

A composite image featuring a man's face from the nose up, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and a dark jacket. On top of his head is a human brain, which is enclosed within a metal cage structure. A red stop sign is visible on the cage. The background is a solid dark teal color.

The Price of Inflexibility, What You Really Truly Desire, and The Upgrade Mindset

November 2024

The upgrade opportunities when you don't book backward

Ask a car dealer for the latest model with a particular wheel spec, interior upholstery, exterior paint, and dashboard technologies, and the car salesman will tell you, "No problem." That will be a bazillion dollars, and I'll have it shipped with your custom requirements in three to six months.

If you want what you want and can afford it, no problem. More power to you. Ask for it, pay for it, and be happy. Move on to the next thing.

But there are some things in life that you can't easily afford but still desire.

Let's say you can't afford the aforementioned car with all its custom trappings to serve each of your personal preferences to a tee. What are you gonna do? You could ask the car dealer what he has on his lot left over

from last year, right? Often, he'll come back to you with a car that's half the price of the custom car, perhaps with an interior color that's not your favorite or something else less desirable. But if you get 90% or 80% of what you want for 50% of the price, that's what many people would call a "deal."

We're going to stack this concept with another concept in just a moment. Hang with me, as I establish the second concept.

WHAT YOU REALLY WANT

It's natural for humans to think they know what they want. However, having helped people book airline tickets for over 30 years, I have observed that people don't know what they want.

Yeah, I've booked airline tickets for the ultra-wealthy and some of the brightest people around, as well as everyone in between. They often start by telling me they have to fly on this particular date, with no flexibility and want to fly on a particular airline — let's say in Business Class on XYZ schedule.

They are confident and seem to know exactly what they want. But in reality, when I look at their options for this highly customized order – like the car buyer who wanted exactly everything he wanted – and then offer this person the best price available for exactly what they wanted, they often don't like it. So I'm always quick to present another option, let's say on a day earlier or later, or on a different airline, that's half the price.

Think about the car buyer taking last year's model from the distressed car lot inventory and getting it for half off. Well, the airline industry is like every other industry, with **wholesale and surplus pricing** for goods that management calculates will ultimately go unsold or be perishable at full price.

Sometimes, I offer a traveler a First Class seat on a different airline, even an opulent First Class seat, for a similar price as the Business Class they requested. Suddenly, they become really happy. It's like an emotional roller coaster. One minute, they're upset because what they thought was more than what they could comfortably afford results in a better option and within their budget range.

WHAT'S MY POINT?

People often don't know what they want. Or at least, they're not really clear on what they want. What's worse? This lack of clarity limits their upgrade possibilities. That's right, if they don't know what they want or have a narrow view of what they want, then how the heck am I — someone in the upgrade business — going to get them the best possible result?

WHAT JOE REALLY WANTED

Joe really wanted the most bang for his buck. But he didn't tell me that. He told me he wanted to fly a particular airline on a particular day. And he did not even tell me his budget.

A lot of people do this. It limits how I can help them. But if they tell me that they want the best bang for their buck and give me directional guidance, that's where I shine.

UPGRADE BLINDERS

What are upgrade blinders? They're self-imposed limits based on thinking you know everything, or at least know a lot.

In other words, my starting point with any upgrade pursuit, flight or otherwise, is that I know nothing.

Perhaps I'm exaggerating a bit, but because of the dynamic nature of life, if I act like I know what a fare or airline ticket should cost because of what it cost yesterday or last year, I'm violating the rules of the dynamics of life.

Things change. Most things change. It's just a matter of time. Because of that, I pursue an upgrade opportunity by merely wanting the best possible outcome. And I always start out with the First Class option and work my way down.

I look for First Class for the price of Business Class, or Business Class for the cost of Premium Economy, or Premium Economy for the price of coach.

TAKEAWAYS

- **Give your upgrade team more latitude.**

Tell them your starting point, what we call the baseline. Tell them the coach fare, then the Business Class fare, or the First Class fare that you've found.

- **Give them context about what you know.**

Give them more general guidance, like you'd pay X dollars more if you could get First Class for that. Or you'd travel a day or two earlier or later if you could get XX class of service for Z% less.

- **Tell them what you want.**

You want the best possible outcome within some general parameters, and you want solid options.

Alternatively, just pay the full asking price if your budget allows it, assuming you know exactly what you want, and move on.



How to Beat the Domestic Business Class Inflation Blues: Now Add Aruba or Jamaica to Your Trip For Free – Or Less Than Free

November 2024

With some domestic fares climbing, savvy travelers are getting more value by turning normal trips into multi-destination adventures – and now with two more options

The rising cost of many airfares to cities like Miami or New York has left many Business Class travelers with sticker shock. But what if, instead of paying more for the same trip, you could transform your itinerary with a bonus tropical adventure that saves you money?

This isn't a travel fantasy; it's the genius of the Stopover Loophole Strategy (SLS).

Imagine this: you're headed to Miami, but instead of just arriving at your destination, your ticket includes a stop in the Caribbean — at no extra cost. In fact, with the SLS, you **could end up paying less** than you would for a simple round-trip ticket.

WHAT IS FCF'S STOPOVER LOOPHOLE STRATEGY?

It takes advantage of airline stopover policies, allowing you to schedule a layover—lasting anywhere from a day to weeks—**without increasing your ticket price** much of the time.

On some routes, this tweak to your baseline itinerary **can actually lower your initial round-trip fare**. The result? A two-for-one travel experience that can combine business and pleasure while stretching your budget further than ever.

FCF's truffle hounds have noticed that this works best with American Airlines when initially traveling to one of its hubs, including **Charlotte, Miami, New York, or Philadelphia**.

Until now, the cheap, free, and less-than-free add-on destinations this strategy worked with in the Caribbean were limited to **San Juan, Puerto Rico; St. Croix, and St. Thomas**. We've recently discovered that **you can now add Aruba and Jamaica** to the list of cheap or free side trips.

For example, a non-stop round-trip flight from Los Angeles to Miami is going for around \$1,810+. By adding a stopover in Montego Bay, Jamaica, that price could drop to \$1,804—a savings of \$6. That's not only a free side trip, but it's less than free! You get paid six dollars to go to Jamaica. And what else do you get with the savings? World-class beaches, vibrant culture, and memories to last a lifetime.

LOS ANGELES > MIAMI > LOS ANGELES BUSINESS CLASS R/T: \$1,810+

Round trip 1 Business

Los Angeles LAX

Round trip Reset Mon, Mar 3 Tue, Mar 18

All filters (2) Nonstop

Be

Top departing flights

Ranked based on price and convenience

6:00 AM – 1:49 PM
American
Avoids as much CO2e as 6,1

9:45 PM – 5:33 AM^{*1}
American

10:45 PM – 6:34 AM^{*1}
American

11:45 PM – 7:35 AM^{*1}
American

January 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 \$1,860	2 \$1,910	3 \$1,990	4 \$2,250	
5 \$1,950	6 \$1,860	7 \$1,810	8 \$1,860	9 \$1,910	10 \$1,910	11 \$2,250
12 \$2,160	13 \$1,860	14 \$1,810	15 \$1,860	16 \$1,910	17 \$1,910	18 \$1,950
19 \$1,950	20 \$1,860	21 \$1,810	22 \$1,860	23 \$2,330	24 \$1,910	25 \$2,160
26 \$1,950	27 \$1,860	28 \$1,810	29 \$1,940	30 \$1,910	31 \$1,910	

February 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 \$1,950
2 \$1,970	3 \$1,860	4 \$1,810	5 \$1,860	6 \$1,910	7 \$1,910	8 \$1,970
9 \$1,950	10 \$1,860	11 \$1,810	12 \$1,860	13 \$1,910	14 \$1,990	15 \$2,160
16 \$2,030	17 \$1,870	18 \$1,810	19 \$1,860	20 \$1,990	21 \$1,990	22 \$2,160
23 \$2,050	24 \$1,860	25 \$1,810	26 \$1,940	27 \$2,130	28 \$2,130	

Showing prices in USD for 15 day trips

from \$1,942 round trip price

Done

LOS ANGELES > MIAMI > MONTEGO BAY > LOS ANGELES BUSINESS CLASS: \$1,804

Multi-city 1 Business

From	To	Date
Los Angeles LAX	Miami MIA	Wed, Feb 5
Miami	Montego Bay MJB	Sun, Feb 9
Montego Bay	Los Angeles LAX	Thu, Feb 13

Add flight

All filters (3) Nonstop X American X Times X Bags Price Emissions Connecting airports Duration

All flights to Miami
Prices include required taxes + fees for 1 adult. Optional charges and bag fees may apply. Passenger assistance info.

American	12:36 PM – 8:28 PM	4 hr 52 min LAX-MIA	Nonstop	351 kg CO2e -21% emissions	\$1,804 entire trip
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WHY ADD JAMAICA OR ARUBA?

These two Caribbean destinations bring their own unique charm to your travel plans:

- **Aruba** is the sunny escape you may have been dreaming of, with crystal-clear waters, wind-sculpted beaches, and a rich blend of Dutch and Caribbean culture. Perfect for snorkeling, fine dining, or simply soaking in the year-round sunshine, Aruba will make any trip unforgettable.
- **Jamaica** is a haven of lush green mountains, cascading waterfalls, and lively reggae beats. Whether it's sipping cocktails on Seven Mile Beach, hiking the Blue Mountains, or experiencing the energy of Kingston, Jamaica is a destination that can rejuvenate the soul.

Adding either destination to your itinerary doesn't just enhance your journey—it elevates it. It could be for only a few days or longer.

WHO BENEFITS MOST?

The Stopover Loophole Strategy is perfect for:

- **Business Travelers:** Add a tropical escape to the Caribbean to a work trip and return home refreshed.
- **Leisure Travelers:** See more for less by bundling a tropical destination with your domestic flight.
- **Frequent Flyers:** Earn more miles or elite credit.

IT'S EASY TO UNLOCK THE MAGIC OF SLS

1. Search for **multi-city** itineraries instead of standard round-trips; [Google Flights](#) is fast at this.

2. Explore stopover-fare pricing in Caribbean destinations like Aruba, Montego Bay, San Juan, St. Croix, and St. Thomas.
3. Play with different cities and dates, as they can vary significantly.

GETTING THE MOST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

Instead of dreading higher fares, turn them into a golden opportunity. With FCF's Premium Stopover Loophole Strategy, your trip becomes the gateway to adventure. A trip to Miami, Philadelphia, or New York is no longer just a point-to-point journey; it's the beginning of an unforgettable story.

So, the next time high Business Class airfares have you second-guessing your travel plans, remember the Stopover Loophole Strategy and explore your options for a bonus destination.



16 Hotels Where You Can Save Between 40% and 86%

November 2024

Use our guide to score at Hyatt properties the world over, whether you have any points or not

Yeah, I like to fly First Class. But I don't like to pay full price. For almost anything pricey I buy, I want the biggest bang for my buck.

That includes hotels.

Staying in a nice hotel is arguably as important — depending on the type of trip, duration, and occasion — as flying Business or First Class to the destination.

But prices at luxury hotels can cost a king's ransom nowadays. (I've heard that hotels are even colluding on pricing, although I have no idea if that's true. But it could be when you consider the price tag of many

properties you see online these days.)

UPGRADE YOUR STAY, BIG TIME

What if I can get you twice the hotel for the same money? A suite for the price of a normal room? Oceanfront for the price of a garden view? There are infinite numbers of upgrades or improvements you can make when it comes to booking hotel stays. Think of the money you save when you get a better room as the upgrade value.

That's what the strategy is all about. We've written about it a couple of times before over the last year [here](#) and [here](#). Check out those reports for more details if you think this strategy might be for you.

Consider this [Hyatt promotion](#), for example. It's running through January 4 and allows you to buy up to 110,000 points for as little as 1.92 cents each, given the 25% bonus promotion.

ANYONE CAN PLAY THIS UPGRADE GAME AND GET EVEN MORE POINTS

If you want even more than 110,000 points, you can transfer points from Chase to Hyatt, [pool your Hyatt points](#), or use [FCF's "how to get around buying points maximum limits strategy."](#)

That's why I like the strategy of buying Hyatt points. Anyone can do it. That is, anyone who has been a Hyatt member for 60 days. (If you haven't signed up, sign up now, because this strategy is available through Hyatt every two to four months. Although this current one is extra good. It only takes a few minutes.). The maximum number of points you can buy is usually 55,000, which makes this promo special.

Here's how it looks for this sale:

MATTHEW, use the slider to select your Bonus Points

110,000 25% bonus

− ⟷ +


Bonus Points	110,000
25% bonus	27,500
Total Bonus Points	137,500
Subtotal	\$2,640.00 USD

Pay now

Here's how it looks for this sale:

SAVE UP TO 43% AT THE HYATT REGENCY MAUI RESORT AND SPA

The screenshot below shows prices for the Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa. The World of Hyatt member nightly rate for a King room is \$954 per night, or \$672 when you buy the 35,000 points needed.




1 King Bed

Experience this newly renovated 451-square-foot room featuring a plush king bed and...
[View Room Details](#)

Sunshine On Sale **\$954**
Includes Fees Before Taxes *Avg/Night*
[+3 more rates](#)

SELECT & BOOK



1 King Bed

Experience this newly renovated 451-square-foot room featuring a plush king bed and...
[View Room Details](#)

Standard Room Free **From 35,000**
Night
[+1 more rates](#)
Points/Night

SELECT & BOOK

Two bits of bad news:

- The upgrade math doesn't play across all Hyatt hotels.
- The deal primarily works with rates on the high side. In other words, if there is a super-saver deal, the math might not work out. That said, if you're looking at a high-end hotel that's pricey or would if you get it for half off, this is worth checking out.

The good news: FCF upgrade truffle hounds recently found 16 hotels that can work — really well — depending on your dates.

Have a look.

EXAMPLES OF SAVINGS BETWEEN 40% AND 86%

Hotel	Link to Sample Deal (Rates Subject to Change)	Room Type	Published Rate for 4 Nights, Including Taxes	Points Required for 4 Nights	Cost to Buy Points When on Sale	Savings	
Thompson Palm Springs	Sample	Regular Room King or Queen	\$9,053	68,000	\$1,306	\$7,747	86%
Park Hyatt Kyoto	Sample		\$10,831	160,000	\$3,072	\$7,759	72%
Park Hyatt New York	Sample		\$11,259	180,000	\$3,456	\$7,803	69%
Andaz 5th Avenue	Sample		\$6,355	140,000	\$2,688	\$3,667	58%
Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort	Sample		\$2,650	60,000	\$1,152	\$1,498	57%
Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme	Sample	Suite	\$5,856	140,000	\$2,688	\$3,168	54%
Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa	Sample		\$9,930	240,000	\$4,608	\$5,322	
Grand Hyatt Tokyo	Sample	Regular Room King or Queen	\$5,571	140,000	\$2,688	\$2,883	52%
Park Hyatt Maldives Hadahaa	Sample	Villa	\$5,405		\$2,688	\$2,717	50%
Alila Ventana Big Sur - Adults Only	Sample	Suite	\$13,108	360,000	\$6,912	\$6,196	47%
Alila Napa Valley	Sample	Regular Room King or Queen	\$6,604	180,000	\$3,456	\$3,148	48%
Grand Hyatt Baha Mar	Sample		\$3,997	116,000	\$2,227	\$1,770	44%

Hotel	Link to Sample Deal (Rates Subject to Change)	Room Type	Published Rate for 4 Nights, Including Taxes	Points Required for 4 Nights	Cost to Buy Points When on Sale	Savings	
Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa	Sample		\$4,720	140,000	\$2,688	\$2,032	43%
Park Hyatt St. Kitts Christophe Harbour	Sample		\$3,381	100,000	\$1,920	\$1,461	
Hyatt House Tokyo Shibuya	Sample		\$1,978	60,000	\$1,152	\$826	42%
Andaz Maui at Wailea Resort	Sample		\$5,784	180,000	\$3,456	\$2,328	40%



Cool Winter 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 Redeems

ASIA

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

EUROPE



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

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > 4 Seat Opportunities > from Washington to Frankfurt](#)

[Miles > Europe > All Year > Scads of Singapore Business Class Opportunities from New York to Frankfurt / 4+ Seats](#)

[*First Class* With Cash OR Miles > Lufthansa > East Coast and Many Other Cities to Munich & Beyond > 2+ Travelers](#)

[*First Class* With Cash OR Miles > Lufthansa > Houston to Frankfurt & Beyond > 2+ Travelers](#)

[American Airlines > Business Class With Miles > from Miami to Barcelona> 4 Seats](#)

[Miles / Points > First Class > Single Seat > Emirates > East Coast to Athens](#)

MIDDLE EAST

[Cash OR Miles > 2025 Travel > Middle East > Qatar Airways Business Class From the East Coast / 2+ Seats](#)

NORTH AMERICA

[Miles > Domestic > New American Airlines Business Class New York to/from San Francisco Options / 4+ Seats](#)

Special Published Fares

AFRICA

[Money > Nairobi > All Year > Biz Class > from Canada from \\$2,499 to \\$3,806 USD R/T](#)

[Money > Kilimanjaro > Fall/Winter > Biz Class > from Atlanta and New York from \\$3,499 to \\$3,785 R/T](#)

[Money > Nairobi > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,284 to \\$4,002 R/T](#)

ASIA

[Money > Southeast Asia > All Year > Biz Class > from Canada from \\$3,230 to \\$3,422 USD R/T](#)

[Money > Seoul > All Year > Biz Class > from Canada from \\$3,355 to \\$4,140 USD R/T](#)

[Money > Bangkok > Fall > Biz Class > from Seattle and San Francisco from \\$3,501 to \\$3,875 R/T](#)

[Money > Asia > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,232 to \\$4,197 R/T](#)



CARIBBEAN

[Money > Bermuda > Winter > Biz Class > from New York and Boston from \\$604 to \\$640 R/T](#)

[Money > Barbados > All Year > Biz Class > \\$954 to \\$1,190 R/T](#)

[Money > St. Thomas > All Year > Biz Class > \\$709 to \\$1,078 R/T](#)

[Money > St. Lucia > All Year > Biz Class > \\$867 to \\$1,182 R/T](#)

[Money > Aruba > All Year > Biz Class > \\$733 to \\$1,162 R/T](#)

[Money > Grand Cayman > All Year > Biz Class > \\$833 to \\$1,108 R/T](#)

EUROPE

[Money > Amsterdam > Winter/Spring > Biz Class > \\$2,147 to \\$3,043 R/T](#)

[Money > Amsterdam > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,055 to \\$5,586 R/T](#)

[Money > Brussels > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,112 to \\$5,553 R/T](#)

[Money > Portugal > Winter/Spring > Biz Class > from Canada from \\$2,525 to \\$2,909 USD R/T](#)

[Money > Switzerland > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,046 to \\$5,547 R/T](#)

[Money > Krakow > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,628 to \\$3,146 R/T](#)

[Money > Stockholm > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,116 to \\$5,557 R/T](#)

[Money > Vienna > Spring > First Class > \\$4,118 to \\$5,559 R/T](#)

[Money > Prague > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,099 to \\$5,540 R/T](#)

[Money > Croatia > Summer > First Class > \\$4,303 to \\$5,108 R/T](#)

[Money > Dublin > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,538 to \\$3,209 R/T](#)

[Money > Budapest > Spring/Summer > First Class > \\$4,058 to \\$5,519 R/T](#)

[Money > Greece > Summer > First Class > \\$4,102 to \\$5,515 R/T](#)

[Money > Budapest > Spring/Summer > Biz Class > \\$2,754 to \\$3,066 R/T](#)

[Money > Milan > Fall > Biz Class > \\$2,696 to \\$3,012 R/T](#)

[Money > Lisbon > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,112 to \\$5,524 R/T](#)

[Money > Prague > Spring/Summer > Biz Class > \\$2,614 to \\$3,012 R/T](#)

[Money > Warsaw > Winter/Spring > First Class > \\$4,091 to \\$5,504 R/T](#)

[Money > Copenhagen > Fall/Winter > Biz Class > \\$2,742 to \\$3,212 R/T](#)

HAWAII

[Money > Honolulu > All Year > Biz Class > \\$855 to \\$1,490 R/T](#)

[Money > Kauai > Fall > Biz Class > \\$900 to \\$1,530 R/T](#)

[Money > Kona > Summer > Biz Class > \\$1,080 to \\$1,369 R/T](#)



INDIA

[Money > New Delhi > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,788 to \\$3,762 R/T](#)

[Money > Bengaluru > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,859 to \\$3,840 R/T](#)

[Money > Chennai > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,313 to \\$3,826 R/T](#)

[Money > Mumbai > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,848 to \\$3,800 R/T](#)

MEXICO

[Money > Cabo San Lucas > Winter > Biz Class > \\$673 to \\$904 R/T](#)

[Money > Cozumel > All Year > Biz Class > \\$697 to \\$922 R/T](#)

[Money > Puerto Vallarta > All Year > Biz Class > \\$614 to \\$900 R/T](#)

MIDDLE EAST

[Money > Dubai > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,748 to \\$3,248 R/T](#)

NORTH AMERICA

[Money > Domestic Transcon > Winter/Spring > Biz Class > \\$738 to \\$1,207 R/T](#)

SOUTH AMERICA

[Money > Lima > All Year > Biz Class > \\$1,268 to \\$1,553 R/T](#)

[Money > Santiago > All Year > Biz Class > \\$1,912 to \\$3,598 R/T](#)

[Money > Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,511 to \\$3,203 R/T](#)

[Money > Sao Paulo and Rio De Janeiro > Winter > Biz Class > from Canada from \\$2,349 to \\$3,030 USD R/T](#)

[Money > Buenos Aires > All Year > Biz Class > from Miami and New York from \\$2,728 to \\$3,079 R/T](#)

[Money > Santiago > All Year > Biz Class > from Toronto and Montreal from \\$2,427 to \\$2,431 USD R/T](#)

A close-up photograph of a man's face, looking directly at the camera. On top of his head, there is a realistic human brain. The brain is enclosed within a small, dark metal cage with vertical bars. A red stop sign is attached to the cage. The background is a solid, muted teal color.

The Upgrade Mindset & Contentment: How Considering the Three Cs Can Deliver

November 2024

Just be realistic about the trade-offs in cost, comfort, and convenience

In travel, if you're flexible, you can make amazing things happen. It's possible to get great prices on great seats just by flying on the dates and routes where airlines have

It's that simple.

But life gets in the way of being flexible. Sometimes you can't move the date (it's Claudio's graduation) or a kajillion other reasons.

This brings me to a guiding Upgrade Mindset philosophy: **When you can't be flexible, two out of three ain't bad.** Sing it, big fella...

And all I can do is keep on telling you

I want you (I want you)

I need you (I need you)

There ain't no way I'm ever gonna love you

Now don't be sad (don't be sad 'cause)

Cause two out of three ain't bad

Meatloaf. Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad. 1977

FCF's 3Cs.

Here at FCF we see travel as a trilogy of Cs:

Cost: in dollars or miles or points

Comfort: class of service / seat quality

Convenience: dates, times, number of stops, routing, airport quality, layover time, etc.

The guiding principle is that when you're not flexible, be content when you get two out of the three Cs.

This may not be a new concept to you. You may have heard of the **Good / Fast / Cheap rule**, often referred to in various types of projects, products, and services, and how **you can only ever have two**. It can be cheap and good, but it's not going to happen fast. Or it can be good and fast, but it's going to cost you a bundle. Or you can do it fast on a low budget, but it won't be very good.

Travel is similar. You *can* achieve the three Cs, which we call the trifecta — and that should get the champagne corks popping. Unfortunately, that doesn't happen all the time. So, in those cases, be content with two.

2 OUT OF 3 CS: SOME EXAMPLES

Example #1: Iberia Airlines Business Class flight New York to Bordeaux via Madrid.

The cost is low (88,000 miles/points R/T). Tick. The seats are decent, so comfort is okay. The convenience level is low on this one, however, because the availability of award seats in this example dictated you return a

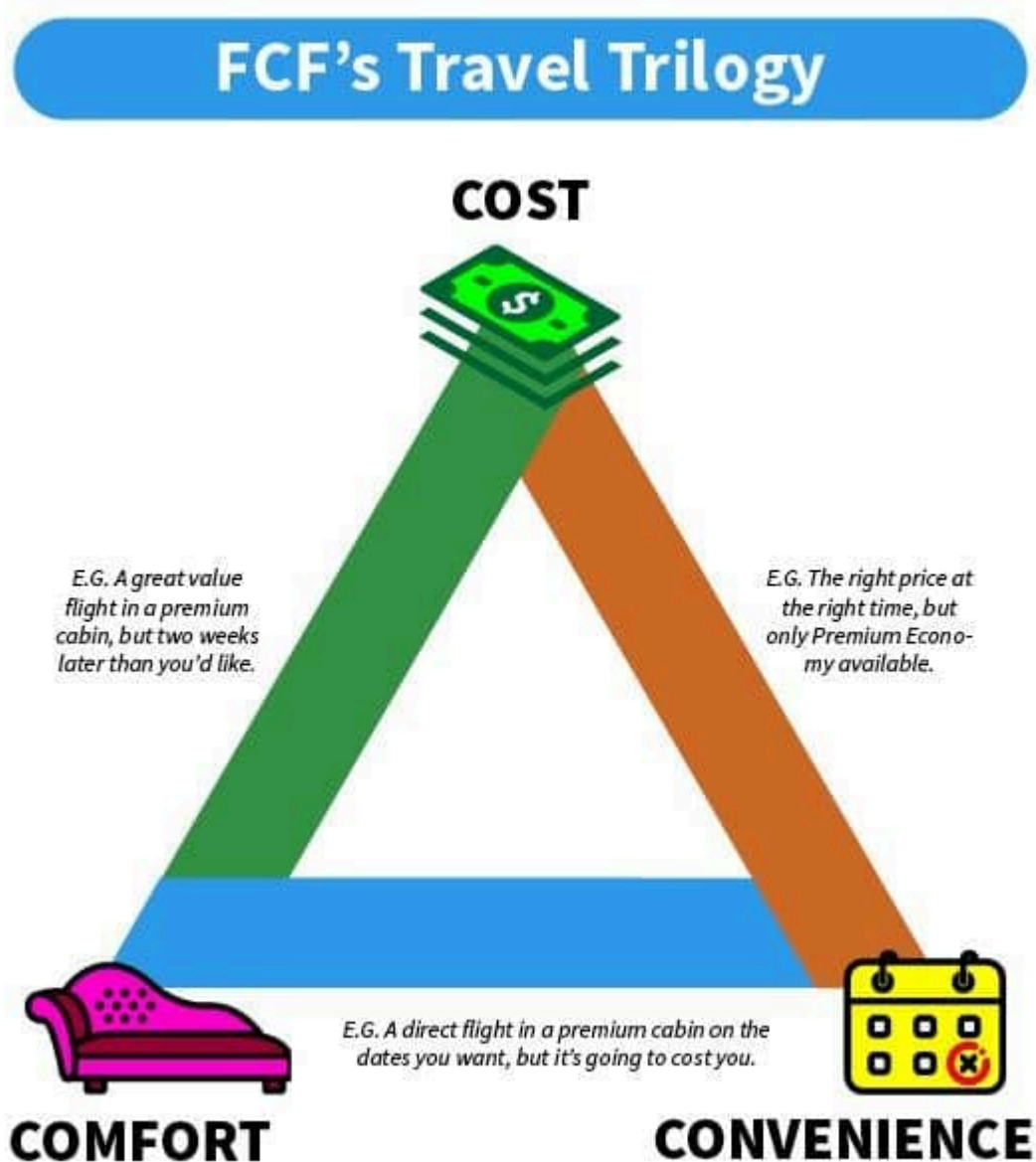
day later than was ideal. That's two out of three.

Example #2: United Airlines Chicago to Frankfurt.

You're on a Business Class flight, so tick the comfort box. It's a nonstop and on the date you want (Claudio's graduation!), so tick the convenience box. BUT, it's pricey, for both miles and dollars. But hey, two out of three ain't bad.

Example #3: Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy flight Atlanta to London.

It's nonstop so that's a plus. That's a tick for convenience. You can get a price that's nice, too. Tick the cost box. BUT, as for comfort, Virgin Atlantic's Premium Economy seat width is ok, similar to Delta's Business Class but not a very good recline if you want to get some sleep. Score two out of three.



WHO SHOULD HEED THIS 2 OUT OF 3 THINKING?

Okay, you perfectionists, I get where you're coming from. You're going to be disappointed most of the time if you're always going for perfection. Two out of three gives you an out. Try to do as well as you can within those parameters. If you're very flexible, then maybe think about three out of three.

: As comedian Steven Wright says, you can't have everything; where would you put it?! You're not a perfectionist as such, but you may go for one of the three Cs. Maybe you're *always* looking at the cost. But that can come at a price — foregoing comfort and convenience even if you have to pay a little more this time around.

HOW TO BE HAPPY WHILE AMBITIOUS

At FCF, we like to **think of travel as an investment, not a cost**. This subtle mindset shift can make a world of difference. If you view travel as a cost, you're looking at it too transactionally, as opposed to transformationally.

No one who can't afford a Mercedes is bent all out of shape when they have to buy a Buick. But in travel, people often fantasize about scoring a perfect deal, so when they don't, they get upset. It's weird what airline tickets do to people. Over fantasizing in travel is a recipe for discontentment.

So consider FCF's three Cs for premium travel. Think realistically about your options and be content to pull the trigger on imperfect options without beating yourself up about it.

Then, after you've locked-in *something*, you can [upgrade your Cs as you go](#). More on that one next month, too.