

The benefits of on-premises laundries in **hotels and spas**

We'll take **care** of it.

Outsourced or in-house?

Which is right for you? Whether you run a rural B&B, boutique spa or bustling city centre hotel, your laundry processes are not only essential to your operations, but likely to account for a large chunk of your spend. Even more importantly, laundry matters to your guests: hotel's towels and bed linens contribute up to 90% of influencing role in customer satisfaction – a fact that underlines why it matters to have the right strategy in place.

At JLA, we've spent five decades supporting thousands of hospitality businesses as they shift from outsourced laundry to invest in bespoke on-premises laundries that deliver cost savings, improve finish quality and give you more control. But is in-sourcing right for you?

This free guide explores the unique challenges of hotel laundry, why you might consider an on-premises solution, and how the newest laundry technologies can help to free up resources, reduce energy use, and save your business money.

What's in the wash?

More than any other industry, hospitality businesses deal with large volumes of laundry across multiple categories, with varied requirements.

Flatwork

Sheets, pillowcases, bed linen, tablecloths, napkins and tea towels must be cleaned regularly to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.

Terry fabrics

Towels, bath mats, dressing gowns and robes are vital for meeting guests' expectations of comfort and luxury.

Clothing and uniforms

Guests' garments and staff uniforms make up a significant proportion of a hotel's laundry load, while many locations operate guest facilities.

Cleaning sundries

Regular laundering of cloths, rags, dusters, and mop heads is critical to maintaining hygiene standards across kitchens, restaurants, spa facilities and more.

Key considerations for **your hotel**

Before exploring whether outsourced or in-house is right for your operation, it's worth taking the time to think about your existing processes. Here are some of the factors to consider while planning, budgeting for and managing laundry from day to day.



Your hotel's location, size, type and rating

A four-star hotel near the coast is likely to clean more beach towels. A motorway hotel would experience a high guest turnover and launder high volumes of bed sheets. A boutique hotel is likely to prioritise the quality of its linen. A spa hotel's guests will expect fluffy towels on tap. But it's not just about responding to your guests' needs.

When it comes to laundry outsourcing, a rural hotel will probably face more logistical challenges than a well-connected urban venue, and you'll also need to consider staff resources: does your team have the time to carry out daily laundry duties?

Managing the risks of contamination and infection control

Given the regular turnover of guests and visitors to your hotel, hygiene is crucial, and your laundry process is one of the main ways you'll maintain it. It's why, just as in care homes and hospitals, it's important that your contaminated items can be kept separate from freshly laundered items, and that you're able to maintain 'dirty' and 'clean' laundry zones.

The layout of your building

Having enough space is one of the basics of operating on-premises laundry facility, while the location, size and shape of the space will also dictate the kind of washing machines, tumble dryers and professional irons you use on site. You'll also want to look at access requirements (e.g., a ground floor laundry is simpler to service).

If you can operate a larger laundry room, you may be able to invest in larger pieces of equipment – such as ironers – and, in turn, handle even more processes on site. If you think you're more likely to have a smaller laundry room, you might look instead at space-saving or stackable laundry equipment.

Transportation and processing

Efficient transport and processing workflows are crucial for saving time, maintaining guest satisfaction, and minimising the risks of cross-contamination. You'll want to be sure that any soiled items can be transported to your laundry facility as quickly as possible, and that changeovers can be completed with maximum efficiency to avoid any disruption to guests.

Why invest in an on-premises laundry?

From quality control to reduced costs – not to mention time savings – there are myriad advantages to investing in and running an on-premises laundry.

Improve cost-effectiveness

With no more need to worry about unexpected service charges, price hikes and unpredictable service, bringing your laundry in house can improve the cost-effectiveness of your operation, and make it much easier to budget.

It's no secret that professional laundry services can be expensive, especially for hotels with high turnover and large volumes of laundry. By managing laundry in-house, hotels can significantly reduce the costs of outsourcing, including delivery fees, processing fees, and per-item charges. Even taking into account any extra staffing and energy costs, our customers regularly report savings from making the switch.

Speed up turnaround times

An on-premises laundry room delivers significant time savings through faster turnarounds, which is particularly handy during peak season. This can also

allow you to keep a smaller of inventory of sheets, bedding, towels and linen, saving space and reducing handling.

Integrate with housekeeping schedules

By managing laundry in-house, you can better synchronise operations with your hotel's wider operations, including processes handled by your housekeeping and restaurant staff. Linen, towels and other items can be ready when they're needed, making everything even smoother.

Instant availability

In-house facilities allow you to respond faster to higher demand for towels and linen during peak seasons, special events, or if larger groups are staying. This reduces the risk of potential shortages and helps to counteract any fluctuations or extended lead times you might experience with an outsourced provider.

Enhance quality control

When stained or dirty linen increases the chances of you losing repeat business by up to 95%, it pays to make the most of the enhanced quality you can achieve in-house. As you look after the process from end to end, you won't need to waste staff time checking, inspecting or processing laundry from your outsourced provider. And because you have the say over washing, drying and ironing techniques, along with the detergents you use, you'll be able to keep standards high, maintain all-important compliance, and make sure any issues are quickly addressed.

It's a powerful benefit for luxury hotels and spas where guests expect the highest quality fresh sheets and fluffy towels.

Reduce your carbon footprint

By handling your own laundry, you'll no longer need to rely on transport to an external provider, and can shrink the carbon footprint often associated with laundry logistics. State-of-the-art laundry systems should also enable you to manage your ongoing running costs – and in some cases monitor your CO2 emissions.

Launder in smaller volumes

Many commercial laundries enforce minimum order volumes, which are often unsuitable for smaller and medium-sized hospitality businesses. To counteract this, some hotels often store up dirty laundry until it reaches a certain threshold, which is not best practice for hygiene, and often takes up precious space.

With an on-site laundry, however, you can launder items more efficiently, as and when you need to. Stable and predictable

In many parts of the UK and Ireland, commercial laundry businesses no longer operate in rural communities due to the cost of transportation and logistics. This can affect the processes – and even business prospects – of countryside or coastal hotels and B&Bs who rely on their services.

In-sourcing laundry facilities will resolve these issues and help to stabilise operations by putting managers fully in control.

On-premises laundry costs – what's the return on investment?

By working closely with a commercial or industrial laundry specialist, hotel managers can tackle the complexities of laundry management to design and fit out an efficient, sustainable laundry room that balances purpose with efficiency. But is the bespoke option too expensive to consider?

A rental package should offer the choice of equipment that is best for your business alongside benefits including installation, maintenance and repairs, and a rapid breakdown service.

By spreading the cost of new equipment and support this way, often through a monthly fee, hotel managers should be likely to find it simpler to establish and operate an efficient laundry room, with no unwelcome surprises to worry about.

If you do decide to invest in your laundry room by another means, however, you're still likely to realise cost savings. This is because the expense of setting up an in-house process will usually be offset by savings made in logistics, resourcing and ongoing utility costs.

Choosing highly efficient machines will further reduce energy and utility costs and help to keep overheads to a minimum.



In-house towel laundries – the best of both worlds?

Rather than bringing all laundry processes back in-house at once, some hotels opt for a staged approach, particularly if space is restricted. By focusing on towels as a first step, hotels can still achieve immediate benefits with minimal hassle:

- ✓ When up to half of a hotel's laundry costs are taken up by cleaning towels, there are significant savings to be made
- ✓ Stacked machines take up minimal space and maximise laundry output for constant rotation, ideal for even the busiest hotel
- ✓ Towel laundry rooms require minimal staff training or specialist equipment, and can noticeably improve finish quality – a large impact with minimal disruption. Given towels don't require ironing then it is a much simpler task compared to bed linen.

Types of laundry equipment

As with any big investment, it's crucial that your laundry room is set up for the future. So, beyond room placement and layout, it's important to consider the right commercial machines to invest in. Here's an overview of the equipment you'll need.

Stackable laundry machines

Stackable commercial washing machines and dryers will save you space in your laundry room and solve problems associated with limited square footage. These compact tumble dryers and washing machines also help to reduce wash-dry times – helpful in large hotels where linen is washed at high volumes.

Available in washer/dryer and dryer/dryer combinations, stackable machines are just as efficient and cost-effective as singular machines, and allow you to cope with extra throughput without having to change your existing layout.



Industrial laundry equipment

The staple for larger hotels and spas demanding capacity for larger laundry throughputs, industrial washers thrive in even the most demanding laundry rooms and can turn over big loads at frequency. Some of the largest industrial washing machines on the market offer capacities up to 220kg.



Commercial ironers

Larger hotels with a full in-house laundry facility will often make use of commercial ironing equipment, particularly dryer-ironers and rotary irons. These fast, efficient and versatile machines help to achieve a professional finish while reducing labour costs and freeing up staff to concentrate on other tasks.



Alternatives to traditional washing machines

Ozone-powered disinfection technology uses the natural power of ozone to destroy moulds, yeasts, viruses and bacteria, even on a cold wash. This safe and gentle process offers a real alternative to thermal disinfection, and could cut running costs by up to 50% while increasing the life of your laundry items.





Talk to our laundry experts.

Whether you're upgrading an existing facility or want to bring your laundry management back on site, we're here to help.

Talk to our experts: 0800 591 903 | jla.com

We'll take **care** of it.