



# Is the Value of a Mile the Same on Overnight Flights as on Daytime Flights?

February 2022

**You'll flip: Why outbound and return flights are not two sides of the same coin and how you 'might' save miles when booking them separately on American, Delta, and United.**

Most travelers don't have as many miles as they'd like. But when they go to book an award flight, they'll typically select "Business Class" or "First Class" and "round-trip." And what does that get them? Either prices that they can't afford or prices that are higher than they'd want to pay (even if they have the miles).

Few airlines, however, allow you to select one class of service for the departure flight and a different class of service for the return flight in order to get a lower overall price.

Very few people think of searching and booking one way to save miles. But that's what I usually do for a [myriad of reasons](#), and you should consider doing it too — with a few exceptions which we will discuss below.

Plus, most people forget that the outbound overnight flight to Europe is much more important than the return day flight, and should be budgeted for accordingly. Given these dynamics, the likelihood of booking the best possible trip is barely 1% if you don't plan strategically.

## MIXED-CABIN MILES THINK

We recently did a series of special reports on this topic, when using normal published fares, [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) to prompt you to think creatively about mixing up your seats. You have more choice than you think. You can mix up your cabins, your carriers, and [your connections](#) to maximize the value of your investment. Default thinking has most people accepting exactly what the airline dishes up. But you *can* have much more control over your destiny.

### MY FLIGHT FORMULA: A TO B ≠ B TO A OR CABIN MIXING, THE LUNCH VERSUS DINNER PERSPECTIVE

Most people budget more for dinner than they do for lunch. For example, you might allocate \$10 or \$20 for lunch and \$30 or much more for dinner. Yet they're both meals, right? Similarly, are you thinking about your round-trip ticket as two separate things that have different levels of importance? Or are you treating them the same and allocating your budget evenly?

Put in airline terms, if I'm flying overnight to Europe, I would pay more for a great (if that can be said) night flight and pay less for the return day flight. That's because the day flight is where I'm on my laptop or reading or listening to an audiobook. But on the overnight flight, sleep — and the quality of it — has a critical impact on my mental performance upon arrival and helps minimize the jet lag issues that aren't as harsh on the return day flight.

## ONE EXAMPLE

If I'm going from New York to Athens (or any place in the area that requires a connection) I'd fly First Class on Emirates outbound and shift my dates around to get that flight because I hate night flights and try to avoid Business Class if I can. But I wouldn't change my date (necessarily) to get a round-trip flight in First Class when I don't absolutely need it for the return. Instead, I *might* fly Business Class on the return if I was short on miles or points or if the schedule was much better. Many would be content with Premium Economy based on savings that we examined [last month](#).



Equalize your trip comfort using miles

Let's take a look at the good, the not great, and the ugly of how the big three U.S. carriers enable the mixed-cabin booking strategy with miles.

## GOOD: UNITED MIXED-CABIN AWARDS

The screenshots below show the cost of flying out and back in Business Class (188,100 miles) versus flying out in Business Class and back in Premium Economy (118,100 miles), plus \$350 in taxes for both options. So you're saving 70,000 miles on a flight you may not need to pay so much more for. The difference really adds up if you're a family of four and saving 280,000 miles. Take a look:

*United Business Class Round-Trip Example New York-London 188,000 Miles*

## Trip summary

[View checked baggage charges](#)

Mon, Mar 21, 2022

Mon, Mar 21 10:00 pm	→	Tue, Mar 22 9:10 am	Nonstop
New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR)		London, GB (LHR)	7h 10m total
New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR) to London, GB (LHR)			United Polaris business (JN)
10:00 pm - 9:10 am (7h 10m)			
UA 16   Boeing 767-300			
Wi-Fi			
Depart EWR: Mon, Mar 21		Over Night Red-eye flight	
Arrive LHR: Tue, Mar 22			

Tue, Apr 05, 2022

8:00 am	→	11:00 am	Nonstop
London, GB (LHR)		New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR)	8h total
London, GB (LHR) to New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR)			United Polaris business (JN)
8:00 am - 11:00 am (8h)			Breakfast
UA 883   Boeing 767-300			
Wi-Fi			

Roundtrip (1 traveler)

[Edit search](#)

Mon, Mar 21, 2022

[Revise](#)

Tue, Apr 05, 2022

[Revise](#)

Fare

188,100 miles

Taxes and fees

\$350.67

**TOTAL****188,100 miles****+\$350.67**

or

starting from **+\$32/month** [?](#)

## Trip summary

[View checked baggage charges](#)

Mon, Mar 21, 2022

Mon, Mar 21 10:00 pm	→	Tue, Mar 22 9:10 am	Nonstop
New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR)		London, GB (LHR)	7h 10m total
New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR) to London, GB (LHR)			United Polaris business (JN)
10:00 pm - 9:10 am (7h 10m)			
UA 16   Boeing 767-300			
Wi-Fi			
Depart EWR: Mon, Mar 21		Over Night	
Arrive LHR: Tue, Mar 22		Red-eye flight	

Tue, Apr 05, 2022

8:00 am	→	11:00 am	Nonstop
London, GB (LHR)		New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR)	8h total
London, GB (LHR) to New York/Newark, NJ, US (EWR)			United Premium Plus (ON)
8:00 am - 11:00 am (8h)			Breakfast
UA 883   Boeing 767-300			
Wi-Fi			

Roundtrip (1 traveler)

[Edit search](#)

Mon, Mar 21, 2022

[Revise](#)

Tue, Apr 05, 2022

[Revise](#)

Fare

118,100 miles

Taxes and fees

\$350.67

**TOTAL****118,100 miles**

+ \$350.67

or

starting from [+ \\$32/month](#) ②**NOT GREAT: AMERICAN MIXED-CABIN AWARDS**

You can't play the mixed-cabin miles game with American miles to Europe as well because when you book a mixed-cabin trip on the same ticket, American prices it as two one-ways — and the airline inflates one-way pricing! So that yields savings of only about 10% to 20%. I'd never recommend downgrading for that small amount of savings, unless it was for the kids' tickets and they hadn't been doing their homework. [A downgrade is only an upgrade](#) when the savings are big.

**USUALLY UGLY, SOMETIMES OKAY: DELTA MIXED-CABIN AWARDS**

Delta typically charges 340,000 miles round-trip to Europe, which I don't recommend under any circumstances.

But we found on its New York-London service, **occasionally** you can do a mixed-cabin trip; fly outbound in Business Class and return in Premium Economy for around 169,000 miles, which would be worth considering if you were flying with many people.

That doesn't work on Delta's New York-Frankfurt route, however, since round-trip Business Class is 210,000, Premium Economy is 203,000 round-trip, and mixed-cabin Business Class outbound and Premium Economy return is 230,000. Yes, that's right – mixed-cabin is actually more than round-trip Business Class.

If you don't have the miles or want to save them to get the highest Return on Investment, FCF suggests treating outbounds and returns like you do lunch and dinner.

Differently.

# Like an Overnight Snowfall, New Asian Lockdown Provides Fresh United Mileage Upgrade and Award Availability to Asia – for Travel All Year

February 2022

## **Time for United elites and Chase points travelers to book while the bookings are good.**

Crazy times we live in, huh? Case in point, China. It's locked down again. Flights are being canceled despite the Winter Olympic Games. But here's a scoop: an overnight dump of insider data found that award and upgrade seats have opened up to nearby Japan, in what was previously barren ground for all of Asia for United award and upgrade seats, [as we told you here](#).

This has suddenly become a blizzard of opportunity. Is all of this connected? Likely. FCF commonly finds airline marketers doing whatever they need to when seats aren't getting filled as quickly as they'd like: So they often make seats available for miles redemptions when bookings are off, as they have to the region.

Now, the trick is to not get frozen out of a great chance to go to Asia this year. And by this year, I mean that there's plenty of great space available right now, **which probably won't be for long**, once Asia picks up again.

The world is opening-up right now at break-neck speed, and miles travel will soon disappear like a thief in the night. **So drop everything and book an amazing trip right now.** You can usually cancel it without fees.

## BEFORE AND AFTER THE BLIZZARD: FREE AWARD TICKETS

This United award chart tells the chilling tale of what we showed you only two months ago [here](#). A snapshot reminder from FCF December 2021's report shows routes with United Business Class Award seats at the lowest discounted award cost available on [just 1 out of 25 routes \(or 4%\)!](#)

Compare that to our survey this month (below), which had 6 of 25 United routes with free award seats available for 140,000 miles round-trip, the difference is like night and day.

## UNITED AIRLINES BUSINESS CLASS FREE AWARD AVAILABILITY NOW WITH 6X THE AVAILABILITY

From / To	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
Chicago - Tokyo		Dec.	April, May to Nov.	May, July	April, Aug., Dec.	March, April to June, Sept. to Nov.
Denver - Tokyo	May, Oct.	Dec.	April, May to Sept., Oct., Nov.	May, June, Dec.	June, Nov., Dec.	March, April, May, Sept., Oct., Nov.
Houston - Tokyo	April	May, Dec.	April, May, June to Aug., Sept. to Nov.	Aug., Sept.	May, Dec.	March., April, May, June, Oct., Nov.
Newark - Tokyo			March, April, May to Aug., Sept. to Dec.	July, Aug.		March, April, May, June, Aug. to Dec.
San Francisco - Tokyo			March, April, May to Dec.	May, Aug., Nov., Dec.	June, Oct.	March., April., May, June, Sept., Oct. to Dec.
Washington, DC - Tokyo			April, May to Aug., Sept. to Dec.	Aug.	Aug.	April, May, June, Sept. to Dec.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

## BEFORE AND AFTER THE BLIZZARD: MILEAGE UPGRADES

This month our Asia survey shows 6 of 25 routes with United mileage upgrades available. Check out the current opportunities not to miss, below.

From / To	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
Chicago - Tokyo		Dec.	April, May to Nov.	May, July	April, Aug., Dec.	March, April to June, Sept. to Nov.
Denver - Tokyo	May, Oct.	Dec.	April, May to Sept., Oct., Nov.	May, June, Dec.	June, Nov., Dec.	March, April, May, Sept., Oct., Nov.
Houston - Tokyo	April	May, Dec.	April, May, June to Aug., Sept. to Nov.	Aug., Sept.	May, Dec.	March., April, May, June, Oct., Nov.
Newark - Tokyo			March, April, May to Aug., Sept. to Dec.	July, Aug.		March, April, May, June, Aug. to Dec.
San Francisco - Tokyo			March, April, May to Dec.	May, Aug., Nov., Dec.	June, Oct.	March., April., May, June, Sept., Oct. to Dec.
Washington, DC - Tokyo			April, May to Aug., Sept. to Dec.	Aug.	Aug.	April, May, June, Sept. to Dec.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

If you're a United elite status chaser or Chase points (transferable to United miles) collector or someone (anyone) willing to buy United miles to save big, now's the time to embrace the cold and freeze that upgraded award seat to Asia before it melts away and evaporates.

## MORE MILEAGE UPGRADE INSIGHTS

From previous FCF special reports:

[Troubleshooting Lucrative United Upgrade Opportunities with Connecting Flights](#)

[How Savvy Elite-Status and Schedule-Focused Travelers Fly Business Class on United](#)

[United's Asian Upgrade Escapade](#)

[Ten Reasons Why I'm the Biggest Fan of Mileage Upgrade Awards—and Why You Should Be Too](#)

A stack of US dollar bills, likely one hundred-dollar bills, is shown in a slightly blurred, out-of-focus manner, serving as a background for the title text.

# Like United, American AAdvantage Miles' Inflation Follows the U.S. Dollar

February 2022

**Plus the secret routes with low-cost availability now in First and Business Class that remain on its partners too: Cathay Pacific, Finnair, Iberia, Japan, and Qatar.**

**Business Class** award flights on: In December we did a deep dive on when award costs skyrocketed. But we also found stacks of low-cost opportunities on its partner airlines.

After that: KAPOW, United partner costs have started to inch up.

And now it's American Airlines. Its own award pricing is following suit, straight up and into the clouds like a Harrier jet.

**But the partners?** Ah, that's where the golden opportunity lies, for the moment. Those award prices have stayed put, and while availability isn't as strong as with United's partners, there are **pockets of fresh opportunity for First and Business Class** travelers looking for extremely good value.

That said, I wouldn't wait too long. Because just as American followed United's lead in raising award costs on its own flights, costs for its partners will surely rise too. It's just a matter of time—and its dynamic pricing technology maturing.

After diving into 22 First Class and 86 Business Class routes on American and five partner airlines, here's the good American AAdvantage miles award availability we found:

**First Class** award flights on:

- American to Europe and India
- Japan to Asia

**Business Class** award flights on: In December we did a deep dive on

- American to Asia, India, and South America
- Cathay Pacific to Asia
- Finnair to Europe
- Iberia to Europe
- Japan to Asia
- Qatar to the Middle East

## AMERICAN FIRST CLASS TO EUROPE

Previously, the lowest pricing hovered around 170,000 miles round-trip to Europe in First Class. Now those seats are drying up and we're seeing pricing typically in the range of 266,000 to 620,000.

For Dallas and New York to London, **some** dates can still be intermittently found in the 170,000 to 194,000 range. Here's your FCF cheat sheet to when and where the discount awards are on international flight

segments:

American To/From London And	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
<a href="#">Dallas</a>	March, April, May	March	April	May, June	March, May	March, April
<a href="#">New York</a>	March, May, Nov., Dec.	March, April, May, June, Sept.	March, April, May, July, Aug.		March, July	March, April to June, July, Aug., Nov., Dec.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

## AMERICAN FIRST CLASS TO INDIA

Generally, most dates on this newly introduced route run up to 400,000 miles. The lowest free award seat rates that we occasionally found in First Class range from 156,000 to 208,000 miles. As this is a relatively new route, I wouldn't say inflation is occurring, but here are where the cheap seats are:

American To Delhi From	Round-trip First Class Mileage	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
<a href="#">New York</a>	156,000-208,000	March	April, Aug.	April, Sept.		Sept.	

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats.

## AMERICAN FIRST CLASS TO SOUTH AMERICA

We found **zero** low-cost award rates to South America in **First Class**. Previous rates were 170,000 round-trip. Currently, routes such as Miami (and many connecting cities from around the U.S.) to Buenos Aires start at 286,000 to 380,000 round-trip, which FCF doesn't recommend. Save your miles for a high-fare trip. Also, recall that Business Class fares to South America are often relatively low, and very low when there are flash deals. Those deals happen with good frequency too, as you can see in the examples [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). First Class is often available for as low as \$2,566, which you can see in the examples [here](#) and [here](#).

## AMERICAN BUSINESS CLASS TO ASIA

Previously, the lowest pricing was typically around 120,000 miles round-trip to Asia in Business Class. Now those seats are drying up and we're seeing pricing usually at 224,000 to 476,000.

For Dallas-Seoul and Los Angeles-Tokyo routes, **some** dates are still available in the 120,000 to 138,000 range, round-trip. Here's your FCF cheat sheet to when and where the discount awards are on international flight segments:

American From / To	Round-trip Business Class Mileage	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
<a href="#">Dallas - Seoul</a>	120,000		Nov.	Nov.	Nov.		
<a href="#">Los Angeles - Tokyo</a>	131,000-138,000	April, May, July, Aug.	July		May	April	

\*Months in **black** at least one seat available; in **blue** at least two seats; in **green** at least four seats.

## AMERICAN BUSINESS CLASS TO EUROPE INFLATION

Overall, we noticed on some routes booking award flights to Europe within 45 days of travel is when you'll typically find the cheapest awards. So, book your flight as a placeholder, then [cancel and change the closer you get to your travel date](#) if your ideal flights become available at a lower price. Canceling or changing is free of charge, more on that [here](#).

Other inflation insights we found to Europe in Business Class...

**Good:** A couple of routes are only slightly inflated. The lowest pricing to Europe used to be 115,000 round-trip but is now 120,000 depending on the month, on

- New York-London: Now 120,000-130,000 round-trip with the exception of Mondays through Wednesdays in August and the entire month of October, which ranges from a bad 270,000 to 360,000 round-trip
- Dallas-Frankfurt: Now 120,000-136,000 round-trip with the exception of June to August, October, and November, which ranges from a not good 163,000 to 360,000
- Chicago-London: 120,000-136,000 round-trip with the exception of June, September, and October, which ranges from a bad 270,000 to 448,000

- Philadelphia-London: 120,000-130,000 round-trip in March and April, however from May to November most days range from bad 178,000 to 500,000

**Ugly:** American is merciless on other routes, with the lowest pricing suffering 30% to 85%+ inflation. For example, expect to see typical pricing over 250,000 round-trip on

- Miami-London: 190,000 to 360,000+ round-trip all months except for July, which offers travel on Mondays for 120,00 round-trip.
- Dallas-Paris: 220,000 to 600,000+ round-trip all months. May, June, and July are the highest cost months.
- Philadelphia-Rome: 220,000 to an eye-popping (and even more than Delta!) 800,000 miles round-trip all months. Talk about Venezuelan bolívar!

*If you can bear to look at these one-way rates...*

Calendar						
PHL to FCO		FCO to PHL				
Nonstop only			Business / First		180K Lowest price this month	
<b>June 2022</b>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 400K	2 400K	3 400K	4 400K
5 400K	6 400K	7 180K	8 400K	9 400K	10 400K	11 400K
12 353.5K	13 400K	14 300K	15 400K	16 390K	17 400K	18 353.5K
19 400K	20 400K	21 300K	22 400K	23 400K	24 400K	25 381.5K
26 335.5K	27 278.5K	28 300K	29 300K	30 300K		

*Might want to close your eyes for this one too...*

## Your trip summary

Flagship® Business

Round trip (per person)

**800,000 miles**  
+ \$68.37

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PHL to FCO → 400,000 miles  
FCO to PHL ← 400,000 miles

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**Total (all passengers)**  
800,000 miles + \$68.37

Includes taxes and carrier-imposed fees  
[Price and tax information](#)

**Room to work or relax**

- Larger, more comfortable seat
- 2 free checked bags\*
- Priority security at participating airports
- Priority boarding
- Same-day flight change & standby when available on American flights

\*AAdvantage Executive Platinum members get 1 extra checked bag.

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[Bag and optional fees](#)

**DEPART**

Philadelphia, PA to Rome, Italy

Friday, June 10, 2022

6:30 PM → 9:10 AM 8h 40m Nonstop Flagship® Business

AA718 788-Boeing 787

**⚠ Overnight flight or connection**

[Details](#) | [Change](#)

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**RETURN**

Rome, Italy to Philadelphia, PA

Friday, June 17, 2022

11:05 AM → 3:20 PM 10h 15m Nonstop Flagship® Business

AA719 788-Boeing 787

[Details](#) | [Change](#)

## AMERICAN BUSINESS CLASS TO INDIA

Generally, most dates can be found on this newly introduced New York/JFK-Delhi route for 250,00 to 360,000 miles round-trip. That said, while currently there is no availability over the course of the last month preparing this report, we've seen availability **occasionally** for 122,000 miles for March and April travel, but not enough to really speak of.

## AMERICAN BUSINESS CLASS TO THE MIDDLE EAST

For Dallas, Miami, and New York to Tel Aviv, most dates can be found on these newly introduced routes at 236,000 to 360,000 miles round-trip. The lowest free award seat rates that we found in Business Class are **occasionally** available from 136,000 to 140,000 round-trip.

## AMERICAN BUSINESS CLASS TO SOUTH AMERICA: A MIXED BAG OF INFLATION & DEFLATION

Previous free award seat rates were 115,000, round-trip. The lowest current rates to South America in Business Class are

- Reduced on the Dallas-Santiago route to 90,000
- Reduced on the New York-Santiago route to 100,000

- Reduced on the New York-Sao Paulo route to 104,000
- Increased on routes such as Dallas-Buenos Aires with award seats ranging from 172,000 to 666,000, round-trip.
- Increased on other routes such as Dallas- and Miami-Sao Paulo, and Miami-Santiago with award seats now ranging from 220,000 to 300,000, round-trip.

Where the cheap seats are:

American Business Class From / To	Round-trip Business Class Mileage	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
<a href="#">Dallas - Santiago</a>	90,000	June, Aug. to Oct., Dec.	May	May	June., Nov.	May, Sept., Oct.	Oct.
<a href="#">New York - Santiago</a>	100,000-120,000	July to Sept., Oct.	April., May, June, July, Aug., Sept.	May, June	March, Sept., Nov., Dec.	April., June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct.	May, Aug.
<a href="#">New York - Sao Paulo</a>	100,000-104,000	March					March

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

## What About American's Partner Availability?

### JAPAN AIRLINES FIRST CLASS TO ASIA

**UNCHANGED:** When you can find them, Japan Airlines' lowest First Class awards are still 160,000 miles round-trip. That's an incredible deal given these seats normally go for \$18,200 to \$22,000. Here's [how to save \\$16,373, or 81%, by buying miles](#), and here's where to find cheap award availability:

Japan Airlines To Tokyo From	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
<a href="#">Chicago</a>	March, April			April	March	

\*Months in black at least one seat available.

## CATHAY PACIFIC BUSINESS CLASS

**UNCHANGED:** When you can find them, the lowest Cathay Pacific Business Class awards are still 120,000 from the West Coast and 140,000 from the East Coast round-trip. A good deal because the fares can easily cost \$5,869 to \$9,667. Here's where to find cheap award availability:

Cathay Pacific To Hong Kong From	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
<a href="#">Chicago</a>	Sept., Oct.	July, Aug.		July, Aug.		
<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	July, Aug., Oct.			July, Aug., Sept., Oct.	July, Sept.	
<a href="#">New York</a>	July, Aug., Oct.	Aug.	Sept.		Sept.	Oct.
<a href="#">San Francisco</a>	Sept.	Aug.		Aug.		

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats. American offers less award space than Cathay Pacific.

## JAPAN AIRLINES BUSINESS CLASS TO ASIA

**UNCHANGED:** When you can find them, Japan Airlines Business Class lowest award rates are still 120,000 round-trip. A good deal because the fares can easily cost \$4,840 to \$10,256 when not on sale. Here's where to find cheap award availability:

Japan Airlines To Tokyo From	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
<a href="#">Boston</a>	April, July, Aug., Sept., Dec.	July, Aug., Oct. to Dec.	Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.	March, June, Oct., Nov., Dec.	July, Oct.	Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.
<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	March, April, June, Aug., Nov., Dec.	April, July, Dec.	July to Nov.	April, July, Aug., Nov.	April	March, June, Aug. to Nov., Dec.
<a href="#">New York</a>	March to May, Aug., Sept. to Dec.	July, Sept., Oct.	Aug. to Oct., Nov., Dec.	April, May, July, Aug., Sept.	March, Oct. to Dec.	Sept., Oct. to Dec.
<a href="#">San Francisco</a>	July, Sept. to Nov.	July, Aug., Dec.	Aug. to Dec.	Oct.	Aug., Nov., Dec.	Aug., Sept., Oct. to Dec.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

## FINNAIR BUSINESS CLASS TO EUROPE

**UNCHANGED:** When you can find them, Finnair's lowest Business Class award rates are still 115,000 round-trip, and available on four routes to Europe. Here's where to find the cheap award availability:

Finnair To Helsinki From	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
<a href="#">Chicago</a>			March to Nov.			March to Nov.
<a href="#">Dallas</a>	July, Aug., <a href="#">Sept.</a> , <a href="#">Oct.</a> to <a href="#">Dec.</a>	Oct., Dec.	Nov.	Aug., <a href="#">Sept.</a> , <a href="#">Oct.</a> , Dec.	Sept., Oct., <a href="#">Nov.</a> , Dec.	Nov.
<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	July, Aug., Dec.	Oct., Nov.		Aug., Oct., Dec.	Nov.	
<a href="#">New York</a>	April, <a href="#">March</a>		March, May to Dec.			<a href="#">March</a> , April to Dec.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

## IBERIA BUSINESS CLASS TO EUROPE

**UNCHANGED:** When you can find them, Iberia's lowest Business Class award rates are still 115,000 round-trip and are available on five routes to Europe. Here's where to find the cheap award availability:

Iberia To Madrid From	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
<a href="#">Boston</a>	Aug., Oct.	July, Oct., <a href="#">Nov.</a> , Dec.		July, Oct., Nov.	Aug., Dec.	Aug., Dec.
<a href="#">Chicago</a>	Nov.	Nov., <a href="#">Dec.</a>		April, June, <a href="#">Aug.</a> , <a href="#">Sept.</a> , Nov.	Aug.	Dec.
<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	Nov., <a href="#">Dec.</a>			Dec.	Dec.	
<a href="#">Miami</a>	July, Sept.	Oct.	July, <a href="#">Aug.</a> , Oct., <a href="#">Nov.</a> , Dec.	March to May, July, Sept., Oct.	Aug.	<a href="#">Aug.</a> , <a href="#">Nov.</a> , Dec.

Iberia To Madrid From	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
<a href="#">New York</a>	April, July, Aug., Sept.		Aug., Oct. to Dec.	April, July, Oct.	Sept., Oct.	Aug., Sept., Nov., Dec.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats.

## QATAR BUSINESS CLASS TO THE MIDDLE EAST

**UNCHANGED:** When you can find them, Qatar's lowest Business Class award rates are still 140,000 round-trip and are available on four routes to the Middle East. A good deal because the fares can easily cost \$6,577 to \$9,607. Here's where to find the cheap award availability:

Qatar To Doha From	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
<a href="#">Boston</a>	March, April, Aug., Nov.	April., Aug., Oct., Nov.	Sept., Oct.	Sept., Nov.	Oct.	Oct.
<a href="#">Chicago</a>	Aug. to Nov.	April., Sept., Oct.		Sept., Nov.	Oct.	
<a href="#">Houston</a>	April, May, Aug., Nov., Jan.	April	Sept., Oct.			
<a href="#">Philadelphia</a>	April, Aug., Nov.	Sept., Oct.	Sept.	Sept., Nov.	Oct.	Oct.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

## DON'T SEE YOUR PREFERRED ORIGIN OR DESTINATION? KNOW HOW TO ADD CONNECTING FLIGHTS FOR FREE

[Free or low-cost connecting flights](#) in the U.S. to major hubs are often available, or, at worst, you can use that transatlantic flight as a "bridge route." When using the discount-rate long-haul flight as a bridge, the connecting flight from the U.S. and/or international hub can be booked in either Business Class or economy, based on availability, often for free. If only economy is available on the short connecting flights, don't let it "harsh your mellow," since the important part is getting the long-haul flight in the class you want.

## CHANGE YOUR TUNE?

[American](#) is currently offering a “travel fee waiver” that includes award flights. That means it won’t cost anything to cancel or change your ticket. More [here](#).

## SOME RELATED DON'TS AND DOS

**DON'T** book “backwards.” Instead of choosing your dates first, choose the miles ticket opportunity and plan your trip around that. There are some great opportunities to explore on our [alert pages](#). Start there and you’re a long way towards winning the game.

**DON'T** fall for prey to traps. See [10 Common Mistakes Most Travelers Make](#)

**DO** check out our latest American Sweet Redemptions surveys [here](#), when space is available.

**DO** be ready to act fast with the help of [FCF's fare alerts](#). Know when to pay with cash or miles. Find more on that [here](#).

So don’t let inflation get you down. Take advantage of American’s favorable partner opportunities for the win and I’ll see you up front.



# Part II-The Golden Key to Unlocking Lucrative Miles & Points: How to Use FCF's Sweet Redemptions to Save Up to 92% on First Class Flights (When You Don't Have Any or Enough Miles or Points)

February 2022

**Fasten your seatbelts: You're about to learn the fastest and easiest way to book tickets up to 92% off – every time.**

Last month we gave you an [overview of our precious Sweet Redemptions](#), the amazing way to unlock the protein from your miles and points.

This month we're going a little deeper to cover special features that make these deals work for you, such as:

- How anyone — with or without any miles or points — can save up to 92% on First Class flights
- How anyone — with or without any miles or points — can save up to 66% on Business Class flights
- How to know the best airlines to transfer your points to for opportunities most don't know about

My favorite ticketing strategy and the one I personally use more than any other...

### **FCF'S SWEET REDEEMS INTEGRATES MILEAGE PURCHASE OPTIONS (AND SALES TO SAVE EVEN MORE)**

The **No Miles, No Problem** section of FCF's Sweet Redeems (see screengrab below) gives you the lowdown on which airlines are offering access to these deals by purchase miles, which *anyone* can do, or [buying points, which Amex Membership Rewards members can do](#).

**Mileage sales and bonus deals** are also integrated into FCF's Sweet Redeems' summary section along with the related costs, the expiration date of the promo, and a link to where you can purchase enough miles. [Here's more about buying miles](#), one of my all-time favorite strategies. See how much you can save by purchasing the number of miles or points needed for the award compared to the everyday published fare, so you can easily see if it makes sense to [buy a normal published fare or buy the miles for an award ticket](#).

### **AMEX EXAMPLE: A) BUY POINTS (IF YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH)**

- B) TRANSFER AMEX POINTS TO VIRGIN ATLANTIC MILES**
- C) REDEEM VIRGIN MILES FOR ALL NIPPON FIRST CLASS**

# FIRST CLASS FLYER

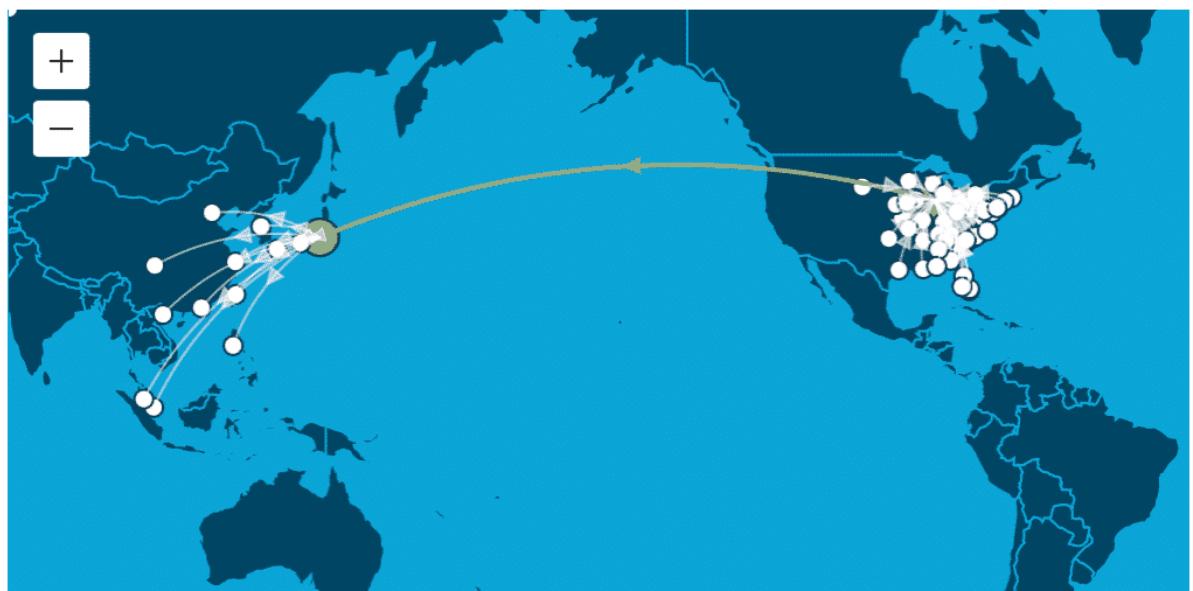
Anyone Can Upgrade

## Example Deal Routes

Depending on the program, you may qualify for free connecting flights to and from your deal route airports. [Learn more.](#)

From Chicago

To Tokyo



## Access Deal With Miles

Every program charges a different price. Pick your preferred payment option and book the flash deal before it vanishes.

Normal Everyday Price: 400,000 on United

150,000 All Nippon  
Airways Miles  
(Operating Airline)

[How to Book](#)

[Summary](#)

**62% OFF**

120,000 Virgin  
Atlantic Miles

**70% OFF**



LESS AVAILABILITY

HOW TO BOOK

Summary

70% OFF



120,000 Amex Rewards Points

TRANSFER TO VIRGIN ATLANTIC

Summary

70% OFF

**NOW FOR THE FCF HAT TRICK TO: BOOK ALL NIPPON FIRST CLASS WITH VIRGIN MILES ACQUIRED VIA BUYING AMEX POINTS...**

## Access Deal With Cash

One of FCF's many strategy inventions: Buy miles or points to use for the flash availability deal. [Learn More](#).

### No Miles? No Problem:



Easily Buy Points from Amex Rewards Points

Summary

85% OFF  
SAVE \$18,173

Given the baseline fare is \$21,273, and you can buy 120,000 Amex Rewards Points for about \$3,000, and taxes with Virgin Atlantic loyalty program generally costs \$100 dollars, you can use cash to buy points if you don't have enough or any points, and save up to \$18,173 or 85% on your next trip from Chicago to Tokyo.

More details about the "Buying Miles Strategy" [here](#).

Or you may want to buy miles from [United when it runs a sale on miles](#) to use with All Nippon First Class.

## HOW DO I KNOW WHICH MILES OR POINTS TO BUY?

I'm so glad you asked. The **Access Deal With Cash** section compares the various mileage and points currencies you can purchase to land huge savings. As you can see in the screengrab below, you may have an Amex card, which allows you to [buy up to 500,000 points](#) a year, or you may want to buy miles from United instead, which anyone can do.

### Access Deal With Cash

One of FCF's many strategy inventions: Buy miles or points to use for the flash availability deal. [Learn More](#).

#### No Miles? No Problem:



Easily Buy Points from Amex  
Rewards Points

Summary

**85% OFF**  
SAVE \$18,173



Easily Buy Miles From United

Summary

**82% OFF**  
SAVE \$17,477

Given the baseline fare is \$21,273, and you can buy 173,400 United miles for about \$3,739 when on sale (\$6,524 when not on sale), and taxes with United loyalty program generally costs \$57 dollars, you can use cash to buy miles if you don't have enough, and save up to \$17,477 or 82% on your next trip from Chicago to Tokyo.

More details about the "Buying Miles Strategy" [here](#).

Oh by the way, when's the best time to buy miles? When there are transfer bonuses or the miles are on sale.

## FCF'S SWEET REDEEMS INTEGRATES TRANSFER BONUSES

Why are FCFs Sweet Redeems sometimes unusually low-priced? Because we include details about which airlines and airline transfer partners are offering a mileage transfer bonus promotion, including the expiration date of the promo and a link to the transfer partner so you can purchase and/or transfer those miles.

### BUY AND/OR TRANSFER MILES & POINTS WITH MAJOR AIRLINES & POINTS PROGRAMS

**FCF's Sweet Redeems covers buy and transfer points deals with Amex and:** All Nippon, Air Canada, Air France/KLM, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Delta, Emirates, Etihad, Singapore, Qantas, and Virgin Atlantic.

**Amex offers bonuses periodically when transferring points to:** British Airways, Iberia, Air France/KLM, and Virgin Atlantic.

**FCF covers points transfer deals with Chase to:** Air Canada, Air France/KLM, British Airways, Emirates, Iberia, Singapore, United, and Virgin Atlantic.

**FCF covers transfer points deals with Citi to:** Air France/KLM, American, Cathay Pacific, Emirates, Etihad, Qantas, Qatar, Singapore, Turkish, and Virgin Atlantic.

### EXAMPLES OF THE POTENTIAL SAVINGS

[American Business Class:](#) Save 54% / \$3,568

[Cathay Pacific First Class:](#) Save 92% / \$31,433

[Emirates First Class:](#) Save 48% / \$6,512 [Business Class:](#) Save 30% / \$1,032

[Iberia Business Class:](#) Save 49% / \$2,727

[Japan Airlines First Class:](#) Save 81% / \$16,373 [Business Class:](#) Save 66% / \$5,867

[Qatar Business Class:](#) Save 55% / \$4,346

[United Business Class:](#) Save 63% / \$5,533

[United Business Class Mileage Upgrades:](#) Save up to 70% / \$4,200

## STRATEGY STACKING: SAVE EVEN MORE TIME & MONEY BY COMBINING THESE COOL HACKS

This is a quick travel treasure-trove of links to relevant FCF special reports where you can “stack the strategies,” including:

- One of the best ways to get in the upgrade game, overnight: [How to Get Around Buying Miles Maximum Limits](#)
- Getting [Free Tickets Beyond the Nonstop Bridge](#) flight
- [Connection Widget](#) makes more deals doable
- Beginner’s Guide: [how to play the “buy miles to fly in style” strategy](#).
- Details on transferring miles and points partnerships: For [SkyTeam](#), for [oneworld](#), for [Star Alliance](#), and for [non-alliance airlines](#)
- Six Plays to Consider [when there’s only one mileage seat available](#)
- [Which airlines will lend you the time](#) to either buy or transfer the miles needed
- FCF recommends booking your future travel now and using miles to do it. More on that here: [Pro Tips and Tricks on Booking Mileage Tickets Way in Advance](#) and [How to Strike While the Iron is Hot](#)
- If you do have flexibility, don’t play into the airlines’ hands. Be [an opportunity traveler](#) instead, and let them play right into yours.
- [Why One-Way Awards Can Make or Break a 50% to 90% Off Business or First Class Deal](#)
- [Mining for Miles Availability: 10 Common Mistakes Most Travelers Make](#)
- Emirates First Class awards are still attainable. More on that here: [FCF’s Perspective On Emirates Award Changes and How You Can Still Save Up to \\$9,454 / 58%](#)

PS: Let us know about your success story (there’s a **reward** for that), and how you think our Sweet Redemptions could be even better (a **reward** for that, too).



# The U.S. Transcon: Comparing Miles and Fares for the Best Business Class Value, Nowadays

February 2022

What's the deal with the Transcon nowadays, cost-wise? [Often miles are the way to go](#), and [sometimes fares offer the best value](#). It fluctuates with the times. So what's a savvy flyer to do right now? Let's take a look.

## SHOULD I BOOK WITH CASH OR MILES AT THE MOMENT?

I hate this question because the answer is: *it depends*. And I know how frustrating it is to hear that kind of answer.

First of all, it depends on how flexible you are. That's the big kahuna. And we speak about this a lot here at FCF because the more flexible you are, [the better deal you can get](#).

## WHAT DOES FLEXIBILITY LOOK LIKE?

It looks like an open calendar. Are you free to shift dates around? If your Delta fare is \$1,700 on Monday and \$2,700 on Wednesday, is that a trade you'd be happy to make? Or are you trying to make nephew Bernie's wedding? In that case, you can either persuade Bernie and Crystal to move their wedding to fit your good fare (unlikely) or consider using your miles. Perhaps you have a treasure chest overflowing with them.

Or what if that \$1,700 fare on Delta was \$1,100 on American? How shackled are you to a single airline? You know [I've preached](#) being a [Loyalty-Free Agent](#) for over 20 years when the average guru will try to convince you to give away your freedom (and usually your best opportunities). The more flexible you are, the [more options appear](#). Let's take the temperature of the sky right now and break down the opportunities.

## COMPARING CURRENT PREMIUM TRANSCON FARES

Unless you want to take a red-eye, here's what the cheapest Transcon fares look like.

### AMERICAN HAS THE LOWEST FARES

Business Class travel on American Airlines between JFK and SFO is going for between \$1,098 and \$2,058 round-trip, while travel between JFK and LAX is \$1,078 to \$2,296 through March and a bit more afterwards.

**Good news:** Loyalty to the AAdvantage program isn't hurting you on these routes at the moment.

### DELTA LOYALTY COSTS THE MOST

Travel between JFK and SFO is going for \$1,739 to \$3,198, and travel between JFK and LAX starts at \$1,738. **Bad News:** That makes **Delta 41% more on average than American and United**. That's something SkyMiles devotees might want to know, or not.

### UNITED HAS GOOD FARES THROUGH AUGUST, THEN THEY SPIKE

On United's NYC-SFO route, Business Class fares start at \$1,180 and can be up to \$1,686 round-trip or higher through August. Newark-SFO Business Class fares start at \$1,180 through May then they jump to between \$1,686 and \$2,192, round-trip. On United's Newark/JFK-LAX service, fares start at \$1,180, then jump to between \$1,686 and \$2,192. **Takeaway:** Don't book far in advance on United.

Award Mileage	From / To	Under 25,000	26,000-30,000	31,000-60,000	61,000+
American	Los Angeles - New York	12%	7%	27%	55%
	New York - Los Angeles	15%	10%	36%	40%
	San Francisco - New York		13%	32%	54%
	New York - San Francisco		34%	27%	38%

Award Mileage	From / To	Under 25,000	26,000-30,000	31,000-60,000	61,000+
Delta	Los Angeles - New York			19%	81%
	New York - Los Angeles			33%	67%
	San Francisco - New York			10%	90%
	New York - San Francisco			25%	75%
United	Los Angeles - New York (JFK)			92%	8%
	New York (JFK) - Los Angeles			95%	5%
	San Francisco - New York (JFK)			92%	8%
	New York (JFK) - San Francisco			94%	6%
	Los Angeles - Newark			89%	11%
	Newark - Los Angeles			93%	7%
	San Francisco - Newark			84%	16%
	Newark - San Francisco			81%	19%

## WHAT'S THE MILES OUTLOOK?

We surveyed pricing and availability on American's, Delta's, and United's Transcon routes for the next 11 months, and discovered much that Loyalty-Free Agents and Loyalty Devotees will want to know. The chart below shows where the deals are in terms of mile outlays. American shines brightest again with some real bargains under 50,000 miles round-trip, United lands mostly in the 62,000 to 120,000 miles, round-trip category, and Delta is mostly concentrated in the +120,000-mile, round-trip zone.

Let's go for a deep dive.

## Comparing One-Way Costs and Frequency

Award Mileage	From / To	Under 25,000	26,000-30,000	31,000-60,000	61,000+
American	Los Angeles - New York	12%	7%	27%	55%
	New York - Los Angeles	15%	10%	36%	40%
	San Francisco - New York		13%	32%	54%
	New York - San Francisco		34%	27%	38%
Delta	Los Angeles - New York			19%	81%

Award Mileage	From / To	Under 25,000	26,000-30,000	31,000-60,000	61,000+
United	New York - Los Angeles			33%	67%
	San Francisco - New York			10%	90%
	New York - San Francisco			25%	75%
	Los Angeles - New York (JFK)			92%	8%
	New York (JFK) - Los Angeles			95%	5%
	San Francisco - New York (JFK)			92%	8%
	New York (JFK) - San Francisco			94%	6%
	Los Angeles - Newark			89%	11%
	Newark - Los Angeles			93%	7%
Delta	San Francisco - Newark			84%	16%
	Newark - San Francisco			81%	19%



# Out of Africa (and Coach) with Sub-\$3,000 Business Class Fare Trend, Even Lower Flash Fares, Plus Miles and Points Deal Availability

February 2022

## **Africa awaits with deals popping up as low as \$2,064**

If an African safari isn't on your bucket list, well then you might not be a serious bucket A-lister. It's an experience like no other on our planet – a chance to get up close to some of the world's most majestic animals in an epic wilderness that takes your breath away.

Problem is, a safari can often take your money away too because historically, premium flights to Africa run in the \$5,000 to \$8,000 range. I'd be lion if I said that wasn't a passion killer for people wanting to go to Africa, but unwilling to warthog it in coach.

You don't have to look very far to see what fares can be on **normal and high-fare routes** when sales are NOT happening.

Atlanta - Johannesburg	\$4,465
Austin - Johannesburg	\$3,824
Charlotte - Cape Town	\$4,312
Detroit - Cape Town	\$7,580
Las Vegas - Johannesburg	\$3,852
Minneapolis - Cape Town	\$8,471
Philadelphia - Cape Town	\$4,312
Phoenix - Nairobi	\$3,936
Salt Lake City - Johannesburg	\$7,147
Seattle - Cape Town	\$4,686

So, when we spot sub-\$3,000 fares to the land of safaris, it's a great cause for celebration, and I might add, migration.

Grab the binoculars, we've just spotted some wild fares roaming the plains.



We've found savings you'd stick your neck out for

## WORKING WITH VOLATILE FARES TO AFRICA

[Fare dips](#) are interesting in volatile fare markets. These markets have high fares, then all of the sudden for a day or two or three or five, they get cut in half. The [reasons for flash discounting are endless](#).

It's good to know where these volatile fare markets are, because it's opportunity, opportunity, opportunity, before or after your booking. If you can wait for the fare to dip or if you're antsy and need to confirm right away, it's important to know about booking the rebooking opportunities — [more on that here](#).

We [most recently](#) told you about special fares to Africa on January 19 where we found fares from the low \$2,000's from Los Angeles, New York, Miami, and Washington, DC, to Nairobi. Then those fares crept up 21% to 30% by February 2, while Chicago-Nairobi crept up 10% to 18%. Even with those increases, there are still some bargains to Nairobi for under \$3,000 right now with similar fares to Cape Town and Johannesburg too.

## TANZANIA: THE BIG FIVE AND WILDEBEEST MIGRATION

At the top of most safari bucket lists is Tanzania, which has the largest population density and diversity of animals in Africa. It's also one of the best places to check off the "Big Five," because it has one of the largest populations of each: lion, elephant, cape buffalo, rhino, and leopard.

Tanzania boasts the world-famous **Serengeti National Park**, the **Ngorongoro Crater**, and the snow-crowned **Mt. Kilimanjaro**, Africa's tallest mountain, towering in the background. Pinch yourself as you watch 2.5 million wildebeest and zebra thunder across the expansive plains of the Serengeti during the Great Wildebeest Migration, the largest movement of animals on earth. Hold your breath as you catch a rare, endangered black rhino quietly grazing in Ngorongoro if you're lucky. And add countless bird species to your life list in the Great Rift Valley.

Tanzania is easily reached via Nairobi, Kenya, which is served by many international carriers, such as Air France, British Airways, Emirates, KLM, Lufthansa, Qatar, Turkish, United. And now those fares are on sale more frequently.

*Nairobi for just \$2,064 last month:*

## YOUR TRIP TO NAIROBI CHANGE

**DEPARTING FLIGHT**

 New York (JFK)  1 connection   Nairobi (NBO)	2022 Apr 02 Sat 20:30 - 21:25 (+1 day)	USD 938.89
	AIRFRANCE AF0814	<a href="#">CHOOSE YOUR FARE ▾</a>

**RETURN FLIGHT**

 Nairobi (NBO)  1 connection   New York (JFK)	2022 Apr 10 Sun 23:35 - 13:50 (+1 day)	USD 1,125.88
	AIRFRANCE AF0014	<a href="#">CHOOSE YOUR FARE ▾</a>

Ticket price for 1 passenger  
USD 2,064.77

### CURRENT FARES TO NAIROBI UNDER \$3,000 ROUND-TRIP

Air France	Dallas	\$2,741
Houston	\$2,871	
Miami	\$2,646	
New York	\$2,768	
Emirates	Dallas	\$2,969
KLM	Houston	\$2,874
	New York	\$2,764
Lufthansa	New York	\$2,868

Air France	Dallas	\$2,741
	Washington, DC	\$2,972
Qatar	Dallas	\$2,985
	New York	\$2,861
United	Washington, DC	\$2,981

## RWANDA: GORILLAS IN THE MIST

Interested in a gorilla trekking safari? Then Rwanda is the place. For a once-in-a-lifetime experience, head to the legendary **Volcanoes National Park**, which shelters some 600 of the world's last remaining mountain gorillas, considered the world's most endangered primate species. Hike its lush hills to spot a gorilla peeking out from the bush or a mother watching over her babies. These primates were thrust onto the world stage by the late Dian Fossey, who studied them for 20 years, and by the subsequent film, *Gorillas in the Mist*.

After flying into the capital city of Kigali —a Volatile Fare Market nowadays — you're only a few hours' drive away from Volcanoes National Park.

## BOTSWANA: THE BIG FIVE & MORE

Competing with Tanzania for safari cred is Botswana, which has devoted 38% of its land to national parks, reserves, and wildlife management areas. Prime among them is the **Okavango Delta**, considered one of the seven natural wonders of Africa and the jewel in Botswana's wilderness crown. The biggest inland delta in the world contains the country's "predator capital," where you can spot leopard, cheetah, prides of lion, and the endangered African wild dog hunting for prey. **Chobe National Park**, meanwhile, hosts large numbers of wildlife, especially elephants. At 130,000, Botswana has the largest elephant population in the world.

Botswana has no international flights that originate outside Africa, so most visitors fly there via Johannesburg, South Africa, to pick up a connecting flight.

## CURRENT FARES TO JOHANNESBURG UNDER \$3,000 ROUND-TRIP

Air France	Los Angeles	\$2,924
	Chicago	\$2,992
Lufthansa	Los Angeles	\$2,883
	New York	\$2,963
	Washington, DC	\$2,992
Swiss	Chicago	\$2,940

Air France	Los Angeles	\$2,924
	Washington, DC	\$2,940
Turkish	Washington, DC	\$2,866
	Los Angeles	\$2,891
United	New York	\$2,900
	Washington, DC	\$2,975

If you're going this far, there are many other places to stop if you have the time to be wild, like Cape Town, Kruger National Park, Sossusvlei (one of my favorites), and Victoria Falls to name a few.



Sossusvlei, Namibia

### CURRENT FARES TO CAPE TOWN UNDER \$3,000 ROUND-TRIP

Qatar	Miami	\$2,993
New York	\$2,964	
Turkish	Miami	\$2,966

That's fertile ground. Most fares are valid for travel through the end of May and start back up again in September/October through to mid-November. Some are valid all the way until mid-November. **British Airways has some solid First Class fares too, coming in at around the cost of typical Business Class fares.**

Routes with the lowest fares typically include Johannesburg from Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and Washington, DC, and Nairobi from Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami.

**Getting in the Mood - 5 Great Movies About Africa** Out of Africa (1985) The African Queen (1951) Black Panther (2018) The Lion King (1994 & 2019) Gorillas in the Mist (1988)

## WANT TO BURN YOUR MILES INSTEAD?

Not all of you want to pay in cash for your epic Africa trip, so we decided to explore the opportunities for free tickets. Here's what we found.

To Nairobi (via Paris) From	Round-trip Miles	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
Dallas		April			April	April	
Houston		March, April, May			April, May, June, Sept., Oct.	May	
Miami	170,000	April, May, Oct.			May	May	
New York		March, May, Nov.				May	

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

You can get Air France miles from points transfer partners Amex, Capital One, Chase, and Citi.



Victoria Falls

From / To (via Doha)	Round-trip Miles	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
Boston - Johannesburg	150,000	July, Aug., Oct., Nov.	Aug., Nov.	Sept., Oct.	Nov.	Oct.	Oct.
Boston - Nairobi		March, April, July, Sept., Oct., Nov.	Sept., Oct.	Oct.	Sept., Nov.	Oct., Nov.	Oct.
Chicago - Capetown		April., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.	Aug.		Sept.	Oct.	
Chicago - Nairobi		April, Sept., Nov.	April, Oct.		Oct.	Sept., Oct., Nov.	
Dallas - Nairobi		May, July, Aug., Nov.	Aug., Sept., Nov.	Sept., Oct.	June, Oct., Nov.		
Houston - Johannesburg		April, Aug., Nov.	April	Sept., Oct.	Sept.	Oct.	Oct.
Houston - Nairobi		April, May, Aug., Nov.	Sept., Oct.	Sept., Oct.	Sept., Oct.	Oct.	

From / To (via Doha)	Round-trip Miles	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
Los Angeles - Nairobi	166,000	March, Aug., Sept., Oct.	Oct.		Nov.		
Philadelphia - Johannesburg		Aug., Oct., Nov.	Sept., Oct., Nov.	Sept.	Sept., Nov.	Oct.	Oct.
Philadelphia - Nairobi		April, May, Sept., Oct., Nov.	Aug.	Sept., Oct.	June, Oct., Nov.	Nov.	Oct.
San Francisco - Nairobi		April, Aug. to Oct.			Oct.		
Seattle - Nairobi		May, Aug. to Nov.			March, June, Nov.	June, Oct.	

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

To Nairobi (via Istanbul) From	Round-trip Miles	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
Chicago	166,000	Aug., Dec.		April, Oct., Nov.		April	Oct. to Dec.
Dallas		April, Aug., Oct., Nov.	April	Oct.	April, Oct.		Oct.
Houston		March, July, Dec.	April	April, Aug. to Nov.		March, June, Sept.	April, May, June, Sept., Oct. to Dec.
Miami		April, July, Dec.		Aug. to Nov.		March	April to June, Oct., Nov.
New York		March, April, Aug., Sept., Nov.	Oct., Nov.		Nov.		
Washington, DC		April, Aug., Sept.		Oct., Nov.		Nov.	

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.



Cape Town

From / To (via London)	Round-trip Miles	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
Los Angeles - Johannesburg	230,000	May, Aug., Oct., Nov.	Dec.		Aug., Oct.	Dec.	Nov., Dec.
New York - Johannesburg	230,000	May, Sept., Oct., Nov.	July, Nov.	Aug.	April, June, Sept., Nov., Dec.	May, June, Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.	May, June, July, Aug., Oct.

\*Months in black at least one seat available; in blue at least two seats; in green at least four seats.

It's gonna take a lot to drag me away from you There's nothing that a hundred men or more could ever do I bless the rains down in Africa Gonna take some time to do the things we never had

*Africa by Toto*