



# Doom or Boom? FCF's Fearless 2022 Forecast & 2021 Wrap

January 2022

## **Happy New Year to all our awesome readers!**

I hope 2022 is a year filled with comfy seats, on-time departures and steady cruising altitudes. Not to mention the thrill of new destinations and the comfort of old. Travel is food for the soul and I think we all deserve more of that soul-nurturing nourishment at 40,000 feet after the last couple years.

So what's in the forecast for the year ahead? Once again, we're dusting off our Czech Republic-sourced Bohemian crystal ball to give you our best predictions for 2022. But good predictions are based on relevant experience and long-accumulated knowledge, so what better base to use than the complicated year that just passed?



It's Crystal Ball Time at FCF

## SO FIRST, LET'S RECAP 2021.

With **domestic business travel** still down, there were (and still are) plenty of First Class seats that are going unsold that the airlines don't want to "give away" to their loyal frequent flyers. Instead, they are **discounting domestic First Class** fares as we most recently discovered [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). Relatively cheap domestic First Class seats is another reason NOT to care about chasing elite status credentials so you can avoid unpredictable upgrade-confirmation anxiety, nicely.

## MILEAGE AWARD AVAILABILITY

An unwelcome surprise in 2021 was that even though travel picked up again, the airlines reverted back to their typical stinginess with award seats. Award space was [wide open](#) on [several routes](#) with [several airlines](#) through June. Then when travel returned, award space dried up like a bone, as reported [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Airline award prices continued to skyrocket in 2021. "Dynamic" award pricing, where prices fluctuate (supposedly based on demand), is proving to be a loyalty killer. First there was Delta, and then in 2021 [United's inflation resembled the United States](#), or worse.

## A380'S

**A380s**[slowly made their way back](#) onto airline rosters in 2021. It's a favorite aircraft of FCF-ers, so that was welcome news. We've heard rumors that Etihad's A380 (which has my favorite seat) [might even make a comeback in 2022](#).

## HIDDEN REFUNDABLE FARES

In addition to the proliferation of *cancellable* fares, which didn't surprise us, little-known *refundable* fares are now part of the travel landscape as we told you [here](#). Surprisingly, few people know about them. Will they stick around after more lockdowns go away? Let's hope so.

## INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CLASS FARE TRENDS

- **Africa:** We found [Cape Town](#) from \$2,625 and [Cairo](#), [Morocco](#), and [Nairobi](#) are destinations that have been trending downward and remain around \$2,100 or less.
- **Asia:** Fares were higher than we've seen for a couple of years, in the \$4,000 to \$9,000 range nonstop. Not many remarkable fares are up for grabs right now, except for the remarkable [Maldives](#) starting at \$2,238.
- **Caribbean:** Lots more great fares were available, including to many destinations for under \$800 round-trip on major airlines, including the [Bahamas](#), [Cayman Islands](#), [Dominican Republic](#), [Jamaica](#), and [St. Thomas](#).
- **Europe:** There were lots of great fares to Europe and many destinations were intermittently under \$2,000 for round-trips on major airlines, as reported [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Hawaii:** Fares under \$1,000 have been available to [Honolulu](#) and [Kona](#) sporadically from the West Coast. Meanwhile, nonstops from major Midwest and Eastern hubs are running in the \$2,000 to \$3,000+ range. Nothing special as demand outstrips supply for the most part.
- **Mexico:** Fares have been available from all over the U.S. and Canada to [Acapulco](#) from \$587; to [Cabo](#) from \$552; to [Cancun](#) from \$512; from the Midwest and the East Coast to [Cozumel](#) from \$537.
- **South America:** Last year we frequently saw amazing long-haul fares as low as \$1,402 to [Brazil](#), \$1,589 to [Chile](#) and \$1,714 to [Argentina](#). Keep an eye on this region for the best values in 2022.

## WHAT DIDN'T SURPRISE US IN 2021: ELITE STATUS CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE

Elite status continued its inexorable value descent in 2021. No joy to report there, but no surprises either. Loyalty simply isn't rewarded anymore. Let's take a closer look.

**American Airlines:** This [just-overhauled elite program](#) is a joke for the average, not-high rolling 'loyal' frequent flyer. When everyone is elite, is anyone elite? Oh, and anyone can get most minor perks without loyalty, such as [Main Cabin Extra](#) seats, for a relatively modest price.

**Delta Air Lines:** Its new changes are a sad joke for its top fliers, much more so in 2022, with its most recent perk reductions, most notably how it upgrades its top-tier Medallion members, [with the elimination of economy to Business Class upgrades](#). You can also forget about earning miles on its lowest fares.

**United Airlines:** Why should premium travelers bother with this 'elite' status program?

If you aren't very familiar with FCF's perspective on Elite Hype Hypnotics, get up to speed [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and: - [It's Not Too Late to Excommunicate Yourself From 'The Elite Class' - An Elite-Status Declaration of Independence](#)

## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2022

**Continue to see award availability from American, Delta, and United** at higher levels compared to years past. Availability at lower levels is so awful right now that it can only improve from here, you'd think. Only time will tell. An interesting FCF survey is coming in February you won't want to miss.

Routes to **destinations with tourist-friendly entry policies**, [like Belize, Croatia, Maldives, Portugal, and Ukraine](#) for example, are offering many flights and therefore have a surplus of premium seats to discount.

Expect **cities with the most lockdown restrictions**, such as Los Angeles, New York, and Italy to have lower fares due to significantly less demand. Airlines will continue to reduce flights to such cities in 2022. Among hidden anomaly fares, [gouging](#) will continue to affect some destinations. With every virus variant that comes along, transitioning back to normalcy will continue to be on and off again until we learn to live with it; house elections will inevitably upend the otherwise prevailing narrative, however.

[Link to IATA's Jabbed and Unjabbed restrictions by country.](#)

**Domestic First Class fares** will continue to be low, as **the last thing airlines want to do is give free upgrades to frequent flyers.**

The best deals to high-demand **Hawaii** can be found [using packages](#) with airlines that have bulk air.

[Advance planners to Europe](#) will feel the brunt as airlines evaluate revenue versus demand, and will be happy to charge an arm and a leg to travelers who crave the sense of security of far-out bookings.

**South America** is the cheapest hot spot. Now's the time to visit because flash Business Class fares in the \$1,500 range are fairly predictable every couple of weeks. Think of destinations like **Iguazu Falls, the Andes, Patagonia, and Rio.**

Expect **sporadic award availability** on non-U.S. carriers to mark the year. Be ready to jump when the deals hit. Book [partner awards](#) now as we told you [here](#).

While credit card points collectors may safely hold on to their points, we recommend burning your [airline loyalty program miles](#) whenever possible. Unfortunately, inflation isn't going away anytime soon.

Some of FCF's favorite strategies will continue to be attractive in 2022:

- [Buy the Dip, Upgrade Your Trip](#)
- [Stop "Booking Backwards": Use FCF's Forward-Thinking Deals to Book Dream Trips Every Time](#)

- [Fishing: Get Your Net Ready to Land More Trophy Tickets to Europe More Trophy Tickets to Europe](#)
- [Horses for Courses \(and Cabins\). How Returning in a Different Class Can Make for a Much Better Value](#)
- [Mixed Cabin Part II: The One Step Above Cattle Class. When Elites Should Consider Going for Extra Legroom](#)
- [Classy Moves. How Changing Cabins Can Change the Way You Fly First Class to Europe.](#)
- [Thanks a Bundle: Why Booking a Premium Package Deal Is the Way to Go to Hawaii Right Now](#)
- [Can a Downgrade Result in an Upgrade?](#)
- [The FCF Eurasian Stopover. Go-Crazy Business Class Savings to Europe and Asia](#)
- [FCF's Wrestling Move Pins Down \\*Two\\* Round-trips on \\*One\\* Ticket in an Epic Post-Lockdown Price Slam.](#)
- [We're Upgrade Open-Minded. Are You?](#)
- [How to Leverage FCF's Special Fare Finder](#)
- [Bargain Basement. How to Choose Between a Flash Low-Cash Fare and a Discount Mileage Deal?](#)
- [Six Plays to Consider When There's Only One Mileage Seat Available](#)
- [Why One-Way Awards Can Make or Break a 50% to 90% Off Business or First Class Deal](#)
- [To Asia: Why One-Way Mileage Awards Can Make or Break a Business or First Class 50% to 90% Off Deal](#)
- [Southern South America: Part Three About Why One-Way Mileage Awards Are the Way to Go](#)
- [Are You An Opportunity Traveler?](#)
- [Don't See Your Origin and/or Destination in an FCF Headline? This Report Was Made For You.](#)
- [The Art of Skipping Stones & What We Can All Learn from the Boise to Budapest Premium Traveler](#)

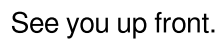
- [Ten Reasons Why I'm the Biggest Fan of Mileage Upgrade Awards—and Why You Should Be Too](#)
- [1,001+ Ways Anyone Can Upgrade](#)
- [Mining for Miles Availability: 10 Common Mistakes Most Travelers Make](#)
- [If You're NOT Flexible: 11 Ways to Save on Premium Flights](#)
- [Elite Status Combat Force: Best Ticketing Strategies Based on Your Level of Inflexibility](#)
- [United Partner Power 101: Hidden Opportunities and Mileage Availability Comparison](#)
- [American Partner Power 101: Hidden Miles Opportunities](#)
- [Delta Deception: Why Partner Power Doesn't Work for Your SkyMiles](#)
- [The Difference Between a Dream Trip and Frustrationville Often Boils Down to Knowing How to Work Free and Paid Connecting Flights](#)
- [Hold This, Dear: A Way to Have Your Deal and Fly It Too](#)

## THANK YOU

**A heartfelt thanks to all our wonderful readers for sticking with FCF through thick and thin.**

Here's to 2022 and to all of your happy travel dreams coming true at last.







# Nine Ways to Take a Samurai Sword to High Tokyo Business Class Prices

January 2022

## **How to escape ridiculous Tokyo fares with FCF strategies.**

Fares to Tokyo are climbing faster than a sunrise over Mount Fuji, so it's time to look for alternatives. Business Class fares on United currently range from \$5,888 to \$6,388, on Japan Airlines from \$5,380 to \$5,832, and on ANA can cost more than \$5,600, and the lowest fares have often been as high as \$9,000 over the last few months. Those are some in the kitchen for our employees to work out their anger.

But the best form of revenge is analysis, not violence. So that's what we've prepared here for you.

In no particular order...



## HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #1: ZIPAIR

ZIPAIR, owned by Japan Airlines, is offering new nonstop Los Angeles-Tokyo flights starting at \$1,693 round-trip. Both outbound and return flights are running daily (except Sundays) through March 19, 2022. At the present time, ZIPAIR offers service only on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays after March 21, 2022.

Here is FCF's GBU™ (Good, Bad & Ugly!) analysis of ZIPAIR:

**The Good:** Fares are low, and there's a decent schedule:

- Outbound departing Los Angeles at 9:40 a.m. and arriving at Tokyo's Narita International Airport at 2:25 p.m., Inbound departing Tokyo at 2:45 p.m. and arriving 7:40 a.m., **through March 12**; - Outbound departing Los Angeles at 10:40 a.m. and arriving at Tokyo at 2:25 p.m., Inbound departing Tokyo at 2:45 p.m. and arriving 8:40 a.m., **through June 30**; - Outbound departing Los Angeles at 11:00 a.m. and arriving at Tokyo at 2:10 p.m., and inbound departing Tokyo at 2:45 p.m. and arriving Los Angeles at 9:00 a.m., **after July 2**.

Since it's owned by JAL, points can be [exchanged](#) between ZIPAIR and JAL.

ZIPAIR provides two different types of seating options. There are [18 flat seats](#) in a 1-2-1 configuration.



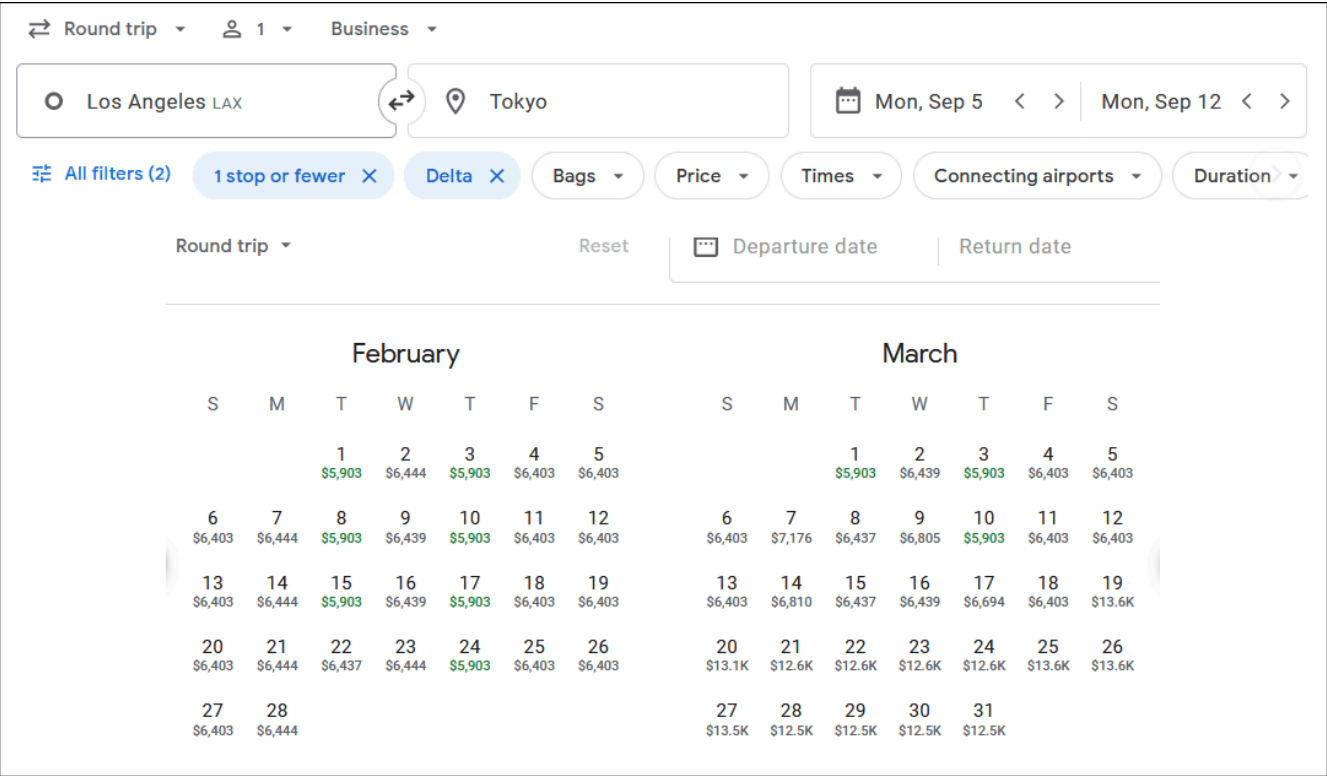
Los Angeles to Tokyo	<a href="#">ZIPAIR</a>	<a href="#">Japan</a>	<a href="#">ANA</a>	<a href="#">United</a>	<a href="#">Singapore</a>
Aircraft	<a href="#">787-800</a>	777	777	787	777
Fare	\$1,693 to \$1,975	\$5,380 to \$5,832	\$5,658 to \$6,138	\$5,888 to \$6,388	\$3,887 to \$4,366
Business Class Seat	Lie-flat	Lie-flat	Lie-flat	Lie-flat	Lie-flat
Configuration	1-2-1	2-3-2	1-2-1	1-2-1	1-2-1
Width	20	25.5	21	20.5	30
Pitch	42	74	62	78	51
Wi-fi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TV		✓	✓	✓	✓

**The Bad:** It only flies five days a week through March 19, then goes to three days a week. No Personal seat-back TV monitor.

**The Ugly:** With the exception of the Tokyo-Seoul route, [you can't make any changes to flights once ticketed and no refunds are permitted](#), which goes against current airline trends.

## HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #2: FLY DELTA (BUT DO IT SOON)

Oh by the way, after ZIPAIR decreases their service to three days a week, Delta with one stop, is already charging half price before March 19 (near ZIPAIR's end of daily service). In other words, you can fly Delta to Tokyo in Business Class *before* March 19 and pay \$5,903 to \$7,176, OR you can fly after that day and pay between \$12,600 and \$13,600 until it starts nonstop service in April. Mmmm, see for yourself...



### HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #3: JAPAN AIRLINES AWARD AVAILABILITY

There's good one- and two-seat availability on Japan Airlines from now through to November out of Boston, Chicago and Dallas. From Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco, that availability goes all the way to December. As you'd probably expect, it's rarer to find four seats, but not impossible, particularly out of New York in October and November. Japan Airline is a transfer partner of Marriott.

**No miles? No problem.** See our chart just below with availability treasure map... and buy-miles/points strategy savings at the bottom of this special report.

Airline	Business Class 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
Japan Airlines	Boston - Tokyo	March, April, May, June, July, Aug.	May, July, Sept., Nov.	July., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.	Feb., May, June., July, Aug., Sept.	March., Oct., Nov.	March., June., Sept. to Nov.
	Chicago - Tokyo	Feb., March, April., Sept., Oct.	July to Oct.	Feb., July to Oct., Nov.	Feb., March, May to July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Dec.	March	Feb., Sept., Oct., Nov.

Airline	Business Class 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
	Dallas - Tokyo	Feb., June, <b>July to Oct.</b>	Feb., <b>Dec.</b>	<b>July. to Oct., Nov.</b>	<b>Feb., Aug., Sept.</b>	June, Aug., <b>Dec.</b>	Feb., <b>Sept., Oct., Nov.</b>
	Los Angeles - Tokyo	<b>Feb., June., July to Oct., Nov.</b>	Feb., April	July. to Oct., <b>Nov., Dec.</b>	April, July, <b>Aug.</b>	<b>Feb., Nov.</b>	June., Aug., <b>Sept. to Dec.</b>
	New York - Tokyo	<b>March, April, May, July, Aug. to Sept., Dec.</b>	<b>Feb., March, Aug., Sept.</b>	Feb., April, July to Sept., <b>Oct., Nov., Dec.</b>	<b>Feb., March, June to Aug., Sept., Nov.</b>	July, Aug.	Feb., May, June, <b>Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.</b>
	San Francisco - Tokyo	April, June	<b>July, Sept.</b>	July, <b>Aug., Sept. Oct. to Dec.</b>	<b>July</b>	June, July, <b>Oct.</b>	<b>Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.</b>

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

## HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #4: SINGAPORE AIRLINES WITH DOLLARS

Save a bundle with Singapore Airlines Business Class nonstop from Los Angeles to Tokyo for \$3,887 — compared to ANA and United from \$5,888 and Japan Airlines from \$5,380.

Los Angeles LAX

Tokyo

Mon, Sep 5


<

>

Mon, Sep 12

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2:20 PM – 5:50 PM\*<sup>1</sup>

Singapore Airlines

11 hr 30 min


LAX–NRT

Nonstop

-7% emissions

\$3,887

round trip



1:30 PM – 4:40 PM\*<sup>1</sup>

JAL

11 hr 10 min


LAX–NRT

Nonstop

+17% emissions

\$5,380

round trip



11:05 AM – 2:40 PM\*<sup>1</sup>

United · ANA

11 hr 35 min


LAX–NRT

Nonstop

-13% emissions

\$5,689

round trip



12:45 PM – 4:30 PM\*<sup>1</sup>

ANA · United

11 hr 45 min

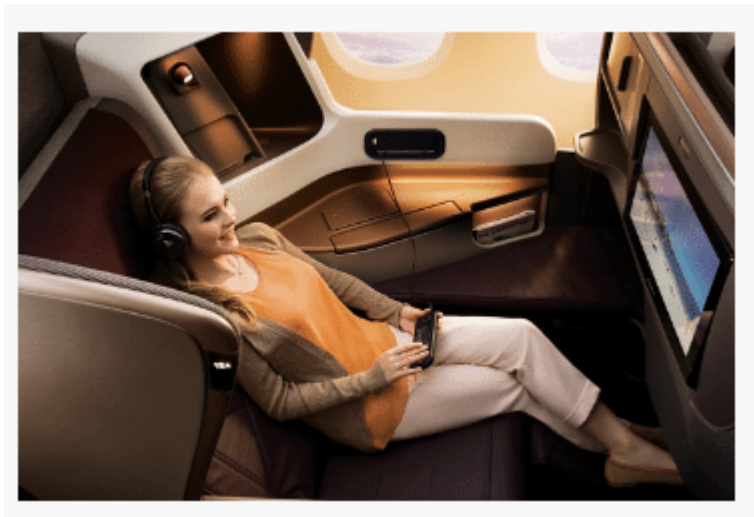
LAX–NRT

Nonstop

Avg emissions

\$5,689

round trip



Singapore Airlines Business Class

### HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #5: SINGAPORE AIRLINES AWARD AVAILABILITY (POINTS TRANSFER PARTNERS: AMEX, CAPITAL ONE, CHASE AND CITIBANK)

Here at FCF we love the color green. That's because green means available seats are seen. That's particularly the case out of the Big Apple flying Singapore Airlines in Business Class to Singapore for one, two, and four seats. There's also good availability from Los Angeles to Tokyo, straight through until December.

Airline	Business Class 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
Singapore	Los Angeles - Tokyo	Feb., March, April, June	Feb., April, May, Nov.	July to Oct., Nov.	Feb., March, April, June., July, Sept. to Nov.	May, July, Aug., Oct., Nov.	Aug., Sept.
	New York - Singapore	March		April to Oct.			April to Oct.

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

### HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #6: DEPART FROM VANCOUVER

Here's some true north thinking: Depart from Vancouver on Air Canada, ANA, or Japan Airlines and pay USD \$2,737 to \$3,290, up to 77% off fares from the U.S.



↔ Round trip ▾

👤 1 ▾

Business ▾

📍 Vancouver YVR

↔📍 Tokyo

Round trip ▾

Reset

📅

Departure date

Return date

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		\$3,366	\$3,366	\$3,366	\$4,004	\$3,290
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$3,290	\$3,290
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$3,290	\$3,290
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$2,748	\$3,290	\$3,290
27	28	29	30	31		
\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747		

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
					\$3,290	\$3,290
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$3,290	\$3,290
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$3,290	\$3,290
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$3,290	\$3,290
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
\$2,748	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$2,747	\$3,290	\$3,290

**HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #7:**  
**CONSIDER CATHAY PACIFIC HONG KONG AWARD AVAILABILITY**

**(POINTS TRANSFER PARTNERS: AMEX, CAPITAL ONE, AND CITIBANK)**

In the last half of this year (July-October) there is some good one- and two-seat availability out of Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco to Hong Kong in Cathay Business Class.

**No miles? No problem.** See our chart just below with availability treasure map... and buy-miles/points strategy savings at the bottom of this special report.





Airline	Business Class 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
Cathay Pacific	Los Angeles - Hong Kong	July	July, Aug.	Aug., Sept., Oct.	July, Aug.	Sept.	Sept., Oct.

Airline	Business Class 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
	New York - Hong Kong	April, <a href="#">July</a>	July	<a href="#">Aug. to Oct.</a>	<a href="#">July, Aug.</a>	July, Aug.	<a href="#">Sept., Oct.</a>
	San Francisco - Hong Kong		July, <a href="#">Aug. to Oct.</a>	Aug. to Oct.	<a href="#">July, Aug.</a>	July	Aug., <a href="#">Sept., Oct.</a>

\*Months in [black](#) at least one seat available; in [blue](#) at least two seats.

## HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #8: [THE FCF EURASIAN STOPOVER](#)

We mentioned this last month and [it's still a beauty](#). You can fly on Finnair from New York to Tokyo with a free stop in Helsinki and pay just \$2,997. Compare that to Japan Airlines' New York-Tokyo route for \$11,110. Imagine what you could do with that extra eight grand.

Round trip · 1 · Business Class		Total price from			
<b>New York ↔ Tokyo</b>		<b>\$2,997</b>			
	Tue, Mar 22 · 12:50 AM – 10:00 AM* <sup>1</sup> Finnair · American, Iberia, British Airways, JAL	20 hr 10 min JFK–NRT	1 stop 2 hr 35 min HEL	+14% emissions ⓘ	▼
	Sat, Mar 26 · 11:55 AM – 7:45 PM Finnair · British Airways, JAL, American, Iberia	20 hr 50 min NRT–JFK	1 stop 1 hr 50 min HEL	Avg emissions ⓘ	▼
Round trip · 1 · Business Class		Total price from			
<b>New York ↔ Tokyo</b>		<b>\$11,110</b>			
	Tue, Mar 22 · 1:50 PM – 5:10 PM* <sup>1</sup> JAL · American	14 hr 20 min JFK–HND	Nonstop	+40% emissions ⓘ	▼
	Sat, Mar 26 · 11:05 AM – 11:00 AM JAL · American	12 hr 55 min HND–JFK	Nonstop	+17% emissions ⓘ	▼

## HIGH-FARE CHOPPER #9: ALL NIPPON AMEX TRANSFER PARTNER AWARD AVAILABILITY

: we've found a few seats for two travelers from Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Washington, DC and some good one-seat Business Class award space to Tokyo on All Nippon as shown in the chart below. As you can see, Washington, DC-Tokyo (Haneda) is particularly fruitful from July through November, and there's pretty good one-seat availability out of Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Houston. And it's relatively cheap.

**No miles? No problem.** See our chart just below with availability treasure map... and buy-miles/points strategy savings at the bottom of this special report.

Airline	Business Class 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
All Nippon	Chicago - Tokyo	Aug.	July, Sept., Oct., Dec.	Nov.	Feb.	Sept., Dec.	Oct., Nov.
	Houston - Tokyo	June		July to Nov.	June, July	Sept.	Aug., Oct., Nov.
	Los Angeles - Tokyo	Sept., Oct.	Aug., Nov.	Nov.	May, Aug., Sept., Nov.		Sept., Oct., Nov.
	New York - Tokyo		Nov.		Nov., Dec.		
	Washington, DC - Tokyo	July to Oct., Nov., Dec.	Dec.	Nov.	Aug., Sept., Nov., Dec.	Oct., Dec.	Nov.

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

## CHEAPEST AMEX TRANSFER PARTNERS PLUS BUY MILES STRATEGY IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE POINTS

Airline	Business Class From/To	Lowest Cost Amex Partner	Amex Partner Cost	Cost To Buy Points / Miles at 2.5 Cents Each From Amex	Normal Published Fare	Savings	
All Nippon	Chicago - Tokyo	All Nippon	75,000	\$1,875	\$7,937	\$6,062	76%
	Houston - Tokyo				\$7,937	\$6,062	76%
	Los Angeles - Tokyo				\$5,658	\$3,783	67%
	New York - Tokyo				\$7,985	\$6,110	77%
	Washington, DC - Tokyo				\$8,130	\$6,255	77%
Cathay Pacific	Los Angeles - Hong Kong	Cathay Pacific	140,000	\$3,500	\$5,780	\$2,280	39%
	New York - Hong Kong		170,000	\$4,250	\$8,251	\$4,001	48%

Airline	Business Class From/To	Lowest Cost Amex Partner	Amex Partner Cost	Cost To Buy Points / Miles at 2.5 Cents Each From Amex	Normal Published Fare	Savings	
	San Francisco - Hong Kong		140,000	\$3,500	\$5,887	\$2,387	41%
Japan	Boston - Tokyo		150,000	\$3,750	\$9,402	\$5,652	60%
	Chicago - Tokyo				\$7,666	\$3,916	51%
	Dallas - Tokyo				\$8,631	\$4,881	57%
	Los Angeles - Tokyo				\$5,380	\$1,630	30%
	New York - Tokyo				\$7,711	\$3,961	51%
	San Francisco - Tokyo				\$7,460	\$3,710	50%

## MORE BUY MILES STRATEGY OPTIONS

Operating Airline	Business Class From/To	Buy Miles from	Miles Cost	Cost To Buy Miles When On Sale at ~1.8 Cents	Normal Published Fare	Savings	
Cathay Pacific	Los Angeles - Hong Kong	American	120,000	\$2,160	\$7,937	\$5,777	73%
	New York - Hong Kong				\$7,937	\$5,777	73%
	San Francisco - Hong Kong				\$5,658	\$3,498	62%
Japan	Boston - Tokyo				\$7,985	\$5,825	73%
	Chicago - Tokyo				\$8,130	\$5,970	73%
	Dallas - Tokyo				\$5,780	\$3,620	63%
	Los Angeles - Tokyo				\$8,251	\$6,091	74%
	New York - Tokyo				\$5,887	\$3,727	63%
	San Francisco - Tokyo				\$9,402	\$7,242	77%
All Nippon	Chicago - Tokyo	United	160,000	\$2,880	\$7,666	\$4,786	62%
	Houston - Tokyo				\$8,631	\$5,751	67%

Operating Airline	Business Class From/To	Buy Miles from	Miles Cost	Cost To Buy Miles When On Sale at ~1.8 Cents	Normal Published Fare	Savings	
	Los Angeles - Tokyo				\$5,380	\$2,500	46%
	New York - Tokyo				\$7,711	\$4,831	63%
	Washington, DC - Tokyo				\$7,460	\$4,580	61%

## WHY VISIT TOKYO IN 2022

Need more reasons to visit Tokyo in 2022? From pop culture hotspots and historical sites, to skyscrapers and nature parks, Japan's capital is a buzzing metropolis with the largest population of any city in the world: 37 million. It's also ground zero for delicious Japanese food, fashion, and a bustling nightlife. Here are 10 reasons to go:

1. Shop 'til you drop at the fashion boutiques of **Shibuya** and check out the Shibuya Scramble Crossing, the busiest crossing in the world — with up to 3,000 pedestrians at a time.
2. Into Japanese pop culture? Head to **Harajuku**, the heart of youth culture or the **Nakano** and **Akihabara** areas to get your fix of anime, manga, video games, Hello Kitty, Pokemon, and Kawaii fashion.
3. Drink a sake toast to your good fortune at a fun izakaya bar in neon-lit **Shinjuku**.
4. Eat like a king — or a shogun — in the city with more Michelin stars than any other in the world. From epic sushi restaurants to hole-in-the-wall joints, to street stalls specializing in ramen, you can indulge in blockbuster cuisine at a whopping 60,000 eateries.
5. Watch the fascinating auctioneers and buyers in action at the world's largest fish market, **Tsukiji**, where you can also sample the freshest seafood in town.
6. Glory in the signature spring cherry blossoms at gorgeous gardens and parks, such as **Shinjuku Gyoen Park**, **Yoyogi Park**, **Ueno Park**, and **Rikugien Gardens**.
7. Step back in time in the old town of **Yanesen** to admire traditional buildings and historical spots — a glorious window into the famed 1603-1867 Edo period. Be sure to Instagram the photogenic Senbon Torii Gate.
8. Soar to the top of 2,080-foot-high **Tokyo Skytree**, the tallest building in Japan, with the best bird's-eye view of the city from the 1,473-foot-high Tembo Galleria, which is the world's highest skywalk.



9. Explore the history of temples and shrines in the **Asakusa** neighborhood, especially the 7<sup>th</sup>-century Buddhist temple of Sensoji, the oldest in Tokyo, with its symbolic giant lantern.
10. Take a day trip to scenic **Mount Takao**, an hour by train from downtown, to hike its beautiful trails to the 1,965-foot summit and the 8<sup>th</sup>-century Yakuoin temple.



Sunrise at Mount Fuji and sunset for high Tokyo prices if we can help it.



**Here's how to add on stops, depart from your hometown—and still save miles or dollars—with an airline that works with *American Express, Chase, and Marriott points* ([\*and Capital One indirectly\*](#))**

[In this special report](#) last month, we told you about Iberia's delicious offering: cheap ways to get to Europe in Business Class with miles, points, or cash, starting at just [\\$1,499 \\*OR\\* 49,000 miles or points](#) with transfer bonus. Those were simple nonstop, round-trip tickets. But what if you [don't live in one of the airline's U.S. hub cities](#), and/or maybe you want to go beyond Madrid at the other end? More on that concept [here](#).

The beauty of these cheap flights to Europe is that they give you flexibility to do more with your trip like adding on stops and departing from your own hometown while still saving money. Let's say you live in Chicago. You can make a stop in New York to see grandma Beatrice, pop over to Madrid for the La Paloma festival, fly down to see cousin Carlos in Málaga, and even catch a game at Yankee Stadium on the way back. That's living.

It's all made possible by low Iberia pricing because those four stops would end up costing what other airlines charge for two.

Case in point: If you live in Nashville and want to go to Bordeaux, France, for some wine tasting, it will cost you 119,000 Iberia miles. Or the lowest cost we found for the same two-stop itinerary on United is 310,000 miles. On American Airlines, it was 230,000 miles.

Bottom line: If you were to fly Iberia instead, you can add New York and Madrid AND still pay way less overall. Let's break it down.

- Nashville to New York (on American)
- New York to Madrid (Iberia)
- Madrid to Bordeaux (Iberia)
- The total for this entire itinerary is 119,000 miles, round-trip during off-peak dates.

By flying Iberia:

- You'd save up to 191,000 miles versus United
- You'd save up to 111,000 miles versus American

Check out the screenshot below.





Mallorca, Seville, Valencia, Geneva, Lisbon, Lyon, Marseilles, Nice and many other cities.

Oh by the way: you can also get a stopover in Madrid for the same price.

## TRAVEL WELL BEYOND MADRID FOR 15,000 MILES

Want to go even farther afield? For 15,000 off-peak (16,500 peak) miles one-way or 30,000 (33,000 peak) miles round-trip, you can add on Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Dublin, Dubrovnik, Florence, Frankfurt, Genoa, Glasgow, Hamburg, London, Malta, Manchester, Milan, Munich, Naples, Palermo, Paris, Prague, Rome, Strasbourg, Tenerife, Turin, Venice, Vienna, Zagreb, Zurich, and more.

Oh by the way: you can also get a stopover in Madrid for the same price.

## START OR END IN A U.S. CITY OTHER THAN IBERIA'S HUB

Here are some Oneworld U.S. cities you can depart from to connect with the Spanish carrier's seven transatlantic flights.

Oh by the way: you can also get a stopover in the U.S. City coming and/or going for the same price.

## ADD-ONS FROM IBERIA U.S. HUBS

Iberia Hub:	Boston	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles (LAX)	Miami	New York	Washington, DC
U.S. Cities 650 Miles or Less From Iberia's Hub:	Baltimore, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Harrisburg, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Raleigh, Richmond, Rochester, Syracuse, Washington, DC	Akron/Canton, Atlanta, Cedar Rapids, Charlotte, Columbus, Dayton, Des Moines, Detroit, Fargo, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Madison, Minneapolis, Peoria, Pittsburgh, Toledo	Alexandria, Amarillo, Austin, Denver, Fayetteville, Houston, Killeen, Lubbock, Midland, Mobile, Nashville, New Orleans, Oklahoma City, Shreveport, Springfield, Tulsa, Wichita	Las Vegas, Jackson, Sacramento, San Jose, Reno	Atlanta, Atlanta, Charlotte, Charleston, Jacksonville, Knoxville, New Orleans, Orlando, Pensacola, Raleigh, Richmond, Savannah, Tampa	Boston, Charlotte, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, Pittsburgh, Raleigh, Richmond, Washington, DC	Charlotte
U.S. Cities 651 to 1,150 Miles from	Ashville, Atlanta, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Jacksonville,	Allentown, Allentown, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Jacksonville,	Albuquerque, Aspen, Atlanta, Birmingham, Chattanooga, Durango, El Paso,	Boise, Bozeman, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Tucson	Birmingham, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Indianapolis,	Atlanta, Detroit, Ft. Lauderdale, Indianapolis, Minneapolis,	Austin, Dallas



Iberia Hub:	Boston	Chicago	Dallas	Los Angeles (LAX)	Miami	New York	Washington, DC
Iberia's U.S. Hub:	Louisville, Memphis, Nashville, Orlando, Savannah, St. Louis, Traverse City, Wilmington	Louisville, Memphis, Nashville, Orlando, Savannah, St. Louis, Traverse City, Wilmington	Minneapolis, Montgomery, Santa Fe		Little Rock, Louisville, Memphis, Nashville, Pittsburgh, St. Louis	Nashville, New Orleans	

\*Some short-haul flights in economy


## YOU CAN STOP IN THE U.S. AND BEYOND MADRID

As shown in the Nashville to Bordeaux example below.

Nashville → Bordeaux				Your return flight 31 sep. 2022			
Your outbound flight 7 sep. 2022				Bordeaux → Nashville			
Nashville	09:38			Bordeaux	09:15		Nashville 18:43
BNA	09:38	2h 12min	NYC 12:55	BOD	09:15	2h 25min	MAD 10:40
Operated by:			Details ~	Operated by:	IBERIA		Details ~
NYC	17:00	2h 25min	MAD 06:25	MAD	12:00	2h 15min	NYC 14:15
Operated by:	IBERIA		Details ~	Operated by:	IBERIA		Details ~
MAD	07:25	2h 25min	BOD 08:45	NYC	17:09	2h 34min	BNA 18:43
Operated by:	IBERIA		Details ~	Operated by:	American Airlines		Details ~

## USE FEWER MILES / MORE MONEY NON-STOP EXAMPLE

You can also split the cost between miles and cash. You pay the least number of miles: 13,600, which has a higher co-pay of \$1,142 EUR / \$1,294 USD. Or you can pay the highest number of miles at 68,000, and the lowest co-pay amount of \$242 EUR / \$274 USD, or somewhere in-between. It's your call. See the screenshot below for the Boston-Madrid example.



Boston ✈ Madrid

OUTBOUND: 13/10/2022 RETURN: 20/10/2022

✈ x 1


[Change search](#)

The price of your flight (in your usual currency) will depend on how many Avios you have. If you don't have enough Avios, you can buy the ones you need to choose any of these combinations:

<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>68,000 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>242.82€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>57,800 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>412.82€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>44,200 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>592.82€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>34,000 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>772.82€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>23,800 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>952.82€</div>	<div>✈</div> <div>13,600 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>1,142.82€</div>
--	--	--	--	--	--

## USE FEWER MILES / MORE MONEY EXAMPLE WITH EUROPE STOP

You can also travel from New York to Bordeaux for 86,000 miles round-trip or you can split the cost between miles and cash. You pay the least number of miles: 17,200, which has a higher co-pay of \$1,399 EUR / \$1,586 USD. Or you can pay the highest number of miles at 86,000, and the lowest co-pay amount of \$349 EUR / \$395 USD, or somewhere in-between. It's your call. See the screenshot below for the New York-Bordeaux example.



New York John F Kenn... ✈ Bordeaux

OUTBOUND: 14/09/2022 RETURN: 21/09/2022

✈ x 1

[Change search](#)

New York John F Kennedy

17:00

1 STOP: MADRID

9h 45min.

Bordeaux

08:45

NYC

17:00

✈ 7h 25min.

MAD

06:25

Operated by:

IBERIA

Details

Economy

Premium Econo...

Business

MAD

07:25

✈ 1h 20min.

BOD

08:45

Operated by:

IBERIA

Details

Economy

Premium Econo...  
not available

Business

Bordeaux

09:15

1 STOP: MADRID

11h

New York John F Kennedy

14:15

BOD

09:15

✈ 1h 25min.

MAD

10:40

Operated by:

IBERIA

Details

Economy

Premium Econo...  
not available

Business

MAD

12:00

✈ 8h 15min.

NYC

14:15

Operated by:

IBERIA

Details

Economy

Premium Econo...

Business

<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>86,000 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>349.25€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>73,100 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>549.25€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>55,900 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>769.25€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>43,000 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>979.25€</div>	<div>Buy Avios</div> <div>30,100 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>1,189.25€</div>	<div>✈</div> <div>17,200 Avios</div> <div>+</div> <div>1,399.25€</div>
--	--	--	--	--	--

Oh by the way you can stop with the less miles and more money option.

## CHEAP ONE-WAY AWARDS

You don't have to book round-trips either. Use one-ways to complement other plans you may have in mind.

Page 6 of 7

To Madrid From	Low Season O/W Award Cost	High Season O/W Award Cost
Boston, New York, Washington, DC	34,000	50,000
Chicago, Dallas, Miami	42,500	62,500
Los Angeles, San Francisco	51,000	75,000

You can use this Iberia play to launch another incredible low-cost deal we call [The Leg Stretch Strategy](#). For example, if you're planning to visit Europe and South America in a 12-month window, these Iberia one-ways are for you.

Note: This strategy doesn't work as well from the West Coast, such as Seattle, because the mileage requirements are higher. If you're pushing the envelope with stopovers it can be lucrative though however.

## LEVERAGE FCF'S AWARD AVAILABILITY TREASURE MAP

Iberia Business Class 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
Boston	Sept., Dec.	Nov.	Oct.	Feb. to April, May, Sept. to Dec.	Sept., Oct.	
Chicago	Dec.	Nov.		Feb., Dec.	Nov.	
Miami	Feb., April to June		July to Nov.	July	April to July, Sept.	Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.
New York	Feb., March, April	Feb., Sept., Dec.	Feb., Oct., Nov., Dec.	April, June	March, May, Sept., Oct.	Feb., March, May, Sept., Nov., Dec.

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



# The Golden Key to Unlocking Lucrative Miles & Points Opportunities: FCF's Sweet Redeems 2022, Part I

January 2022

## **It's time to eliminate the challenge of finding deeply discounted mileage awards.**

What better way than to kick off a new year with a travel hack-tastic play: leveraging the (usually) untapped power of your miles and points? Talk about a New Year's Resolution that will actually stick, FCF's "Sweet Redeems" makes the hard work of finding premium travel easy.

### **WHY MOST TRAVELERS HATE MILES & POINTS**

**Everyone** has trouble finding flights with discount mileage availability – especially those who don't [book their flights first](#) when planning a trip. Airlines (especially nowadays) [allocate very few](#) Business and First Class

seats for purchase with miles. Recent FCF reports show that your odds on [American](#) and [United](#) are less than 3%. On Delta, it's much worse.

So it's important to lock-in your flights [BEFORE](#) you book your cruise, hotel, villa, or tour. Otherwise, you can forget about using your miles for deeply discounted premium flights, which will cause you to resent the airlines for it.

## **SO WHAT ARE FCF'S SWEET REDEEMS?**

You can think of FCF's Sweet Redeems as "treasure maps" that show you where discount Business and First Class award seats are—i.e., the airlines, the routes, and the months with availability for using your hard-earned miles at low mileage rates.

Otherwise, you can spend hours and hours searching for cheap mileage award seats and still come up dry.

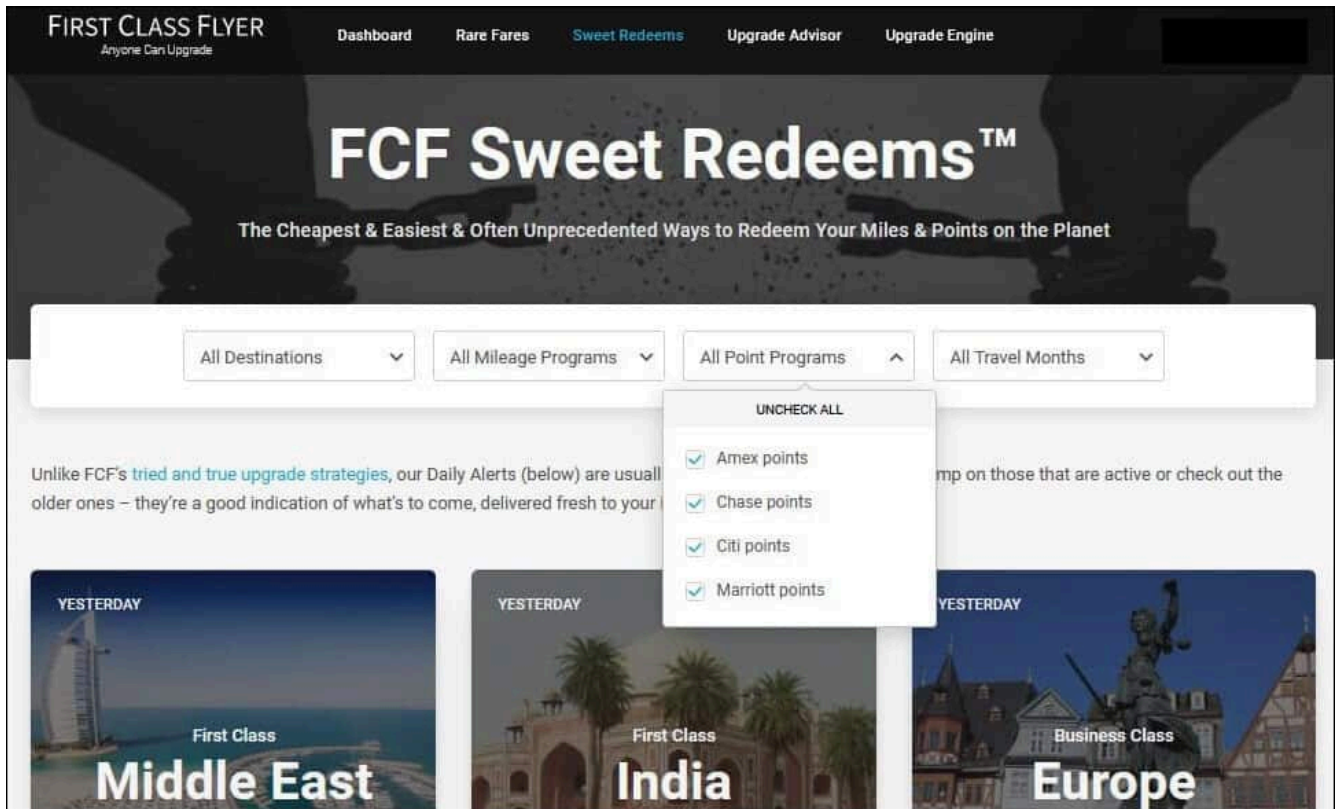
Whereas with Sweet Redeems, you spend minutes going straight to the airlines and routes with low-cost mileage award availability. We've designed our Sweet Redeems to save you time and angst in the booking process. No more being angry with the airlines.

But that's just the beginning of the power of Sweet Redeems.

## **HOW TO USE FCF'S SWEET REDEEMS**

On our home page, click on the [Sweet Redeems link](#) – the dreamiest miles redemption site on the Internet. It looks like this:





This is the home of FCF's Sweet Redeems. Up at the top you'll see **four filter options**:

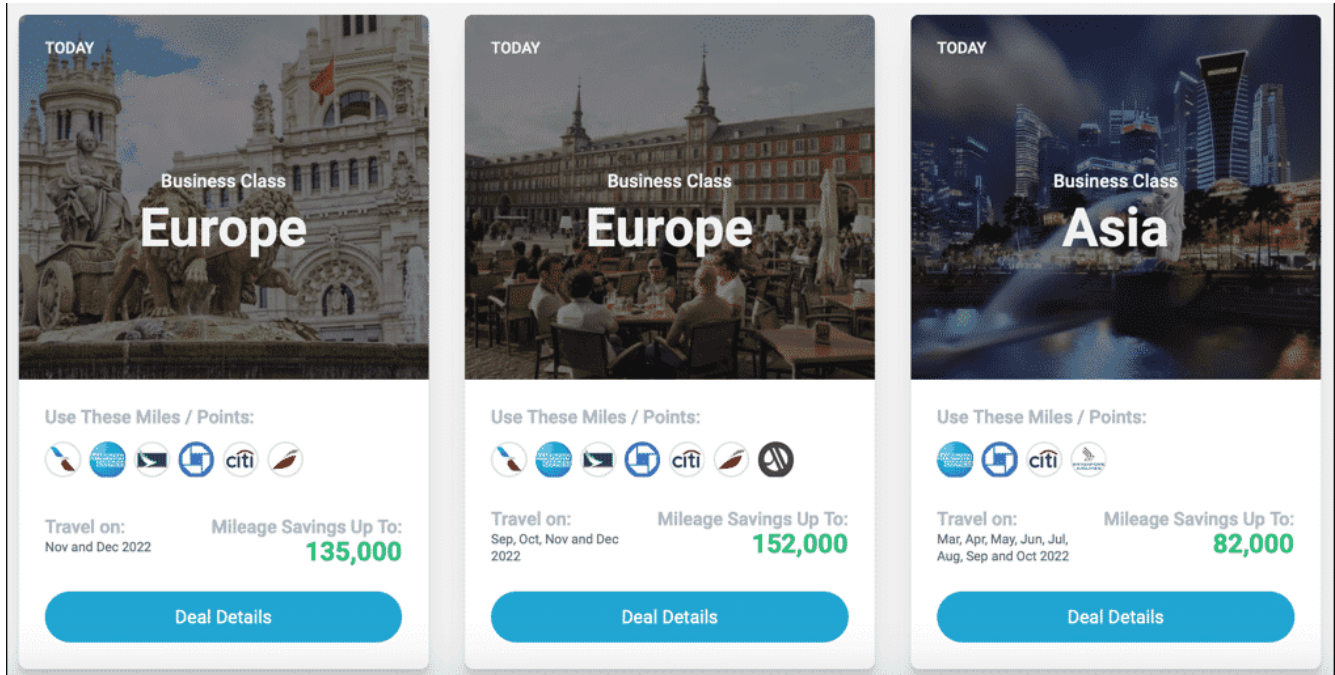
- Destinations
- Mileage Programs
- Point Programs
- Travel Months

Each has a dropdown menu allowing you to quickly filter by your preferences.

You can check or uncheck all options, or select individually

Underneath the filters are the deals available at any given time. This is what we call the:

## LIVE DEALS SECTION



Here you can quickly get a handle on the available deals and see the most important details at a glance, such as:

- When the deal was posted to see what's freshly baked
- Class of service
- Region — to check your desired destination or to spark new ideas
- Loyalty programs involved — to see if the deal works for you
- Travel months — to decide if the deal syncs with your plans or if you should be [flexible](#) to make it work
- Mileage savings between the everyday cost and the lowest partner cost

Click anywhere on the deal or on Deal Details to find lots more information, starting with:

## EASY-TO-USE DEAL AVAILABILITY CALENDAR

This is where you start to experience being in the driver's seat like nowhere else. Imagine a team of researchers that is constantly checking for mileage availability on cheap premium seats, with dozens of airlines, on hundreds of routes, over thousands of dates, and producing **treasure maps** like this...

FIRST CLASS FLYER

Anyone Can Upgrade

Dashboard

Rare Fares

Sweet Redeems

Upgrade Advisor

Upgrade Engine

Example Deal Routes

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

From New York

↔

To Madrid

Deal Availability

Fly at other times and pay double or triple.

Partner availability varies. Availability for the operating carrier, at times, is different when using partner airline currency. Check the Access Deal with Miles section below for more information. [Show Less](#)

Days Available

> 13+

9 TO 12

4 TO 8

2022

FEB	4		
MAR		2	
APR			1
MAY			
JUN			1
JUL		4	
AUG	2		
SEP			
OCT	1	2	4
NOV			2
DEC			1

4 Seats

2 Seats

1 Seat

Otherwise hard-to-find and often on a flash basis, mileage deals are visible at a glance with FCF’s Sweet Redeems. You’ll get a good sense of availability by month — **for one, two, and four seats** — so you can immediately see if it lines up with your plans and the number of your travel companions.

Or, if the deal is so good (and they often are), you can always find a way to [tweak your travel dates](#) to make the opportunity work for you so you can fly on your miles and save your cash.

## HOW TO FIND THE DEAL ROUTES

Based on the routes involved in the deal. You can:

- Select a departure city from the drop-down menu (if there is more than one route involved in the deal)
- The availability calendar shows:
  - How many possible days award seats are available for 13+ days, 9-12 days, or 4-8 days
  - Which months award seats are available
  - The number of possible travelers, including one, two, or four

- Click the double-arrow between the departure and arrival destinations to see if there are award seats available in the opposite direction, in which months, and how many

## UNDERSTAND HOW FREE AND LOW-COST CONNECTIONS WORK

Based on the selected departure city, the map quickly shows examples [of possible connecting cities within the U.S., and those beyond the deal's arrival city](#) based on the airline alliance relevant to the deal. Very handy.

**REMEMBER:** You want to find the long-haul segment first. Then, work backwards from there. Use the link above to get a sense of the free [connecting flights](#) you can add on.

## WORKS WITH MAJOR AND PREMIUM CARRIERS

This includes All Nippon, American, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Delta, Emirates, Etihad, Japan Air, Lufthansa, Qatar, Singapore, United, Virgin Atlantic, to name a few.

## FLASH DEAL SUMMARY

**FIRST CLASS FLYER**  
Anyone Can Upgrade

DashboardRare FaresSweet RedeemsUpgrade AdvisorUpgrade Engine

### Flash Deal Summary

For up to four travelers (and possibly more), FCF's research team has discovered an opportunity to save up \$1,619/45% if you don't have any miles and want to pay in cash **or** 152,000 miles when compared to normal/everyday prices traveling to/from the U.S.

See [FCF's Risk of Booking Tickets Now](#) widget for more information on the risks of booking mileage tickets.

**Sample Savings via American Express, Chase's and Marriott's points-to-miles transfer partnership with Iberia:** New York to Madrid's normal/everyday price can often be 220,000 when using American miles but if you use Amex Rewards Points partner Iberia miles the cost can be as low as 68,000 miles. American Airlines charges 60,000 miles for economy.

Rates based on off-peak season, slightly higher during peak season [here](#).

#### NO MILES? NO PROBLEM

American Airlines is currently running a deal whereby miles can be acquired for as low as 2.1¢ each (includes taxes and processing fee), through a new, up to 35% bonus buy miles promo, which runs through January 19, 2022.

[More Info on American Airlines Promotion.](#)

#### SAMPLE SAVINGS FROM U.S. TO EUROPE IN BUSINESS CLASS:

The published Business Class fare on Iberia's New York to Madrid route is \$3,561 r/t; **through the American Airlines purchase strategy, you can pay \$2,471r/t** (includes about \$60 in award tax), a savings of \$1,090 (31%).

New to buying miles? Know: [FCF's Beginner's Guide: How to Play the "Buy Miles to Fly In Style" Strategy to Net Up to 90% Off Premium Travel.](#)

More [here](#) on getting flights (based on availability) from around the U.S. to the hub (New York) **AND/OR** flights from the destination (Madrid) to Europe.

Show Less

As you'd expect, our **Deal Summary** is an overview of the deal in a nutshell. Click **Show More** to go deeper, where you'll find information about using miles and points.

## MILES & POINTS SAVINGS WIZARD

Researching (on your own) which mileage currency to use is a pain in the patootie, so we injected all that into FCF's Sweet Redeems, making it ridiculously easy. In the twitch of a squirrel's nose, you'll see which of your miles or credit card transferable points, and/or which partners work best for your particular situation.



# FIRST CLASS FLYER

Anyone Can Upgrade

[Dashboard](#)
[Rare Fares](#)
[Sweet Redeems](#)
[Upgrade Advisor](#)
[Upgrade Engine](#)

## 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: 220,000 on American Airlines

68,000 Iberia Miles (Operating Airline)	<a href="#">How to Book</a> <a href="#">Summary</a>	69% OFF
68,000 Amex Rewards Points <a href="#">TRANSFER TO IBERIA</a>	<a href="#">Summary</a>	69% OFF
68,000 Chase Rewards Points <a href="#">TRANSFER TO IBERIA</a>	<a href="#">Summary</a>	69% OFF
80,000 Japan Airlines Miles <span>LESS AVAILABILITY</span>	<a href="#">How to Book</a> <a href="#">Summary</a>	64% OFF
115,000 American Airlines Miles <span>LESS AVAILABILITY</span>	<a href="#">How to Book</a> <a href="#">Summary</a>	48% OFF
122,000 Cathay Pacific Miles <span>LESS AVAILABILITY</span>	<a href="#">How to Book</a> <a href="#">Summary</a>	45% OFF
122,000 Citi ThankYou Points <a href="#">TRANSFER TO CATHAY PACIFIC</a>	<a href="#">Summary</a>	45% OFF
122,000 Capital One Points <a href="#">TRANSFER TO CATHAY PACIFIC</a>	<a href="#">Summary</a>	45% OFF
124,000 British Airways Miles <span>LESS AVAILABILITY</span>	<a href="#">How to Book</a> <a href="#">Summary</a>	44% OFF
174,000 Marriott Points <a href="#">TRANSFER TO IBERIA</a>	<a href="#">Summary</a>	21% OFF

The **loyalty miles and points Savings Wizard** is organized with the highest savings at the top, so you'll quickly see which points or mileage program is offering the best deal. Here you'll find:

- The normal everyday price you'd pay without the deal (good bragging intel).
- The operating carrier details.
- The points transfer partner with the lowest cost, **including Amex, Capital One, Chase, Citi, and Marriott.**
- The lowest cost mileage transfer partner.
- Partner details, including a summary of which partners typically offer award space so you'll know when partner availability is easier to attain or a better cost option than the operating carrier — saving you unwanted clicking time. Partner availability is described as:
  - Same, meaning the partner typically offers the same award seat availability as the operating carrier, or
  - More, meaning the partner typically offers more award seat availability than the operating carrier, or

- Less, meaning the partner typically offers less award seat availability than the operating carrier.
- How much money you will save in %.

## HOW TO BOOK

Did you know this could all be at your fingertips? Could you imagine saving so much research time and piles of miles on your next trip?

The **How to Book** instructions, with estimated times for how long it takes to get the booking done, makes it all so easy for you (the time required is usually short, by the way).

### 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: 220,000 on American Airlines

68,000 Iberia Miles (Operating Airline)

[How to Book](#) [Summary](#) **69% OFF**

### How to Book online on Iberia

Estimated time: 3 to 6 minutes  
Save 23,688 to 48,511 miles per minute  
**BOOK BY PHONE: 1-800-994-0704**

- 1** Review FCF's Breakdown of Discounted Availability Closely (by Month and Seat Count) (5 to 15 seconds to 15 seconds) [More](#)
- 2** Check Availability for Your Specific Date with Airline Website (2 to 3 minutes to 3 minutes) [More](#)
- 3** Select Flights and Make Payment (2 to 3 minutes to 3 minutes) [More](#)

There you have it. Your power-packed guide for finding and booking the cheapest First and Business Class miles and points dream trips in 2022.

With ease.

Through FCF's Sweet Redeems.

An app like no other.

See you up front.





# How Good Are Your Connections? Why You May Be Connecting Flights All Wrong

January 2022

## **And why convenience-focused travelers love mixed airline itineraries...**

Connections matter. Just ask the NYPD detectives in the hit crime thriller, “The French Connection.”

They matter to flyers, too, bigtime — especially if they increase your inconvenience on a trip.

## CONVENIENCE IS SIMILAR IN IMPORTANCE TO FLYING COMFORT AS A CUSHIER SEAT

It's one more way you can make your traveling life easier. The trick is to find flight connections (when the itinerary dictates, anyway), that work for *you* — not the airline.

Savvy travelers know this, so they take a step back to get a more holistic view of their trip. They consider things like time of day for connections and layover times and factor it all into their planning.

Savvy-challenged travelers (most people) on the other hand, just buy a standard round-trip ticket and put up with the inconvenience of taking the default option. Hint: default options generally always favor the airline.

Planning isn't so critical for shorter flights. But for longer ones, say, across the Atlantic, it can have a huge impact on your cranky-meter.

### FLIGHT SMARTS 101: CONNECT EARLY

In this report, I'm talking about where and when your connections take place for a longer trip. If you're like me, the last thing you want is to make it through a long overnight flight only to face a dreaded connection when you land. You're tired. You're sick of flying (even if it's a nice Business or First Class experience). You're eager to go home or reach your final destination.

My solution? When you do have to connect, **mix and match carriers** for a more convenient, comfortable trip.

You do this by **booking each segment so that the connection is early in the trip, not at the end.**

By changing carriers to better serve your needs, *you're* the one who's in control, not the airline. This goes against some misconceptions I hear a lot: that you have to fly on your favorite airline round-trip (that will eliminate good opportunities, trust me); that you might pay more money (look at our examples below, one costs just \$47 more, another \$2 more and the last actually *saves* you \$1,494); or that you won't earn miles (you will as long as you stay within the airline alliance when you fly a code-share flight marketed by your airline).

Bottom line: You don't have to accept the inconvenient situation that standard round-trip tickets burden you with. There is another way. Let's look at some examples.

### ONEWORLD EXAMPLE: YOU LIVE IN AUSTIN AND WANT TO GO TO AMSTERDAM


In the example below, the inconvenient truth lies in the return segment. After 10 hours of flying (Amsterdam-Dallas on American), you feel exhausted. You have to collect your bags if you checked them, go through

security all over again, and schlep your way to another terminal to catch your flight back home to Austin. Sounds like fun — NOT.

Round trip · 1 · Business Class

Austin ↔ Amsterdam

Total price from \$3,924



Wed, Mar 9 · 2:25 PM – 10:55 AM\*<sup>1</sup>

American · British Airways

13 hr 30 min


AUS-AMS

1 stop

2 hr 55 min DFW

+13% emissions ⓘ

▼



Returning flight · Wed, Mar 16

+20% emissions ⓘ

Change flight

^

○ 1:05 PM · Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)

Travel time: 10 hr 35 min

○ 5:40 PM · Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW)

American · Business Class · Boeing 787 · AA 221

Ticket also sold by British Airways

2 hr layover · Dallas (DFW)


○ 7:40 PM · Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW)


Travel time: 1 hr 1 min


○ 8:41 PM · Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS)


American · First Class · Airbus A321 · AA 576


Ticket also sold by British Airways


 Lie flat seat


 Wi-Fi


 In-seat power & USB outlets


 On-demand video


 Carbon emissions estimate: 2,131 kg ⓘ

 Standard recliner seat

 Wi-Fi

 In-seat power & USB outlets

 Stream media to your device


 Carbon emissions estimate: 100 kg ⓘ

Or you could fly British Airways through London on the way home for about 47 bucks more and get the connection out of the way early, before arriving back in Austin after the long flight and going straight home.

*Taxi!*

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Round trip · 1 · Business Class
Total price from  
**\$3,971**




Wed, Mar 9 · 2:25 PM – 10:55 AM<sup>1</sup>  
American · British Airways

13 hr 30 min  
AUS-AMS

1 stop  
2 hr 55 min DFW

+17% emissions ⓘ



Returning flight · Wed, Mar 16

-5% emissions ⓘ

[Change flight](#)

7:10 AM · Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)  
Travel time: 1 hr 15 min

7:25 AM · Heathrow Airport (LHR)  
British Airways · Business Class · Airbus A319 · BA 423  
Ticket also sold by American

4 hr 45 min layover · London (LHR)

12:10 PM · Heathrow Airport (LHR)  
Travel time: 10 hr 35 min

5:45 PM · Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS)  
British Airways · Business Class · Airbus A350 · BA 191  
Ticket also sold by American, Finnair, Iberia

Average legroom (30 in)  
CO<sub>2</sub> Carbon emissions estimate: 117 kg ⓘ

Individual suite  
Wi-Fi  
In-seat power & USB outlets  
On-demand video  
CO<sub>2</sub> Carbon emissions estimate: 1,632 kg ⓘ

Connecting at the front end, when you're fresh, is waaaaay better.

## STAR ALLIANCE EXAMPLE: YOU LIVE IN DENVER AND WANT TO GO TO MADRID.

Here again, you *could* accept the standard round-trip ticket on United and endure 9 hours of flying into Newark (I don't care if you are in Business Class, that's a long time in the air) before then having to jump on a connection to get home to Denver. Evidence below.

Round trip · 1 · Business Class

Denver ↔ Madrid

Total price from  
\$3,010

Thu, Feb 17 · 11:40 AM – 9:25 AM\*<sup>1</sup>  
United

13 hr 45 min  
DEN–MAD

1 stop  
2 hr 54 min EWR

Avg emissions ⓘ

Returning flight · Thu, Feb 24

Avg emissions ⓘ

Change flight

- 11:15 AM · Adolfo Suárez Madrid–Barajas Airport (MAD)
- Travel time: 8 hr 50 min
- 2:05 PM · Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR)

United · Business Class · Boeing 767 · UA 50  
Often delayed by 30+ min

3 hr 5 min layover · Newark (EWR)

- 5:10 PM · Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR)
- Travel time: 4 hr 21 min
- 7:31 PM · Denver International Airport (DEN)

United · First Class · Boeing 737 · UA 2660

- Lie flat seat
- Wi-Fi
- In-seat power & USB outlets
- On-demand video
- Carbon emissions estimate: 1,653 kg ⓘ

- Standard recliner seat
- Wi-Fi
- In-seat power outlet
- Stream media to your device
- Carbon emissions estimate: 442 kg ⓘ

Or for about 2 bucks more you can switch your airline to Lufthansa and front-load that connection (Madrid-Munich, just a couple hours or so flight) before flying straight home to Denver, as shown below.

Round trip · 1 · Business Class

Denver ↔ Madrid

Total price from  
\$3,012

Thu, Feb 17 · 11:40 AM – 9:25 AM\*<sup>1</sup>  
United · Brussels Airlines

13 hr 45 min  
DEN–MAD

1 stop  
2 hr 54 min EWR

Avg emissions ⓘ

Returning flight · Thu, Feb 24

Avg emissions ⓘ

Change flight

- 7:20 AM · Adolfo Suárez Madrid–Barajas Airport (MAD)
- Travel time: 2 hr 40 min
- 10:00 AM · Munich International Airport (MUC)

Lufthansa · Business Class · Airbus A320 · LH 1805

1 hr 50 min layover · Munich (MUC)

- 11:50 AM · Munich International Airport (MUC)
- Travel time: 10 hr 45 min
- 2:35 PM · Denver International Airport (DEN)

Lufthansa · Business Class · Airbus A350 · LH 480  
Ticket also sold by United

- Average legroom (32 in)
- Carbon emissions estimate: 257 kg ⓘ

- Lie flat seat
- Wi-Fi
- In-seat power & USB outlets
- On-demand video
- Carbon emissions estimate: 1,803 kg ⓘ

## SKYTEAM EXAMPLE: YOU LIVE IN SEATTLE AND WANT TO GO TO ROME.


We're talking some serious distances here, so even more reason to make the connection work for you. In the

typical schedule below, you arrive in the U.S. after a 10-hour flight from Rome to New York on Delta, only to drag yourself to a connection back home.

Round trip · 1 · Business Class

Seattle ↔ Rome

Total price from  
\$5,327



Tue, Aug 2 · 7:15 AM – 7:30 AM<sup>\*1</sup>

Delta · Air France, KLM

15 hr 15 min


SEA–FCO

1 stop

1 hr 45 min BOS

+12% emissions ⓘ

▼



Returning flight · Tue, Aug 9

+20% emissions ⓘ

Change flight

▲

○ 9:30 AM · Leonardo da Vinci International Airport (FCO)

Travel time: 9 hr 55 min

○ 1:25 PM · John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)

Delta · Business Class · Airbus A330 · DL 183

Ticket also sold by Air France, KLM

3 hr 20 min layover · New York (JFK)


○ 4:45 PM · John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)


Travel time: 6 hr 22 min


○ 8:07 PM · Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)


Delta · Business Class · Boeing 757 · DL 452


Ticket also sold by Air France, KLM


 Lie flat seat


 Wi-Fi


 In-seat power & USB outlets


 Stream media to your device


 Carbon emissions estimate: 1,550 kg ⓘ

 Lie flat seat

 Wi-Fi

 In-seat power & USB outlets


 Stream media to your device

 Carbon emissions estimate: 1,187 kg ⓘ

Or you can switch your airline to Air France and front-load that connection (Rome-Paris, just 2 hour or so flight) before flying straight home to Seattle, as shown below. And on top of that, you'll have a couple hundred dollars more in your wallet. Talk about convenience.

Page 6 of 7


Round trip · 1 · Business Class
Total price from  
**\$3,833**



**Tue, Aug 2 · 7:15 AM – 7:15 AM<sup>1</sup>**  
Delta, ITA

**15 hr**  
SEA–FCO

**1 stop**  
1 hr 40 min BOS


+25% emissions ⓘ




**Returning flight · Tue, Aug 9**

-10% emissions ⓘ

Change flight



○

6:25 AM · Leonardo da Vinci International Airport (FCO)

AF

Travel time: 2 hr 15 min

○

8:40 AM · Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG)

Air France · Business Class · Airbus A321 · AF 1005  
Ticket also sold by Delta

**1 hr 40 min layover · Paris (CDG)**

○

10:20 AM · Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG)


DL


Travel time: 10 hr 45 min


○


12:05 PM · Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)


Delta · Business Class · Airbus A330 · DL 115



Average legroom (30 in)



In-seat USB outlet



On-demand video



Carbon emissions estimate: 237 kg ⓘ


Lie flat seat


Wi-Fi


In-seat power & USB outlets


Stream media to your device


Carbon emissions estimate: 1,814 kg ⓘ

To learn more about “downgrading” your Business Class seat to intelligently save money, read our Mixed Cabin article found [here](#) and [here](#).

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# How to Get a Seat to London That's 1.5 Inches Wider for \$1,914 Less Cost

January 2022

## **Pay or save \$638 per ½ Inch... The choice is yours**

What if I told you that you could save \$1,914 on a Business Class trip across the pond and even get a wider seat — simply by being smart about the flight?

We discussed this in special reports about mixed-class flying, found [here](#) and [here](#). To make this work best, you want to leverage a mixed cabin strategy with partners that have the best Premium Economy seats for the return segment.

Let's keep a couple stats in mind: the average American male is 5 feet 9 inches. The average American woman is 5 feet 4 inches.

That suggests that legroom isn't as important as seat width for many, given the average American is 'wider' nowadays than 'taller'... which makes seats with more width feel much less cramped, overall.

And guess what? We've found a way you can get a wider seat and pay a lot less for the privilege.

## NEW YORK – LONDON

On the New York-London route, for example, if you buy a Business Class round-trip for \$4,717 on Delta, you're spending an extra \$1,914 — or \$638 per 1/2 inch — compared to booking Virgin Atlantic's Premium Economy for the return segment. And that's despite Virgin's Premium Economy seat being 1.5 inches *wider* than Delta's Business Class seat. I know, right?!

**DELTA** | NYC - LON | Round Trip | Sep 13-20 | 1 Passenger | [MODIFY](#) | [SIGN UP](#) | [LOG IN](#) | [3](#) | [Q](#)

[Book Better. Fly Better.](#)

**Trip Summary** SKY PRIORITY

[Start Over](#) | **1** Trip Summary | [2](#) Review & Pay | [3](#) Confirmation

[Book Confidently Now with No Change Fees Later](#)  
Book your next trip now and enjoy more peace of mind with no change fees. Excludes Basic Economy travel that departs after December 31, 2021.  
Terms apply.

**Trip Total** [Currency Calculator](#)

1 Passenger

**Flights** **\$4,325.00**

**Taxes, Fees & Charges** **\$391.77**

**Amount Due** **\$4,716.77 USD**

<b>Outbound</b> <a href="#">Change Flight</a>	DL1 JFK ▶ LHR	Tue, Sep 13	WED, SEP 14 8:00pm - 8:10am	Nonstop, 7h 10m Delta One®	▼
<b>Return</b> <a href="#">Change Flight</a>	DL2 LHR ▶ JFK	Tue, Sep 20	TUE, SEP 20 10:00am - 1:15pm	Nonstop, 8h 15m Delta One®	▼

But if you buy a Delta Business Class outbound ticket for the night flight in a seat you will sleep in, and return in Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy on a day flight in a seat you likely won't sleep in that is 1.5 inches wider, the round-trip cost is \$2,803. That means you'll spend \$1,914 less, which equals a savings of \$638 per *extra* half inch. Now *that's* a deal.

NYC - LON

Round Trip

Sep 13-20

1 Passenger

MODIFY

SIGN UP

LOG IN

3

Book Better. Fly Better.

Start Over

1 Trip Summary

2 Review & Pay

3 Confirmation

SKY PRIORITY

Book Confidently Now with No Change Fees Later

Book your next trip now and enjoy more peace of mind with no change fees. Excludes Basic Economy travel that departs after December 31, 2021.

Terms apply.

Mixed-experience Itinerary

You have selected a combination of experiences for this trip.

Details

Outbound

Change Flight

DL1

JFK → LHR

Tue, Sep 13

WED, SEP 14

8:00pm - 8:10am

Nonstop, 7h 10m

Delta One®

Return

Change Flight

DL5997<sup>1</sup>

LHR → JFK

Tue, Sep 20

TUE, SEP 20

9:15am - 12:35pm

Nonstop, 8h 20m

Premium

Trip Total

Currency Calculator

1 Passenger

Flights

Taxes, Fees & Charges

Amount Due

\$2,411.00

\$391.77

\$2,802.77 USD

Simply book the Virgin Atlantic B787-900 or A330-300 from New York to London. Note that this does not work as well with [Virgin's A350-1000](#) as the seats are a ½ inch narrower than Delta's Business Class. You can crunch similar numbers (and coddle those hip bones) out of Boston and Seattle, as detailed below.

## VIRGIN ATLANTIC PREMIUM ECONOMY



[B787-900](#) 22 Inches Wide / Reclines up to 8 inches / 38 inches of legroom

[A330-300](#) 21 Inches Wide / Reclines up to 7 inches / 38 inches of legroom

Route	Delta	Virgin Atlantic	Typical Business Class Fare on a Delta-Operated Flight Costs	The Airline You Want to Fly Home in Premium Economy Is	Virgin's Premium Economy Seat Compared to Delta's Business Class Seat Gives You an Extra	To Get 1.5 Extra Inches of Width in Delta Business Class Over Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy Costs	Total Saving in Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy Over Delta Business Class Is
New York - London	767-400	A330-300	\$4,714	VS (bookable on delta.com)	1.5 Inches	\$638 per 1/2 inch	\$1,914

Route	Delta	Virgin Atlantic	Typical Business Class Fare on a Delta-Operated Flight Costs	The Airline You Want to Fly Home in Premium Economy Is	Virgin's Premium Economy Seat Compared to Delta's Business Class Seat Gives You an Extra	To Get 1.5 Extra Inches of Width in Delta Business Class Over Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy Costs	Total Saving in Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy Over Delta Business Class Is
Boston - London		B787-900	\$4,242			\$321 per 1/2 inch	\$965
Seattle - London			\$4,292			\$245 per 1/2 inch	\$865

Delta vs Virgin Atlantic	Premium Economy				Business Class			
Airline/Aircraft	B767-400	B787-900	A330-300	A350-1000	B767-400	B787-900	A330-300	A350-1000
<a href="#">Delta</a> Seat Width	19.9-20	-	-	-	19.0-19.5	-	-	-
<a href="#">Virgin Atlantic</a> Seat Width	-	21	21	18.5	-	22	22	20

## BOSTON – LONDON

By following this approach, if you buy a Business Class round-trip fare on the Boston-London route for \$4,242 on Delta, you actually spend an extra \$965, or \$321 per 1/2 inch more of seat width, compared to Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy.

But if you buy Business Class outbound for the night flight in a seat you will sleep in, and return in Premium Economy, same flight, in a seat you likely won't sleep in that is 1.5 inches wider, the round-trip will cost \$3,277 on Virgin Atlantic and you'd spend \$965, saving \$321 per 1/2 inch.

## SEATTLE – LONDON

On the Seattle-London route if you buy Business Class round-trip for \$4,292 on Delta you are spending an extra \$865, or \$245 per extra 1/2 inch of seat width, compared to Virgin Atlantic Premium Economy.

But if you buy Business Class outbound, a night flight, you'll probably sleep in your seat. Then you return in Premium Economy during the day when you'll be watching a movie or be on your computer or mobile device, from a seat that is 1.5 inches wider, and not trivial. This round-trip on Virgin Atlantic will save you \$865.

The takeaway? Play musical chairs to save big to London.