



213 Secret Cheap Routes to Europe in Business Class with Your Miles or Points – Some With Enough Seats to Take the Baseball Team

April 2025

Yes, mileage award seats for up to nine passengers do exist.

For a while now, many travelers have been frustrated trying to find available, cheap premium seats to Europe using miles. Most of the pricing we've seen lately is 250,000 to 500,000 miles round-trip, if not more.

But despite all the bad news, deals *can* exist—and we've found a fistful. In some cases, you can **get nine seats for the price of one** American, Delta, or United with FCF's research. More on that in a moment.

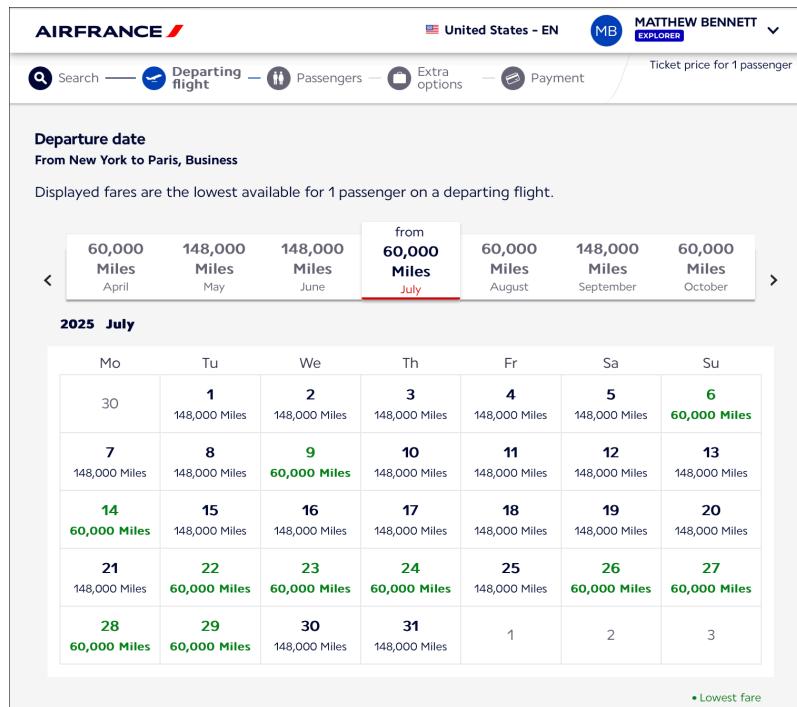
With some flexibility, **Business Class awards at 60,000 miles each way** have been found on 213 routes for up to nine seats on Air France and KLM through the airline's Flying Blue loyalty program.

You can easily use a **points-to-miles transfer partner** to get the miles via Amex, Capital One, Chase, and Citi.

SECRET ROUTES?

There are two kinds—don't tell anyone about them, okay? This is just between you and me.

Non-Stop Secret Routes: Most travelers aren't finding deals between the U.S. and Europe. But look at this: 10 days for Business Class seats from New York to Paris in July:



The screenshot shows the Air France website interface for a flight search. The search parameters are set to "Departing flight" from "New York to Paris, Business". The results table shows flight availability for July, with specific miles requirements for each date:

Date	Miles Required
July 6	60,000 Miles
July 14	60,000 Miles
July 21	60,000 Miles
July 28	60,000 Miles
Other dates in July	148,000 Miles

One-Connection Secret Routes: These work much like [American's lucrative system](#), which offers **better availability on routes with a connection** than non-stops.

In other words, where there might NOT be availability of the cheapest Business Class seats between Houston and Paris non-stop, there is good, cheap seat availability from Houston to Ibiza—via that same Air France non-stop flight, just by adding Ibiza to the itinerary!

The trick is to know what routes offer cheap Business Class seats.

Let's take a look. Here is the August availability of one Business Class seat from Houston to Paris. Forget cheap 60,000-mile seats, they start at 144,000 in August each way:

AIRFRANCE

United States - EN MATTHEW BENNETT **EXPLORER**

Search

Departure date
From Houston to Paris, Business

Displayed fares are the lowest available for 1 passenger on a departing flight.

195,500 Miles May	195,500 Miles June	60,000 Miles July	from 144,000 Miles August	195,500 Miles September	195,500 Miles October	144,000 Miles November
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Ticket price for 1 passenger

But **add on Ibiza**, the popular Spanish island, to your Houston-Paris itinerary, and look at the 17(!) cheap, 60,000-mile Business Class seats available:

AIRFRANCE

United States - EN MATTHEW BENNETT **EXPLORER**

Search

Departure date
From Houston to Ibiza - Balearic Islands, Business

Displayed fares are the lowest available for 1 passenger on a departing flight.

253,500 Miles May	135,500 Miles June	60,000 Miles July	from 60,000 Miles August	135,500 Miles September	253,500 Miles October	November
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2025 August

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
28	29	30	31	1 135,500 Miles	2 60,000 Miles	3 60,000 Miles
4 60,000 Miles	5 60,000 Miles	6 60,000 Miles	7 60,000 Miles	8 60,000 Miles	9 60,000 Miles	10 60,000 Miles
11 60,000 Miles	12 60,000 Miles	13 60,000 Miles	14 60,000 Miles	15 135,500 Miles	16 60,000 Miles	17 60,000 Miles
18 60,000 Miles	19 253,500 Miles	20 253,500 Miles	21 60,000 Miles	22 135,500 Miles	23 60,000 Miles	24 60,000 Miles
25 60,000 Miles	26 253,500 Miles	27 253,500 Miles	28 253,500 Miles	29 253,500 Miles	30 60,000 Miles	31

* Lowest fare

Want more?

Like **nine cheap Business Class seats**. No problem, there are nine days in August with nine seats:

AIRFRANCE United States - EN MATTHEW BENNETT  EXPLORE

Search Ticket price for 9 passengers

Search — Departing flight — Passengers — Extra options — Payment

Departure date
From Houston to Ibiza - Balearic Islands, Business

Displayed fares are the lowest available for 9 passengers on a departing flight.

6,300,000 Miles May	3,172,500 Miles June	540,000 Miles July	from 540,000 Miles August	6,300,000 Miles September	3,172,500 Miles October	— November
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2025 August

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
28	29	30	31	1 3,172,500 Miles	2 540,000 Miles	3 540,000 Miles
4	5 540,000 Miles	6 1,219,500 Miles	7 2,281,500 Miles	8 540,000 Miles	9 1,219,500 Miles	10 540,000 Miles
11 540,000 Miles	12 1,219,500 Miles	13 540,000 Miles	14 1,219,500 Miles	15 1,219,500 Miles	16 3,172,500 Miles	17 540,000 Miles
18 1,219,500 Miles	19 3,172,500 Miles	20	21 1,219,500 Miles	22 2,281,500 Miles	23 540,000 Miles	24
25	26 1,219,500 Miles	27 3,172,500 Miles	28	29 6,300,000 Miles	30 2,281,500 Miles	31

* Lowest fare

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW THIS?

Nine seats—for what you see Delta charging for one:

AIRFRANCE United States - EN MATTHEW BENNETT  EXPLORE

Price for 9 passengers
540,000 Miles
+ USD 2,301.30

Your trip to Ibiza - Balearic Islands Change

Miles balance [420901](#)

Departing flight Wednesday 13 August

AIRFRANCE +1 airline	3:50 PM IAH	1 connection 14h40	1:30 PM IBZ
Change			


540,000 Miles

Ticket price for 9 passengers
540,000 Miles
+USD 2,301.30

[View trip details and fare conditions](#)

What we found on the **Houston-to-Ibiza** route on Air France for 60,000 miles (or points):

	July 2025	August 2025
1 Traveler	15 seats available	19 seats available
2 Travelers	19 seats available	19 seats available

4 Travelers	11 seats available	17 seats available
7 Travelers	3 seats available	14 seats available
9 Travelers	2 seats available	9 seats available

What we found on the **Ibiza-to-Houston** route for 60,000 miles (or points)—zilch in July, though plenty in August:

Month	August 2025
1 Traveler	10 seats available
2 Travelers	9 seats available
4 Travelers	8 seats available
7 Travelers	6 seats available
9 Travelers	3 seats available

MORE SECRET ROUTES TO SCORE LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Subject to change at any time, here is what we found in **Business Class for 60,000 miles on Air France and KLM...**

AVAILABILITY TO/FROM BOSTON

Route	Outbound		Return		
	4 to 8 Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	
Barcelona	July, Aug., Jan., Feb.	June, Dec. to Feb.			May
Berlin	Jan.	Aug., Jan. to Feb.	May		
Copenhagen	July, Aug.	Aug., Dec., Jan.	Jan.		

Florence	Jan.	Jan., Feb.	May	
Ibiza	July, Aug.	Aug.		
Istanbul	Aug., Jan., Feb.	Dec. to Feb.	May	
Lisbon	Jan.	Dec. to Feb.	May	
Lyon	Aug., Jan., Feb.	June, Aug., Dec. to Feb.		May
Madrid	Jan., Feb.	June, Aug., Dec. to Feb.		May
Munich	Jan.	Aug., Jan. to Feb.		
Porto	Jan.	May		
Zagreb	Jan.	Aug., Dec., Jan., Feb.		
Zurich	Jan.	Aug., Jan., Feb.		

Months in black have at least one seat available; in blue, at least two seats; in green, at least four seats. Remember to use the data as a guide since availability can be volatile...

AVAILABILITY TO/FROM CHICAGO

Route	Outbound			Return		
	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month
Amsterdam	Feb.	Jan.	Jan.	Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Athens	Feb.	Jan.		Dec. to Feb.		
Basel	Feb.		Jan.	Jan., Feb.		
Berlin	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Bordeaux	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	

Barcelona	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Budapest	Feb.	Jan.		Feb.	Jan.	
Clermont Ferrand	Feb.	Jan.		Dec. to Feb.		
Copenhagen	Feb.		Jan.	June, Nov.	May, Feb.	Dec., Jan.
Dublin	Feb.		Jan.	April, June, Aug., Dec., Feb.	May, Dec., Jan.	May, Jan.
Edinburgh	Feb.	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.		
Florence	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Frankfurt	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec. to Feb.	Dec., Jan.	
Geneva	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Hamburg	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Helsinki	Feb.		Jan.	Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	
Ibiza	July, Aug.			Aug.		
London	Feb.	Jan.	Jan.	May, Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Lyon	Feb.			May, Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	
Madrid	Feb.	Jan.		May, June	Dec., Jan.	Jan.
Malaga	Feb.	Jan.		May, Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Manchester	Feb.	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Marseille	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	
Milan	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec., Feb.	Jan., Feb.	Jan.
Munich	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec. to Feb.	Dec., Jan.	

Nantes	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	
Naples	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.		
Nice	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Oslo	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Jan., Feb.		
Porto	Feb.	Jan.				
Prague	Feb.		Jan.	May, Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Rennes	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Rome	Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Jan., Feb.		
Stockholm	Feb.		Jan.	June, Aug., Dec., Feb.	May, Jan.	May, Jan.
Strasbourg	Feb.	Jan.		May, Jan., Feb.		
Stuttgart	Feb.	Jan.		Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Valencia	Feb.	Feb.		May, Dec., Feb.	Jan.	
Venice	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Vienna	Feb.		Jan.	Feb.	Jan.	
Warsaw	Jan., Feb.		Jan.	Feb.	Jan.	
Zagreb	Feb.		Jan.	Jan., Feb.		
Zurich	Feb.		Jan.	May, Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	

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AVAILABILITY TO/FROM DALLAS

Route	Outbound		Return	
	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month
Athens	Jan.		April, May, July, Sept., Oct., Dec.	
Barcelona	Feb.	Jan.	May, Dec., Feb.	Jan.
Berlin	Jan.		April, May, July to Oct., Dec., Feb.	Jan.
Bordeaux	Jan.		April, Jan., Feb	
Budapest	Jan.			
Clermont Ferrand	Jan.		April	
Copenhagen	Jan.		April	
Dublin	Jan.			
Edinburgh	Jan.			
Florence	Jan.		Dec., Feb.	
Frankfurt	Jan.		April	
Geneva		Jan.	Dec., Feb.	
Hamburg	Jan.		April, Dec.	
Helsinki	Jan.		Dec.	
Istanbul	Feb.	Jan.	Jan., Feb.	
Lisbon	Jan.		April, Feb.	
London		Jan.		
Lyon	Jan.		April, Dec., Feb.	
Madrid	Feb.	Jan.	April, May, Feb.	Jan.
Malaga	Jan.		May, Jan., Feb.	

Manchester		Jan.		
Marseille	Jan.		April, Dec., Feb.	
Milan	Jan.		April	
Munich		Jan.	Dec.	
Nantes	Jan.			
Naples	Jan.		April	
Nice		Jan.	April, May, Aug., Oct., Dec. to Feb.	Sept.
Oslo	Jan.			
Prague	Jan.		April	
Rennes		Jan.		
Rome	Jan.		Dec.	
Stockholm	Jan.			
Strasbourg	Jan.			
Stuttgart	Jan.		Dec.	
Valencia	Feb.	Jan.	May, Jan., Feb.	
Venice	Jan.		April, May	
Vienna	Jan.		Dec.	
Warsaw	Jan.			
Zurich		Jan.	April	

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AVAILABILITY TO/FROM DENVER

Route	Outbound		Return	
	4 to 8 Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month
Barcelona	Jan.	May, Nov., Dec., Feb.	Jan.	Jan.
Budapest	Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Dublin	Jan.	Jan.		
Frankfurt	Jan.	Jan., Feb.		
London	Jan.	Jan.		
Madrid	Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb.	Jan.	
Milan	Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb.		Dec.
Naples	Jan.	Jan.		
Nice	Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb.		Dec.
Prague	Jan.	Jan.		
Zurich	Jan.	Jan.		

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AVAILABILITY TO/FROM DETROIT

Route	Outbound		Return	
	4 to 8 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month
Athens	Jan.		Dec. to Feb.	
Barcelona	Dec., Jan., Feb.	Dec., Jan.	Dec.	Jan.
Berlin	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	

Clermont Ferrand	Jan.		April, May, Aug., Dec. to Feb.	Dec.
Dublin	Dec., Feb.	Jan.	Aug., Dec. to Feb.	Dec.
Frankfurt	Jan.		Dec. to Jan.	
Istanbul	Jan.		Dec. to Feb.	
Lisbon	Dec. to Feb.		Dec., Feb.	
London	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	
Lyon	Dec.		May, Jan., Dec., Feb.	
Madrid	Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	Dec., Jan.	
Malaga	Dec. to Feb.		Dec., Feb.	
Milan			Dec., Jan., Feb.	
Naples	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	
Nice	Jan.		May, Jan., Feb.	Dec.
Valencia	Dec. to Feb.	Jan.	Dec., Jan.	
Venice	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	
Vienna	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	
Zagreb	Jan.		Dec. to Feb.	
Zurich	Jan.		Dec., Jan., Feb.	

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AVAILABILITY TO/FROM HOUSTON

Route	Outbound	Return

	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month
Barcelona	Dec. to Feb.			April, June, Aug.	May, Feb.	Nov. to Jan.
Basel	Feb.					
Berlin	Feb.			May, June, Aug., Sept.	June, Aug., Nov., Dec., Jan.	May, Nov., Dec., Jan.
Bordeaux	Feb.			May, Nov.	Feb.	Dec.
Budapest	Feb.			Feb.	Dec.	
Copenhagen	Feb.			Sept., Oct.	June, Aug., Feb.	May, Nov. to Jan.
Florence	Feb.			Feb.	Dec.	
Frankfurt	Feb.			May, Feb.	Dec.	
Geneva	Feb.			May, Feb.	Dec.	
Hamburg	Feb.			Feb., Dec.	Dec.	
Ibiza		July.	Aug.	Aug.		
Lisbon	Feb.			Nov.	Feb.	Dec.
Lyon	Feb.			May, Aug., Feb.		Dec.
Madrid	Jan. Feb.			May., June, Aug. Jan.	Nov., Feb.	Dec.
Marseille	Feb.			May, Aug., Feb.	Dec.	
Milan	Feb.			May, Nov., Jan., Feb.		Dec.
Munich	Feb.			May	Nov., Jan., Feb.	Nov., Dec., Jan.
Nantes	Feb.			Dec.	Dec.	
Naples	Dec., Feb.			Feb.		

Nice	Feb.			April, May, June, Aug., Sept., Nov.	May., Nov., Feb.	Dec.
Palermo		Aug.	Aug.			
Palma de Mallorca						
Porto	Feb.			Nov., Feb.	Dec., Jan.	
Prague	Feb.			May, Aug., Sept., Feb.	June, Nov., Jan., Feb.	May, Nov., Dec., Jan.
Rennes	April, July, Nov., Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.		
Rome	Feb.				Nov., Jan., Feb.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb.
Seville	July, Aug.			July, Aug.		
Strasbourg	Feb.			Feb.		
Stuttgart	Feb.					
Valencia	Jan. Feb.			May, Nov., Feb.		Dec.
Venice	Feb.			May, Aug., Sept., Jan.	May, Aug., Nov., Feb.	May, Dec.
Vienna	Feb.			Feb.		
Warsaw	Feb.			May, Dec.	Dec.	
Zurich	Feb.			May, Feb.		

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AVAILABILITY TO/FROM NEWARK (EWR)

Route	Outbound		Return	

	4 to 8 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month
Barcelona	Feb.		May, Nov.	
Berlin	Jan., Feb.		May, Aug., Nov. Dec. to Feb.	
Bordeaux	Aug., Jan., Feb.		May, Aug., Nov. to Feb.	May
Brussels	Feb.		Aug., Dec. to Feb.	
Copenhagen	Jan., Feb.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Dublin	Feb.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Figari, Corsica		July, Aug.	July, Aug.	
Frankfurt	Jan., Feb.		May, Aug., Nov. Dec. to Feb.	
Hamburg	Jan., Feb.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Istanbul	Feb.		Dec. to Feb.	
Lisbon	Jan.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Lyon	Feb.		May, Aug., Nov. to Feb.	
Malaga	Jan.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Munich	Jan., Feb.		May, Nov. to Feb.	
Nantes	Aug., Jan., Feb.		May, Aug., Nov. to Feb.	
Nice	Jan., Feb.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Oslo	Feb.		May, Dec. to Feb.	
Rome	Jan.		Dec. to Feb.	
Stockholm	Feb.		May, Dec., Jan., Feb.	
Strasbourg	Jan., Feb.		May, Nov. to Feb.	
Stuttgart	Jan., Feb.		May, Aug., Nov. Dec. to Feb.	

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AVAILABILITY TO/FROM NEW YORK (JFK)

Route	Outbound			Return		
	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month
Athens	Jan., Feb.			May, Jan.	Feb.	
Barcelona	Aug., Jan., Feb.			May	Jan., Feb.	
Berlin	July, Aug., Jan., Feb.				May, Jan., Feb.	Jan.
Biarritz	July, Aug., Jan., Feb.			April, May, June, July, Sept.	Dec. to Feb.	May, Aug., Dec.
Brussels	July, Aug., Feb.			May, Aug., Dec. to Feb.	Aug., Feb.	
Clermont Ferrand	July, Aug., Feb.	Jan.		April, July, Aug.	May, June, Nov.	Aug., Dec., Jan.
Dublin	Feb.	Jan.		May, June, Aug., Dec.	May	Jan., Feb.
Edinburgh	Dec.			Jan.	Feb.	
Figari, Corsica	July, Aug.			July, Aug.	Aug.	
Istanbul	July, Aug., Nov., Feb.	Feb.	Jan.	May, June, Nov.	May	Dec. to Feb.
Lyon		Jan., Feb.		May, Aug.	Jan., Feb.	

Madrid	Aug., Jan., Feb.			May, Aug., Dec.	Jan., Feb.	
Mallorca	July			Aug.		
Marsielle	Jan., Feb.			April, June	Aug., Dec. to Feb.	May
Nantes	July, Aug., Jan., Feb.			April, June	Aug., Feb.	May
Nice	Aug., Jan., Feb.			April, June, Aug.	May, June, Aug., Jan., Feb.	May
Rennes	July, Aug., Jan., Feb.			April	May, June, Aug., Jan., Feb.	Dec.
Seville	Jan., Feb.			May, June, Aug.		
Strasbourg	July, Jan., Feb.			June	May, Aug., Jan., Feb.	Dec.
Valencia	Aug., Jan., Feb.			May, June	Dec.	Jan., Feb.

Months in black have at least one seat available; in blue, at least two seats; in green, at least four seats. Remember to use the data as a guide since availability can be volatile...

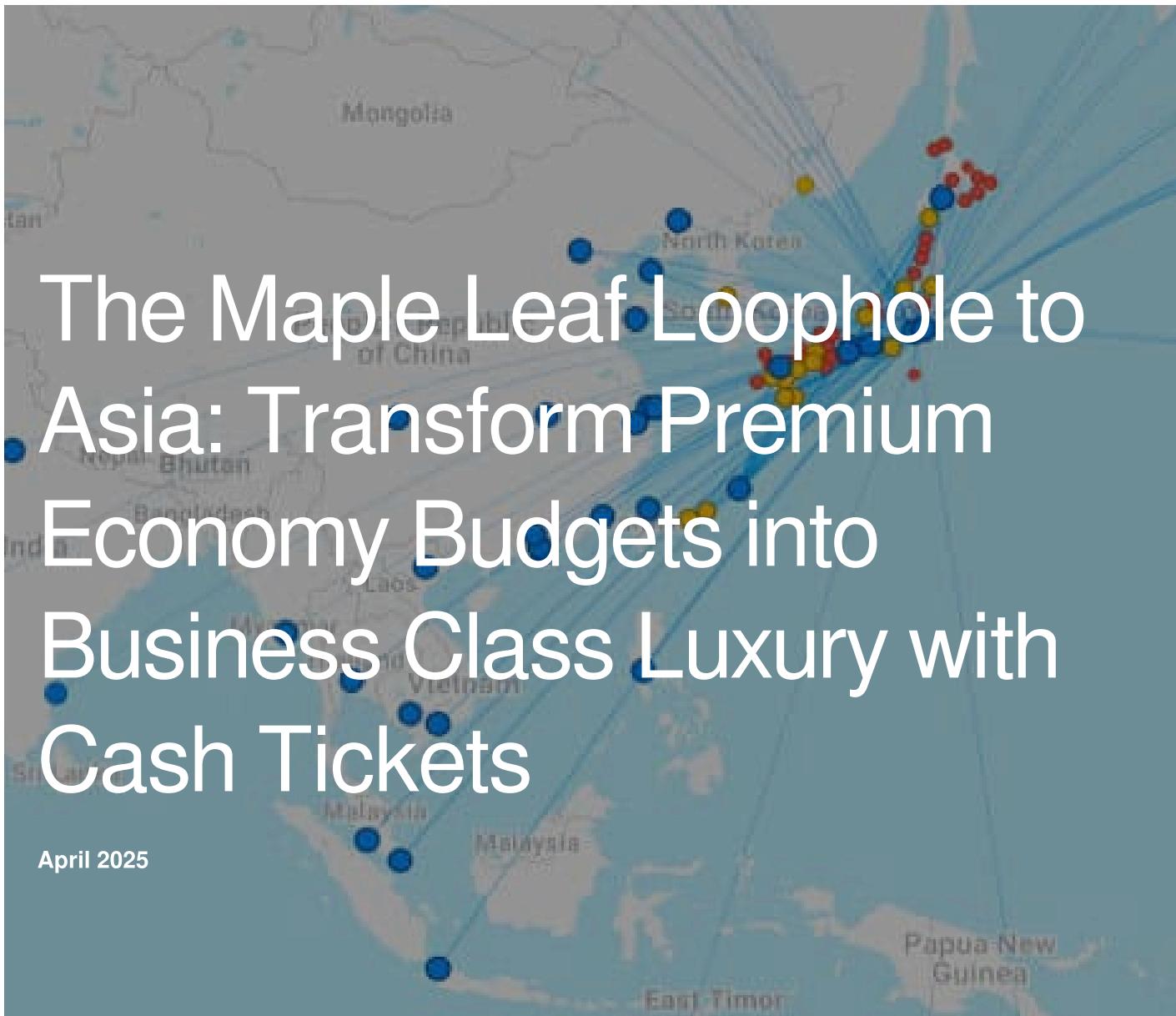
AVAILABILITY TO/FROM WASHINGTON

Route	Outbound		Return		
	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month
Athens	Jan.		May, Dec. to Feb.	Dec.	
Barcelona	Feb.	Jan.	Feb.	Dec., Jan.	May
Frankfurt	Dec.		May, Jan., Feb.	Dec.	

Ibiza	Jan., Feb.				
Lisbon	Jan.		May, Jan., Feb.	Dec.	
Lyon	Jan.		Jan., Feb.	Dec.	May
Madrid	Feb.	Jan.	Feb.	May, Dec., Jan.	
Milan	Jan.		May, Dec. to Feb.		
Naples	Jan.		May, Dec. to Feb.		
Zagreb	Jan., Feb.		May, Dec., Jan., Feb.		
Zurich	Jan.		May, Dec. to Feb.	May	

Months in black have at least one seat available; in blue, at least two seats; in green, at least four seats. Remember to use the data as a guide since availability can be volatile...

See you — and your baseball team—up front, all on cheap premium seats.



The Maple Leaf Loophole to Asia: Transform Premium Economy Budgets into Business Class Luxury with Cash Tickets

April 2025

The Maple Leaf Loophole nets Business Class for little more than Premium Economy to Asia

Looking for lie-flat luxury to Asia without the typical \$7,000–\$12,000 price tag? **The Maple Leaf Loophole** (MLL) might be your golden ticket.

WHAT IS THE MAPLE LEAF LOOPHOLE?

It's simple: Instead of starting your long-haul international flight from a U.S. airport, you use a Canadian hub like Vancouver, Toronto, or Montreal. This adjustment can slash Business Class fares by up to 68%—often on the exact same airlines you'd fly from the U.S. to your destinations.

These aren't award redemptions or tricky point transfers. We're talking about real, bookable cash fares. Add a cheap positioning flight to Canada and you're off to Asia in comfort—often for far less than you'd pay departing from the U.S.

WHAT'S A POSITIONING FLIGHT?

A [positioning flight](#) is a short domestic or international hop you book separately to get to the city where your long-haul flight deal begins—in this case, from a U.S. city to a Canadian one.

WHEN TWO TICKETS ARE CHEAPER THAN ONE BOSTON-TOKYO BUSINESS CLASS EXAMPLE SAVE ~\$8,000 / 70%

Instead Of	Do This	Do This
Non-stop from Boston to Tokyo in Business Class for \$11,374 on Japan Airlines		
OR	Book Toronto - Tokyo Non-stop Business Class for \$5,340 AND separate positioning tickets from Boston to Toronto	Book Vancouver - Tokyo on JAL, ANA, or Air Canada Non-stop Business Class for \$3,520 AND separate positioning tickets from Boston to Toronto
Flying Business Class for \$12,378 on your beloved American, Delta, or United (which all require a connection)		OR
Cost Difference	You have to book positioning flights	You have to book positioning flights
Benefit Difference	Massive Savings ~\$7,000 / 60%	Massive Savings ~\$8,000 / 70%

WHEN TWO TICKETS ARE CHEAPER THAN ONE CHICAGO-SEOUL BUSINESS CLASS EXAMPLE SAVE ~\$4,000 / 50%

Here are real-world examples that show how combining a Canadian Business Class fare with a separate positioning flight can save you thousands.

Instead Of	Do This	Do This
Chicago - Seoul in Business Class for \$7,968 on Korean Air non-stop	Book Vancouver - Seoul Non-stop Business Class for \$3,622 (Korean Air) AND a separate positioning ticket from Chicago to Vancouver	Book Toronto - Seoul Non-stop Business Class for \$4,311 (Korean Air) AND a separate positioning ticket from Chicago to Toronto
OR		OR
Flying American, Delta, or United Business Class for \$8,000 which all require a connection		
Cost Difference:	Significant savings, longer positioning flight	Good savings, shorter positioning flight
Benefit Difference:	Save about ~\$4,200 / 55%	Save about ~\$3,500 / 45%

WHEN BUSINESS CLASS IS ONLY ~10% TO 20% MORE THAN PREMIUM ECONOMY SAN FRANCISCO-TOKYO EXAMPLE

Instead Of	Do This
Non-stop from San Francisco to Tokyo in Premium Economy for \$2,935 (Japan Airlines)	Book Vancouver - Tokyo Non-stop Business Class for \$3,196 (Japan Airlines) AND a separate positioning ticket from SFO to Vancouver
Cost Difference	Total: \$3,249 vs. \$2,935 = \$260 more (10% increase)
Convenience Difference	Extra positioning flights
Benefit Difference:	Fly Business Class instead of Premium Economy

If you had to fly at least Business Class and no mileage awards are available and you're staring down the barrel of an \$11,000 fare, I'd recommend going a day or two before to Canada and enjoy one of its Maple Leaf cities.



April's Top 91 Mileage Awards & Special Fares Greatest Hits (Still Available)

April 2025

Cool 2025 Deals

There are lots of oohs and ahhs this month that can save you a load of miles, points, and dollars. As we always say, however, don't delay, because some will be out-of-date fast!

Sweet Redemptions

ASIA

[Cathay Pacific Discount Business Class > San Francisco to Hong Kong > 2+ Travelers](#)

[Cash OR Miles > *First Class* > Cathay Pacific > New York and Many Other Cities to Hong Kong & Beyond > 2+ Travelers](#)

EUROPE

[Lots of 4+ Seat Discount SWISS Business Class Miles/Points Availability from New York to Zurich](#)

[From 68,000 Miles / Points R/T > Biz Class > 2+ Travelers > Iberia > Chicago to Spain](#)

[Cash OR Miles > Premium Economy > Air France > New York to Edinburgh > 4+ Travelers > 1-stop](#)

[Cash OR Miles > Business Class > American> Charlotte to Munich & Beyond > 4+ Travelers](#)

[From 68,000 Miles / Points R/T > Biz Class > 2+ Travelers > Iberia > New York to Spain](#)

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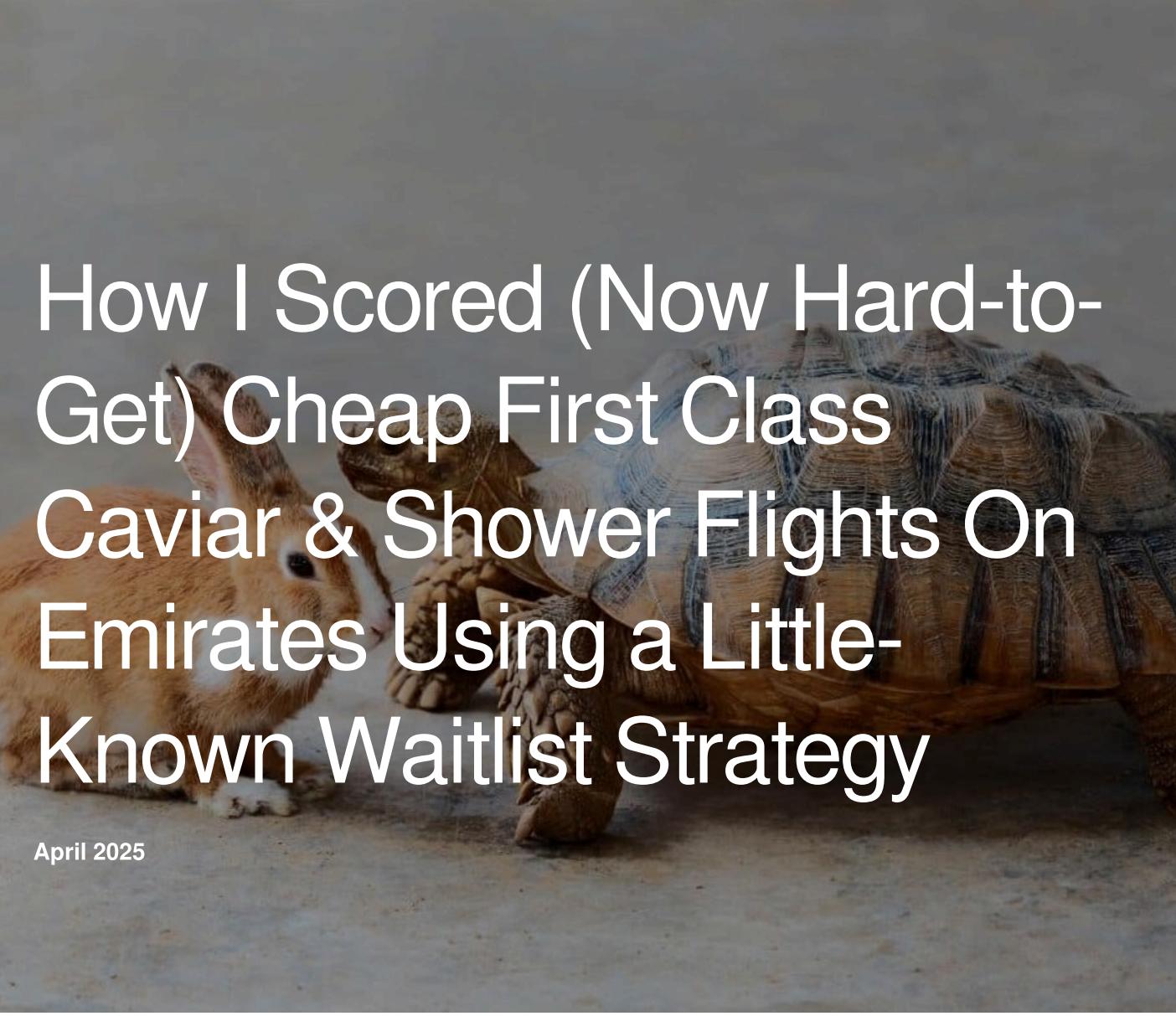
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How I Scored (Now Hard-to-Get) Cheap First Class Caviar & Shower Flights On Emirates Using a Little-Known Waitlist Strategy

April 2025

Some award seats never show up online. Here's how to find 'em

If you are a [bags-packed dream-trip opportunist](#), or a willing-to-[upgrade-till-the-end](#) maestro, fasten your seatbelt. I have a secret strategy that can open up discount award space for \$27,000 tickets you won't be able to snag any other way.

WHAT'S A WAITLIST?

Waitlisting is where you're put on a list for seats that aren't currently available in the *booking category* you desire. Airlines have historically used waitlists as an *insurance policy* when they don't sell all their seats, in that excess inventory is released to those on the waitlist. In this case today, we'll examine Emirates' liberal release of their premium seats for discount miles redemption close to departure.

(Similar to [Lufthansa's lucrative First Class close-in opportunity.](#))

NOT ALL WAITLISTS ARE CREATED EQUAL

When it comes to award waitlisting, there are good waitlists and bad ones.

Bad Waitlists: One bad example is United mileage upgrade waitlists, which seldom clear. One reason is because anyone can do it online, so everyone does.

Good Waitlists: Emirates is a great example of a good waitlist. Why? You *can't* do it online. And almost nobody knows about it. That means the **waitlist line is relatively short so you're more likely to win the waitlist lottery.** Many travelers (especially younger ones) refuse to speak to anyone over the phone. They actually do everything on their phone; they just don't use it to speak to anyone. This hang-up equals more opportunities for you.

HOW TO GET THE GOODS THAT NEVER MAKE IT TO THE MARKET SHELVES

With Emirates waitlisting, you not only get access to seats you wouldn't otherwise, but you essentially beat your travel competitors to the draw as they will never see these seats on the airline's website.

Think of it like a grocery store. When people go to the store and see no tomatoes there, they either give up and move on to the next thing on their shopping list — **OR** they ask a store employee if there are any tomatoes *in the back.* That's kind of like what waitlisting is – access to the stuff that never actually makes it to the shelf. It's like you're going straight from the warehouse to your cart.

There are many people who just keep checking seat availability online (the grocery store shelf) every day. And there are other people who tell the “back room guy” to notify them when a box comes in — bypassing the shelf and going straight to their basket.



We found this tasty one out back

WAITLISTING AWARDS WITH EMIRATES IS A MANUAL (OVER THE PHONE) TASK BUT NOTIFICATIONS ARE AUTOMATIC

Once you've waitlisted an award flight, you'll be emailed when a seat becomes available, before it's even displayed on the website. **A secret seat**, if you will. That's huge. There's a whole stash of inventory that never makes it to the market shelf, but you can still park your patootie on it.

THE TWO WAITLIST WINNERS

Somewhat similar to Lufthansa's close-in release of First Class seats, Emirates generally releases seats three days prior to departure. Moreover, I've noticed that the odds of them releasing the seats are 50% or better.

So who can benefit from this?

Winner #1: The Bags-Packed Opportunist

You always have your bags packed and ready at the door, so to speak, so you can pounce when that world-class First Class bucket-list opportunity comes knocking. Perhaps you're retired, a business owner who makes your own schedule, or maybe you're a digital nomad.

Either way, for you the opportunity is inevitable. It just comes down to when.

Winner #2: The Upgrader Till the End

You've already booked a ticket, but it could use improvement, either because:

- A) It cost more than you wanted to pay (in miles or cash), and/or

- B) It's in a lesser class of service than you want (say Premium Economy or Business, and/or
- C) It's not on your ideal airline (has average seats or for whatever reason), and/or
- D) It could be more convenient (number of stops, routing, airports, connection times, dates, etc.),

AND

E) You're open to upgrade opportunities after buying a ticket. (One of my favorite things to do.)

This happened to me while traveling through the Baltics. I was wandering around the area when something came up that required me to return home. My first thought was to book what was most convenient and that was a LOT Polish Airlines flight. [But my first thought isn't always my best one.](#)

Then I thought to myself, hmmm...

1. What's the best flight I could take home from the region? (Emirates was high on that list.)
2. Italy (one of my favorite countries) has an Emirates A380 flight from Milan back to the U.S.
3. I'm always down for Milan.
4. But there's seldom any discount award availability in First Class on Emirates.

ENTER EMIRATES WAITLIST

I made like a tortoise, and waitlisted all the flights Emirates would let me: three. In my experience, this is almost a total guarantee, as long as you're flexible on dates. What an awesome ending to a trip. I get to hang out in Milan for a few days on my way back to the U.S. from a three-week trip to the Balkans and Baltics, where I hit country #108.

I'd go so far as to say, why not always return from Milan on any European trip? If not starting there?

Seriously.



Tortoise: winner by a long neck

Lake Como, Florence, Venice, Verona, and even the Alps are all an easy train ride away if you've exhausted Milan and want to expand your horizons.

By the way, as my trip was winding down, if the **Emirates First Class A380 from Milan** didn't open-up, I could always just fly home from **Vilnius, Lithuania, in Business Class on LOT Polish Airlines**.

Your Emirates itinerary - [REDACTED]

Emirates <do-not-reply@emirates.email>
To: [REDACTED]



Your waitlisted flights are confirmed

Hello Matthew,

Thanks for your booking – your flights are confirmed and your itinerary is below.

Please get in touch with us immediately to finalise your booking or the booking will get cancelled. You can also read our [conditions of contract](#).

We're looking forward to welcoming you on board.

The Emirates team

This strategy is similar to [FCF's Upgrade Two-Step Strategy](#).

HOW DOES EMIRATES WAITLISTING WORK?

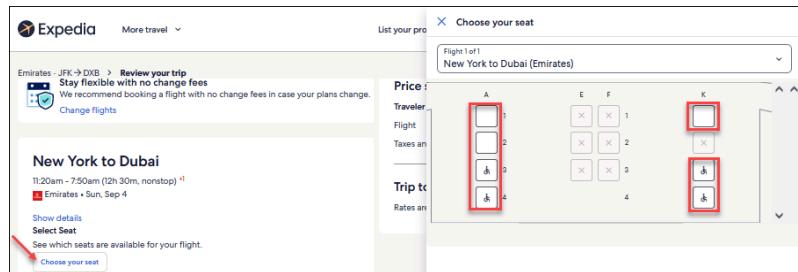
It's easy. All you have to do is pick up the phone, dial Emirates at 1-800-777-3999, and maybe wait on hold five minutes, if that. Put on your iPhone earbuds and enjoy some Barry Manilow or Beethoven, and make dinner or clear the dishes while you wait. Personally, I can be more productive while on hold with airlines than I am otherwise. A perfect distraction that allows me to focus. It's never been a big problem for me, and once you speak to a reservationist, they're happy to put you on the waitlist for up to three flights for your discount award. You just have to ask.

INCREASING YOUR ODDS

The more seats that are empty going in, the better the odds of your waitlist clearing, obviously.

How do you know what flights have the most empty seats?

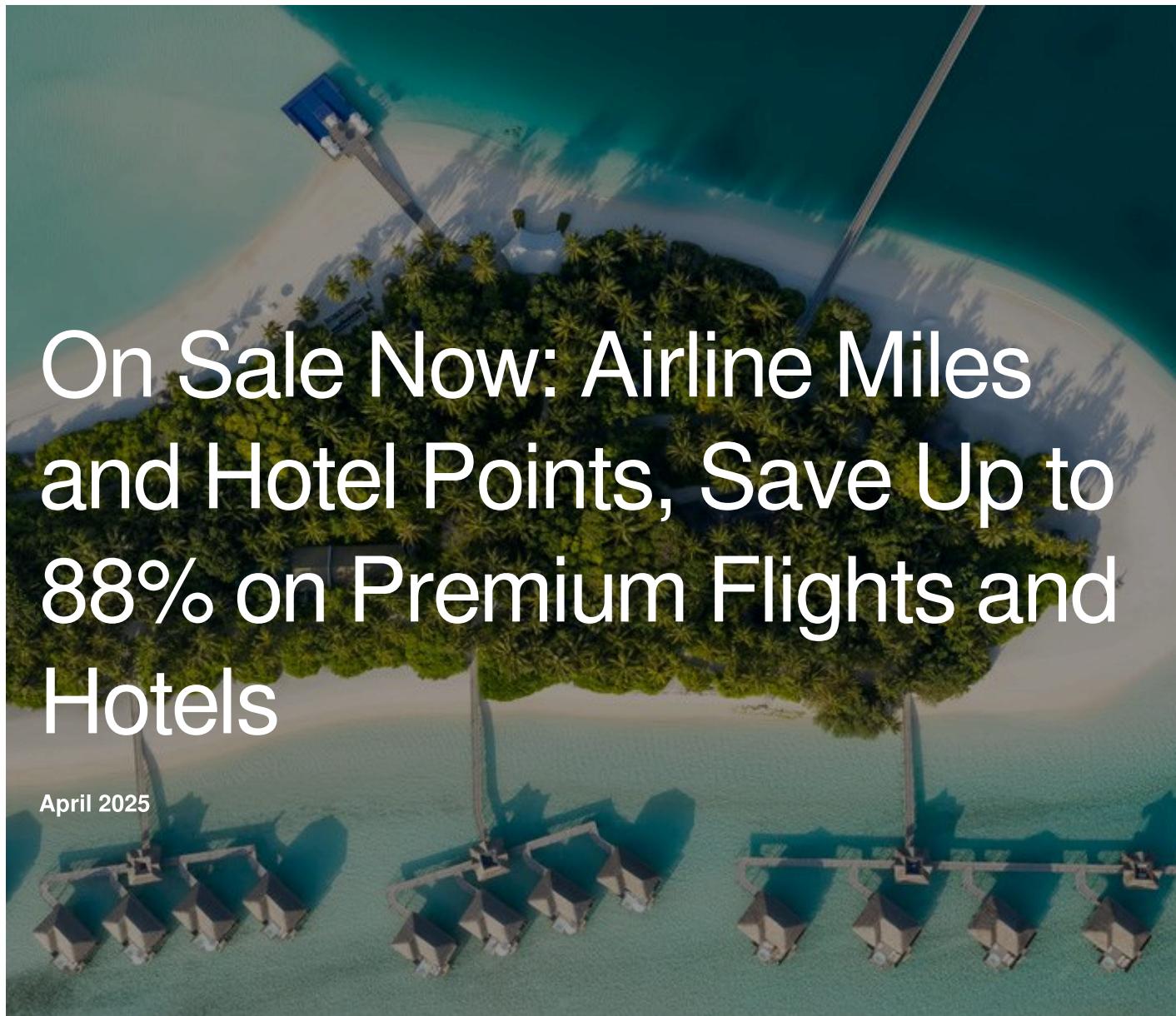
One way is to go to Expedia and do a search on the route and date you're considering. Then in the search results, click on the exact flight you're looking at. Then click on "choose your seat" (see below). Then view the number of empty seats. While not always 100% accurate, it's indicative, and if there are no empty seats, that's a bad sign for sure.



In general, I'd guess if you're a week out from departure, and see four or so seats open (is the case much of the time), waitlisting is worth pursuing. With less than two seats, your odds are slim.



Emirates shower flights are fun and memorable.



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