria and the V8 Hotel Superior Motorworld Region Stuttgart in Boeblingen, Germany. The BW Premier Collection is a soft brand by Best Western Hotels & Resorts, and a new marketing offer for exclusive hotels at top locations in urban centers and holiday destinations. Currently around 80 hotels worldwide belong to the exclusive BW Premier Collection.
- 2018** In addition to the BW Premier Collection, which has been introduced in 2017, the soft brand range of Best Western Hotels & Resorts will be supplemented by two further soft brand collections: the BW Signature Collection for upscale mid-range hotels and the Sure Hotel Collection for hotels in the three-star segment.
- 2018** The Best Western Rewards customer loyalty program celebrates its 30th anniversary and now has over 37 million members.

- 2018** The fullbrands Sure Hotel by Best Western and Sure Hotel Plus by Best Western as well as the Softbrand Sure Hotel Collection by Best Western are launched. The Sure Hotel by Best Western Ratingen is the first hotel of that brand in Germany. (In North America and Asia: SureStay Hotels by Best Western, SureStay Plus Hotels by Best Western and SureStay Collection)
- 2018** The new boutique brands Sadie and Aiden are launched.
- 2019** Three hotels in Germany have joined the newly launched Softbrand Sure Hotel Collection by Best Western: The Amedia Plaza in Schwerin, the Plaza Hotel Blankenburg in Ditzingen and the Amedia Hotel in Weiden.
- 2019** Best Western Hotels & Resorts acquires WorldHotels with approximately 300 independent hotels and resorts worldwide in the upper midscale and luxury segment.
- 2019** The third Softbrand BW Signature Collection is launched in Germany with the Excelsior Hotel Nuernberg Fuerth.
- 2019** BWH Hotel Group, a joint global brand architecture, formed in the wake of Best Western Hotels & Resorts' acquisition of WorldHotels Collection. The umbrella name reflects the merger of the various brand families (Best Western Hotels & Resorts, WorldHotels Collection, SureStay Hotel Group). Shortly afterwards, the Eschborn-based company Best Western Hotels Central Europe GmbH, which is responsible for hotels in the ten countries Germany, Croatia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, is renamed BWH Hotel Group Central Europe GmbH at the end of 2019.
- 2019** New lifestyle brand: The first Aiden by Best Western in the Central Europe region opens in Biberach an der Riss, Southern Germany.
- 2020** Launch of WorldHotels' fourth collection: WorldHotels Crafted Collection.
- 2020** The global covid pandemic brings major impact on travel, revenue losses and temporary hotel closures. Successful measures taken by BWH Hotel Group Central Europe and its hotels, including hotel offices, touristic campaigns for restart, picnic offers, hybrid and digital event offers, hygiene and safety concepts.
- 2020** The WorldHotels Collection celebrates its 50th anniversary.
- 2021** Best Western Rewards and WorldHotels Rewards loyalty programs record more than 45 million members worldwide.
- 2021** The Best Western brand celebrates its 75th anniversary.
- 2021** WorldHotels unveils a logo refresh for the WorldHotels Collection umbrella brand and the four collections WorldHotels Luxury, WorldHotels Elite, WorldHotels Distinctive and WorldHotels Crafted.



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**2021** Brand launch in Austria, a region of BWH Hotel Group Central Europe: The first hotel of the lifestyle brand Aiden opens in Steyr - the Aiden by Best Western @ Stadtgut Hotel Steyr.

**More information / web:**

[www.bestwestern.de](http://www.bestwestern.de), [www.bwhhotelgroup.de](http://www.bwhhotelgroup.de), [www.bestwestern.com](http://www.bestwestern.com)

**Pictures are available online:**

[www.bestwestern.de/Bildmaterial](http://www.bestwestern.de/Bildmaterial)