



## How to work with what actually exists, plus the moves that multiply a smaller map

Here's a number worth sitting with: a round-trip Business Class ticket from New York to Naples, Italy, this summer on United is running \$5,360 to \$7,120 right now.

It's not any better to Tokyo, Rio, or Sydney, either.

So our research team did what we always do. We checked hundreds of United routes across four continents – Europe, Asia, South America, the Pacific – hunting for genuine **mileage upgrade availability**.

The kind where you pair an economy fare with miles and a \$500-ish surcharge each way and land in **Business Class for 25% to 60% off.**

## WHAT DID WE FIND?

Asia: goose eggs.

South America: goose eggs.

South Pacific: goose eggs.

Most of the map we wrote about a year ago? Gone.

Sad.

What's left is real. But it's honest: a handful of routes to Europe and one quiet wildcard to the Pacific.

Here's how to work it.

## THE FANTASY DIED. THE OPPORTUNITY DIDN'T.

The fantasy was always beautiful: your miles are a currency you spend anywhere, anytime, on any route worth flying.

Accumulate. Redeem. Fly Business Class or First for free. Simple. Elegant.

That's mostly fiction now.

And getting more fictional by the month it seems.

The reality in 2026: The routes with genuine United upgrade availability have contracted to a short list. If your dates don't flex, your route doesn't change, and you're searching the way you always have, the United's mileage upgrade game has mostly stopped delivering for you.

Here's the shift. The travelers still flying up front on miles aren't finding better inventory. They're asking a **different question.**

Stop searching for trips. Start hunting bridge routes.

## THE BRIDGE ROUTES – YOUR NEW SEARCH TERM

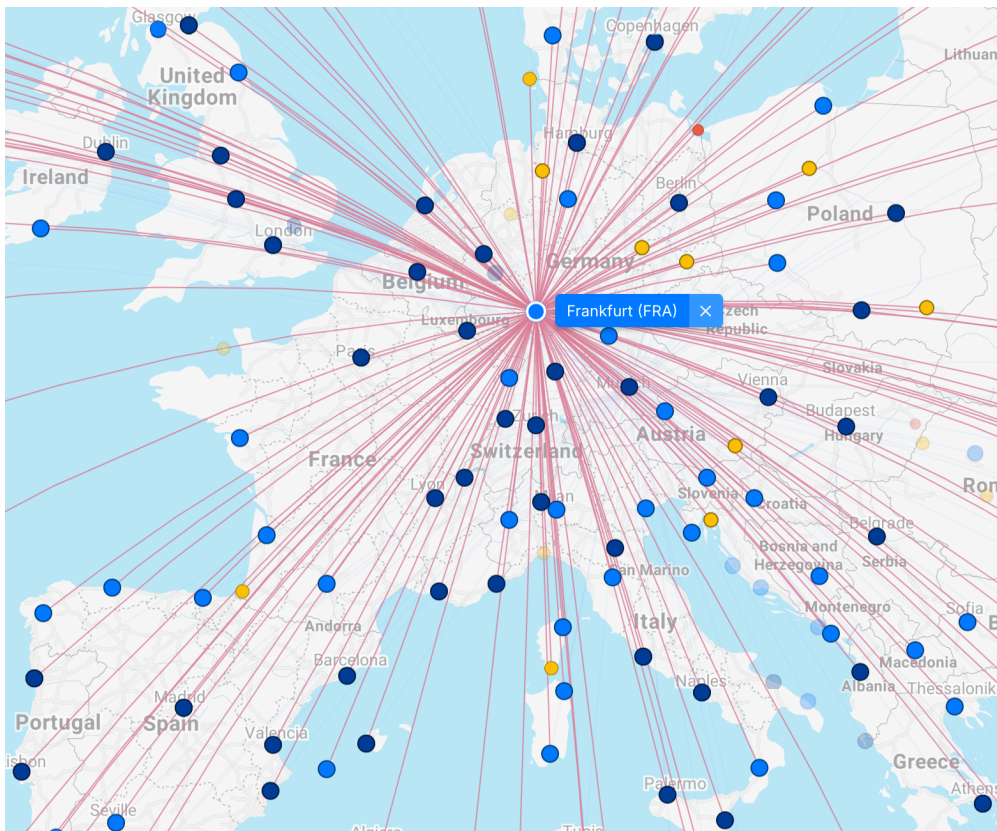
This is especially true with mileage upgrade tickets **when you're often tacking on connections at both ends of the bridge flight** – if only because it's easier then, since you're flying on a paid economy ticket that rarely has inventory issues on the shorter connecting flights.

A bridge route in this case is the long-haul segment where genuine upgrade availability actually exists right now. Washington–Frankfurt is a bridge route, for example.

Nobody goes to Frankfurt. You're likely going to Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Venice, Athens, Krakow, or Istanbul. Frankfurt is just the on-ramp.

Frankfurt works great with United because of their partnership with Lufthansa. Take a look at all the big and little cities you can get to via Lufthansa by using a United's transatlantic flight, which you can upgrade with miles.

*Lufthansa Flights From FRA on FlightConnections.com*



Lufthansa flies nonstop from Frankfurt to over 100 cities in Europe. Every single one is theoretically reachable via your upgraded United flight to Frankfurt.

One bridge. Many trips.

**That's not a tip. That's Upgrade Dynamics: a single leverage point that expands the option set by an order of magnitude.**

The bridge doesn't limit your destination. It unlocks it. For everyone in that network, all at once.

**It works the same way within North America.** United has countless flights to its gateways from many small U.S. cities.

## **WHEN THE ROUTE TAKES YOU ALL THE WAY**

Not every route needs a connection on the far end.

Newark to Naples is on the current list of routes United is offering us some crumbs.

And if you're going to Naples, you're already done. **The Amalfi Coast** is a taxi ride from the airport. Capri is a ferry. Positano is right there, draped across the cliff the way it looks in every photo you've ever seen.

You step off a United Business Class flight and you are, without exaggeration, in the middle of one of the most beautiful places on earth.



No connection. No onward hop. No positioning. That's the gift. Some routes deliver you directly into the dream. Those are the ones to move on first.

## **THE OPEN-JAW COMPOUNDER: HOW YOU MUST THINK NOWADAYS**

Here's what the availability data revealed that should change your mindset: **Return flights from Europe to the U.S. are consistently denser with mileage upgrades** than outbounds. Sometimes twice as dense. Sometimes more.

If you search round trips from your home airport, that asymmetry is invisible and useless. If you treat a trip as two separate legs – if only **when you're planning**, not necessarily when you're booking mileage upgrades – it becomes a second move.

And a powerful one.

Most travelers can't see this move because they were taught to book round trips from their home airport. Opportunity travelers [don't book backwards](#). They find the bridge, then build the trip around it.

This is Step 3 of the Upgrade Process – **Options** – doing real work. When the universe of round-trip availability collapses, the intelligent move isn't to search harder for what used to exist.

It's to see the options that are there, waiting to be considered differently.

## BEHIND THE BRIDGE AND BEYOND THE BRIDGE

One more multiplier before we get to the few routes you can leverage now.

The bridge routes in the FCF's Cheat Sheet below all connect through United's major Atlantic gateways – New York/Newark, Washington Dulles, Chicago, San Francisco. Those gateways offer connections from countless U.S. cities.

Live in Indianapolis? Des Moines? Nashville? Raleigh? Worst case, the positioning flight to the gateway is just an economy leg (sometimes the upgrade will be available domestically) on the same ticket – minor friction, but not a deal-breaker.

On the European side, your Star Alliance partners – Lufthansa, Austrian, Swiss, LOT, Brussels Airlines, and others – connect you from the gateway city to your final destination. Same ticket.

## THE SOUTH PACIFIC FOOTNOTE

One quiet wildcard sits outside Europe entirely: **San Francisco–Tahiti**.

Inventory is small but steady on short-notice – and unusually consistent across both outbound and return. This isn't a route to engineer your year around. But it's absolutely a route for the **bags-packed traveler** or someone **already with a ticket** that's perhaps more expensive and/or in a lower class of service, which can be [cancelled and upgraded](#).

If you're that person, keep Tahiti on your radar. Nice problem to have.

## THE BRIDGE ROUTES: WHAT'S ACTUALLY ON THE BOARD

Route	Outbound			Return		
	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month	4 to 8 Days per Month	9 to 12 Days per Month	13+ Days per Month
Newark - Geneva	May			May	May	
Newark - Naples	May, Aug.	Sept.		June		May
Washington - Brussels	Sept., March			Sept., Dec., Jan.	Jan., Feb., March	
Chicago - Frankfurt	March			March		
Chicago - Brussels	Sept., Jan.	Feb., March		Jan., Feb.	Feb., March	
Newark - Berlin	April			April		
Newark - Zurich	May			June, March	May	
Washington - London	April					April
Washington - Frankfurt	Sept., March	May		Sept., Dec. to Feb.	May, June	March
Chicago - London	April, Aug.			Aug.		April, May
San Francisco - Tahiti	April			April		

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

## WHO THIS WORKS FOR – AND WHO IT DOESN'T

Not everyone.

This works for you if:

- You're a United elite-status traveler who has fully accepted that mileage tickets earn zero elite credit – and you're treating each upgrade redemption as a pure value play, period.
- You're sitting on a MileagePlus balance wondering where to spend it before the next quiet devaluation trims another 20% off the value you've been carrying.
- You're a Chase points collector. Points transfer to United.

The same bridge map is open to you even if you haven't flown United once this year. That's not a small footnote.

## TWO THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **United's website will sometimes fail you.** United's search engine can be dumb about constructing a bridge-plus-connection itinerary even when the upgrade inventory is clearly sitting there. Call United reservations directly. Tell them exactly what you want. Let them build the ticket.
- **Flexible dates are the multiplier.** Two or three days of date flexibility doesn't sound like much. On a short map with asymmetric availability, it often changes everything.

## THE TRANSFER

Here's the real reason this piece exists – and it has nothing to do with airline routes.

The map most people use to navigate the things they care about – career moves, investment decisions, the work that actually matters to them – is also contracting right now in many ways.

Old routes are thinning. Paths that worked a few years ago are congested or closed.

It might be tempting to conclude that one of your games isn't worth playing anymore.

Don't lose heart. The game might just be different.

A bridge isn't a destination. A bridge is what gets you from where you are to where you want to go – across terrain that no longer has a direct road.

**You don't need a perfect route. You need a bridge.**

Find the one that exists. Build the trip around it. Cross it.

The map you want might not be coming back soon.

The bridges on the map you have are real.

Find yours.



# The Open-Minded Opportunist's Unconventional Move to Get The World's Best First Class Seat

April 2026

## And planning for close-in opportunities – For Four or More Travelers

Etihad's First Class Apartment on the A380 – [my favorite seat and flight experience on the planet](#) – is available right now on short notice, using American Airlines miles.

Not everyone wants to fly to the Middle East right now. Fair. But here's the Upgrade Reality: Airlines don't put \$100+ million aircraft in airspace they consider dangerous. That's not how aviation works.

More importantly – this opportunity goes far beyond Abu Dhabi. The same 115,000 miles get you to destinations like **Delhi, Mumbai, Kathmandu, the Maldives, Seychelles, Zanzibar, and many others.**



Feeling exotic? Good. Keep reading.

This is Step 3 of the Upgrade Process in the wild: an unexpected option sitting in plain sight, waiting for the open-minded opportunist to recognize it.

We often call this [Opportunity Travel](#).

The Intelligence Principle: Most people think option expansion means more research, more analysis, more waiting for the perfect moment.

Not always.

Real option intelligence means staying alert to what's already available, then having the mental flexibility to act when something unconventional appears. That's today's move.

## TWO TYPES OF OPPORTUNISTS

**The Dreamer.** You've always wanted Etihad's First Apartment, the seat that changed what "First Class" means to me.

You have American miles collecting dust because good redemptions have been scarce. This is one of the best on earth. [Buy miles if you're short](#) to save a small fortune.

Before: "I have miles I can't use well."

After: "I have a confirmed Etihad First Apartment to the Maldives in 11 days."

That's the identity shift. That's where the real upgrade happens.

**The Optimizer.** You already have a trip booked – India, East Africa, the Indian Ocean. Maybe you booked one-way tickets, the way intelligent travelers often do. You have options. Remember the [Iterative Upgrade Mindset](#).

Here's the move: Cancel one leg. Replace it with this. The Outbound. The Return. Both.

You Decide.

You don't have to rebuild your entire itinerary. You upgrade the piece that's upgradeable. Outbound or return – whichever has space. That's what portfolio thinking looks like in practice: You're not starting over, you're optimizing what already exists.

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE OPPORTUNITY

Etihad flies to two North American cities: New York and Toronto. Right now, Toronto has availability on its A380, where "The Apartment" lives. **Availability for 4+ seats** can be had on most days over the next two weeks.

**See April dates:**

Sat, Apr 25  
YYZ to AUH  
115K

One way (per person) from  
115K miles  
+ \$59.70

Nonstop only

First

115K Lowest price this month

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 115K
26 115K	27 115K	28 115K	29 115K	30 --		

### 4-SEAT FIRST CLASS AVAILABILITY IN MAY

Thu, May 7  
YYZ to AUH  
115K

One way (per person) from  
115K miles  
+ \$59.70

Nonstop only

First

115K Lowest price this month

May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
					--	--
3	4 115K	5 115K	6 115K	7 115K	8	9
--					--	--

# NOT FLYING FROM CANADA? EXAMPLE ON A380 FIRST CLASS APARTMENT CHICAGO – MALDIVES IN MAY

Chicago, IL to Male, Maldives  
Tuesday, May 5, 2026

Calendar view showing dates from Sun, May 3 to Thu, May 7, 2026. Prices are 40K for all days.

Filter by: 2 stops, Airlines

39 results

Depart: ORD, Arrive: MLE, Duration: 35h 9m, 2 stops

Class selection: Main, Business, First (selected)

Price: One way 115K + \$28.90

Flight details:  
ORD - YYZ = AA3604 = E70-Embraer 170  
Operated by Envoy Air as American Eagle  
YYZ - AUH = EY22 = 388-Airbus A380  
Operated by Etihad Airways  
AUH - MLE = EY378 = 789-Boeing 787  
Operated by Etihad Airways

115,000 miles each way. \$28.90 in taxes. Against a cash price that regularly exceeds \$10,000.

## PLAN B

New York/JFK has limited First Class availability with Etihad on the B787, but note: that aircraft doesn't have The Apartment. If you want the full experience, Toronto is your gateway.

Getting to Toronto isn't difficult. Use [FCF's various positioning flight strategies](#) from many other North American cities or tack it on to long-haul flight if it's available.

**Up to four seats are available. Bring someone.**

## A NOTE ON TIMELINE

Current availability runs about two weeks out. My guess is that this will be a strategy that will **possibly work for many months**. That said, they'll probably just release availability a couple weeks out like they are now.

Reminds me about [planning ahead for short-notice opportunities](#).

Supply and demand work everywhere.

But it's the open-minded opportunist who can take advantage of it.





# ATTN New Yorkers: Get Paid \$390 to Fly First Class to the Caribbean (or 41% Off Your Next Trip to Europe) When Taking a Transcon

April 2026

## **The Three-Trips, One-Ticket Strategy (3T1T) – Edition 20: New Yorkers are eligible for Caribbean and European free or cheap bookends.**

Good news, sort of.

### **THE RANSOM GOT SMALLER. IT DIDN'T GO AWAY.**

Last month, Delta's typical round-trip Business Class fare JFK-LAX was running \$5,300 to \$7,700 nonstop depending on the month of travel.

Today, typical fares have dropped to \$4,100 to \$6,000 on most dates.

*Nonstop Delta JFK-LAX Roundtrip / Google Flights Screenshot / June & July Travel*

June							July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
	\$3,200	\$4,100	\$5,350	\$5,000	\$4,450	\$4,100				\$5,000	\$5,000	\$4,100	\$4,100
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
\$3,200	\$4,600	\$4,100	\$3,700	\$5,500	\$4,100	\$4,100	\$5,000	\$5,500	\$5,000	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,000	\$5,000
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
\$4,100	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$3,200	\$5,000	\$4,100	\$4,100	\$6,350	\$6,350	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
\$4,600	\$4,100	\$3,700	\$5,500	\$5,000	\$3,200	\$4,100	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	
\$4,100	\$4,100	\$5,000					\$5,000	\$5,350	\$5,350	\$6,350	\$6,350	\$6,350	

Feel better? Don't.

That's still double what the same seat cost a year ago. And try pricing August right now – Delta marches you straight back to \$7,700. The system now punishes the advance planner. Book ahead, get taxed.

Crazy.

*Nonstop Delta JFK-LAX Roundtrip / Google Flights Screenshot / Aug & Sept Travel*

August							September							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
						1				1	2	3	4	5
						\$6,700				\$5,450	\$5,450	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$5,450
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
\$6,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$5,450	\$3,200	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$5,950	\$5,450	\$5,450	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$8,200	\$5,950	\$5,450	\$5,450	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$5,450	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				
\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$7,700				
30	31													
\$7,700	\$5,450													

For non-redeys and 6AM fights, American and United are typically running about \$2,470 to \$3,560 roundtrip.

Here's the thing though – and it's the whole point of this piece:

**This isn't a fare problem. It's a Step 4 problem.**

Step 4 in the Upgrade Process is Decisions, and every decision is a trade-off.

## THE GHOST YOU KEEP PAYING FOR

The most common line I hear from FCF members who haven't checked the market lately: "But Bennett, last year I only paid \$1,600."

I know. That's the problem.

Upgrade Reality doesn't care what you paid last year. Reality keeps moving. The fare you remember is a ghost. The fare on the screen is the truth.

## EUROPE NOW IN PLAY

Two months ago, we showed [Californians how to bolt two one-way Business Class tickets to Hawaii \(\\$100\) or Tokyo \(\\$319\)](#) onto their transcontinental flight using the Two-Trips, One-Ticket strategy, or 2T1T.

We're now calling it 3T1T, because it's half of two different trips, and 100% of another trip. It's all a matter of perspective. We were calling in "two trips" because it's four long-haul segments, the equivalent of two round-trips. Regardless of your perspective, what impresses me about this strategy is that it's all on ONE ticket

Last month, we handed [New Yorkers the Hula Loophole](#) – two *destinations* on one ticket, cheaper than skipping Hawaii entirely.

Then something weird happened.

We were running fresh 3T1T searches for East Coast members when **Europe** started showing up on the screen, priced in ways that broke typical models.

And the **Caribbean** did something stranger. It didn't ride along for a small fee. On 20 United routes out of Newark, it **paid us to add it**.

Both are yours now.

## THE SANDWICH YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD ORDER

The transcon is the bread. Your round-trip Business Class JFK–LAX/SFO, by itself, is fine. Filling. Boring. Overpriced. The sandwich is what happens when you put something between two slices.

Here's the recipe, step by step.

Leg 1 – a one-way Business Class ticket that serves to return home from a Caribbean (or European) trip (#1).; Just buy a one-way to get it going, and return on this Leg 1 of your 3T1T ticket.

Legs 2 and 3 – your round-trip Business Class transcon to LAX or SFO. (Trip #2)

Leg 4 – a one-way Business Class ticket heading out to your next Caribbean (or European) trip (#3) that you'll take a month or maybe three later. Return home on a one-way award or fare ticket – or start another 3T1T.





Four segments. One ticket. One confirmation code. Built on google.com/travel/flights as a multi-city ticket and booked directly on the airline's site.

What this looks like for travelers to the adding Nassau and Aruba to your Transcon...

## Multi-city trip \$2,490

Business Class · 1 passenger · Lowest total price

**Selected flights** [Track prices](#) ⓘ





	<b>Wed, May 20</b> · 12:35 PM – 3:47 PM United	3 hr 12 min NAS-EWR	Nonstop	218 kg CO2e <span style="background-color: #e8f5e9;">-34% emissions</span> ⓘ	▼
	<b>Tue, Jun 16</b> · 2:15 PM – 5:13 PM United	5 hr 58 min EWR-LAX	Nonstop	627 kg CO2e Avg emissions ⓘ	▼
	<b>Mon, Jun 22</b> · 12:15 PM – 8:49 PM United	5 hr 34 min LAX-EWR	Nonstop	622 kg CO2e Avg emissions ⓘ	▼
	<b>Tue, Aug 25</b> · 9:14 AM – 2:00 PM United	4 hr 46 min EWR-AUA	Nonstop	303 kg CO2e <span style="background-color: #e8f5e9;">-35% emissions</span> ⓘ	▼

What this looks like adding Ireland to your Transcon...

## Multi-city trip \$5,708

Business Class · 1 passenger · Lowest total price

**Selected flights** [Track prices](#) ⓘ

	<b>Wed, May 27</b> · 1:15 PM – 3:49 PM Delta	7 hr 34 min DUB-JFK	Nonstop	1,229 kg CO2e Avg emissions ⓘ	▼
	<b>Fri, Jun 19</b> · 8:00 AM – 10:55 AM Delta	5 hr 55 min JFK-LAX	Nonstop	1,002 kg CO2e <span style="background-color: #ffe0b2;">+60% emissions</span> ⓘ	▼
	<b>Thu, Jun 25</b> · 9:30 AM – 6:20 PM Delta	5 hr 50 min LAX-JFK	Nonstop	863 kg CO2e <span style="background-color: #ffe0b2;">+40% emissions</span> ⓘ	▼
	<b>Tue, Jul 28</b> · 11:55 PM – 11:10 AM <sup>+1</sup> Delta	6 hr 15 min JFK-SNN	Nonstop	1,344 kg CO2e <span style="background-color: #e8f5e9;">-14% emissions</span> ⓘ	▼

**FOUR SEGMENTS.  
MULTIPLE DIFFERENT TRIPS.  
ONE TICKET.**

This is Step 3 in the Upgrade Process – Options – in real life. Options you didn't know existed aren't options. They're invisible. Someone has to show you the menu.

Quick note on why Leg 1 and Leg 4 are often different airports to the Caribbean – Nassau inbound, Aruba outbound for example; or two Europe, Dublin inbound, Shannon outbound; Madrid inbound, Barcelona outbound. You're usually not going to the same place twice. That said, to Europe the lowest fares typically price in and out of the same country. The Caribbean doesn't have that pattern.

## **STEP 4, AND THE TRADE-OFF YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE MAKING**

***"THERE ARE NO SOLUTIONS. ONLY TRADE-OFFS."  
– THOMAS SOWELL, RENOWNED ECONOMIST***

When you click "round-trip, nonstop, JFK-LAX," you think you're choosing a flight. You're not.

You're choosing to forfeit the **Caribbean – for free.**

You're choosing to forfeit **Europe – at a huge discount.**

You're choosing to pay retail for them later, separately, because you didn't see the trade on offer.

The 3T1T trade-off is this: a little planning in advance, maybe some flexibility, a willingness to let one ticket architect itself around multiple trips instead of one. In exchange, you get two Business Class one-ways attached to **a flight you were buying anyway.**

## **WHY NOW? THE ONE-TRICK PONY RETIRES**

Points/miles award seats in premium cabins are getting much harder to find, especially the less flexible you are. Transfer partners keep devaluing the sweet spots. Cash Business Class fares – not just transcons – are climbing on many routes.

Europe Business round-trips routinely clear \$5,000 now. Some are \$8,000.

That's dynamics. The game changed. One-trick ponies – miles-only, cash-only, single-strategy – end up paying retail for most of their travel life.

Published-fare architecture, the ability to see how airlines actually price multi-segment tickets, is the skill this era requires.

## FCF'S CARIBBEAN CHEAT SHEET

Twenty **United** routes out of Newark. Business Class throughout. **All nonstop**. Every single one makes your total ticket cheaper than buying the transcon alone. Sometimes this works with American and Delta, but the deal isn't as good. Pricing can be lower if you're willing to make connections.

Adding two one-way Business Class tickets to the Caribbean can lower the total if you play it right. The Caribbean trips don't cost you money. You get them for free.

Click the links in the far column, adjust the dates, mix-and-match the bookend cities. Your fares will shift from what you see here – they always do – but the architecture remains the same.

Flight #1 (inbound)	Flight #2	Flight #3	Flight #4 (outbound)	3T1T Fare	Typical Transcon R/T	Savings By Adding Two Legs	Pre-Baked Itineraries
Nassau-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Sint Maarten	\$2,734	\$2,880	<b>\$146</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Aruba	\$2,645	\$2,880	<b>\$235</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Bermuda	\$2,717	\$2,880	<b>\$163</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-SFO	SFO-EWR	EWR-Nassau	\$2,750	\$2,880	<b>\$130</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Grand Cayman-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Nassau	\$2,614	\$2,880	<b>\$266</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Antigua	\$2,830	\$2,880	<b>\$50</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Bermuda-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Nassau	\$2,719	\$2,880	<b>\$161</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Grand Cayman	\$2,744	\$2,880	<b>\$136</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Sint Maarten-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Montego Bay	\$2,634	\$2,880	<b>\$246</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Sint Maarten-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Nassau	\$2,758	\$2,880	<b>\$122</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>

Aruba-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Punta Cana	\$2,769	\$2,880	<b>\$111</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-SFO	SFO-EWR	EWR-Montego Bay	\$2,814	\$2,880	<b>\$66</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Santo Domingo-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Bermuda	\$2,764	\$2,880	<b>\$116</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-SFO	SFO-EWR	EWR-Grand Cayman	\$2,677	\$2,880	<b>\$203</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Sint Maarten-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Bermuda	\$2,763	\$2,880	<b>\$117</b>	Link
Nassau-EWR	EWR-SFO	SFO-EWR	EWR-Aruba	\$2,488	\$2,880	<b>\$392</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nassau-EWR	EWR-SFO	SFO-EWR	EWR-Antigua	\$2,840	\$2,880	<b>\$40</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Sint Maarten-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Aruba	\$2,818	\$2,880	<b>\$62</b>	Link
Grand Cayman-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Antigua	\$2,700	\$2,880	<b>\$180</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>
Aruba-EWR	EWR-LAX	LAX-EWR	EWR-Antigua	\$2,695	\$2,880	<b>\$185</b>	<a href="#">Link</a>

*\*You know how often fares change; these probably will too by the time you click on the links. That said, fiddle with the dates and cities, and you can see what's possible, fast.*

The champion: \$390 for a Newark-LAX transcon bookended by a one-way home from Nassau and a one-way out to Aruba months later. The Caribbean isn't just free. It's better than free.

## FCF'S EUROPE CHEAT SHEET

Europe Business Class standalone round-trips are typically \$4,300 to \$8,400 nowadays. The ransom isn't just for transcons anymore.

Attach two Europe one-ways as 3T1T bookends instead, and the math can shift hard – **20% to 48% off what Europe would cost you standalone**. Mostly on Delta. Some on American. All four-segment nonstops.

Better deals are out there if you are willing to make connections.

Airline	Flight #1 (inbound)	Flight #2	Flight #3	Flight #4 (outbound)	3T1T Fare	Transcon R/T	Cost for Europe	EU Trip Savings	Pre-Baked Itineraries
Delta	Dublin-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Shannon	\$5,690	\$ 5,000	\$690	\$5,211 / 48%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Shannon-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Dublin	\$5,690	\$5,000	\$690	\$4,322 / 43%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Dublin-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Dublin	\$5,684	\$5,000	\$684	\$3,931 / 41%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Lisbon-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Porto	\$6,384	\$5,000	\$1,384	\$4,351 / 41%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Lisbon-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Lisbon	\$6,393	\$5,000	\$1,393	\$4,342 / 40%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Reykjavik-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Reykjavik	\$5,876	\$5,000	\$876	\$3,867 / 40%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Rome-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Milan	\$6,972	\$4,297	\$2,675	\$4,313 / 38%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Naples-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Venice	\$6,951	\$4,297	\$2,654	\$4,449 / 39%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Berlin-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Frankfurt	\$7,071	\$4,297	\$2,774	\$3,589 / 34%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Madrid-JFK	JFK-SFO	SFO-JFK	JFK-Barcelona	\$6,465	\$4,197	\$2,268	\$5,061 / 44%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Madrid-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Barcelona	\$6,778	\$4,297	\$2,481	\$4,848 / 42%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Barcelona-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Barcelona	\$6,735	\$5,000	\$1,735	\$2,426 / 26%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Amsterdam-JFK	JFK-SFO	SFO-JFK	JFK-Amsterdam	\$7,468	\$5,050	\$2,418	\$1,813 / 20%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Athens-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Athens	\$7,576	\$5,000	\$2,576	\$1,994 / 22%	<a href="#">Link</a>
Delta	Berlin-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Berlin	\$7,370	\$5,050	\$2,320	\$2,477 / 25%	<a href="#">Link</a>

Delta	Stockholm-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Stockholm	\$5,926	\$ 4,297	\$1,629	\$1,998 / 25%	<a href="#">Link</a>
American	Barcelona-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Athens	\$5,226	\$2,570	\$2,656	\$1,780 / 25%	<a href="#">Link</a>
American	London-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-London	\$5,418	\$2,570	\$2,848	\$1,546 / 22%	<a href="#">Link</a>
American	Edinburgh-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-London	\$5,476	\$2,570	\$2,906	\$1,354 / 20%	<a href="#">Link</a>
American	Athens-JFK	JFK-LAX	LAX-JFK	JFK-Athens	\$5,353	\$2,570	\$2,783	\$1,368 / 20%	<a href="#">Link</a>

## WHO THIS IS FOR

Two kinds of people.

The first is the traveler who refuses to pay retail for premium cabins. She has the time, the patience, and the math instinct to know that sitting down for 30 or 60 focused minutes to save \$1,000 to \$4,000 is a trade worth making. Unless your hourly rate is \$2,000 to \$3,000 – the math eats retail alive. That's not thrift. That's Upgrade Intelligence applied to your own hourly rate.

The second is the traveler who **loves a splurge** but sometimes feels a **twinge of guilt** in the process. The suite at the Peninsula. The tasting menu at the place with the hard-to-pronounce name. The floor seats. The guilt is the problem, not the splurge.

3T1T fixes the guilt. Pocket a few thousand on the ticket, redirect it to the suite, and the suite isn't a splurge anymore – it's a line item funded by Leverage Intelligence.

## THE BUSINESS TRAVELER'S BACK DOOR

You have a conference in California. Your company covers Business Class. You were booking New York – Cali anyway.

Here's the 3T1T move: route the ticket as Nassau-EWR / EWR-LAX / LAX-EWR / EWR-Sint Maarten. Same Business Class seat to the conference. Same dates. Expense the Transcon portion as business travel – because that's exactly what it is. The Caribbean bookends? You paid less than the transcon alone.

*Old frame: I'm booking a business trip.*

Upgrade IQ frame: I'm building travel architecture, and my employer is funding the vacation.

## END THE STRATEGY OR LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL?

Your 3T1T ticket ends with your outbound to the Caribbean or Europe. What next? You have two options:

1. Book another 3T1T ticket, that jives with the architecture, seamlessly, or
2. Get a cheap one-way ticket home. Likely using a cash fare from the Caribbean or a [Sweet Redeem](#) if returning from Europe.

Two vacations a year becomes four. Four becomes six. The transcon you would have paid retail for six times is now the connective tissue of your entire travel calendar.

That's not travel planning. That's a travel operating system. Same compounding principle that makes a steady habit beat an occasional heroic effort. The math works for you instead of against you.

## TRADE-OFFS, NOT SOLUTIONS.

*Here's Sowell, in full this time:*

***"There are no solutions, there are only trade-offs; and you try to get the best trade-off you can get – that's all you can hope for."***

For a New York Business Class traveler in 2026, the best trade-off on the table is this: a little flexibility, a little planning, a willingness to think about your summer and fall trips together, and a willingness to let an expert architect the ticket around them.

In exchange: two Business Class one-ways, paid for by a transcon you were buying anyway. Sometimes for less than nothing.

The sandwich is real. Most people just keep ordering the bread.

See you up front.



# April 2026 Deals

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

## Sweet Redeems

### AFRICA

[Miles / Points > Single Seat > Royal Air Maroc > Business Class > Washington to Casablanca](#)

[Miles / Points > Single Seat > Royal Air Maroc > Business Class > New York to Casablanca](#)

[Miles / Points > Single Seat > Royal Air Maroc > Business Class > Toronto to Casablanca](#)

## **ASIA**

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > Japan Airlines > Business Class > San Francisco to Tokyo](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > Japan Airlines > Business Class > Seattle to Tokyo](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > Japan Airlines > Business Class > Chicago to Tokyo](#)

[Cathay Pacific Discount Business Class > 2+ Seats > San Francisco to Hong Kong > 2027 Travel](#)

[Cathay Pacific Discount Business Class > 2+ Seats > Vancouver to Hong Kong > 2027 Travel](#)

## **EUROPE**

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > SWISS > Business Class > Boston to Zurich](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > SWISS > Business Class > Chicago to Zurich](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > SWISS > Business Class > Washington to Zurich](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > Montreal to Vienna > 4+ Seats > 2027 Travel](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > SWISS > Business Class > New York to Zurich > 2027 Travel](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from Newark to Athens > 2+ Seats > 2027 Travel](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > Chicago to Vienna > 4+ Seats](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > Washington to Vienna > 4+ Seats](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from New York to Milan > 4+ Seats > 2027 Travel](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > American Airlines > Business Class > Charlotte to Munich > 2027 Travel](#)

[American Airlines > Business Class With Miles > from Boston to London > 4+ Seats > 2027 Travel](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > New York to Vienna > 4+ Seats](#)

[Miles / Points > 4+ Seats > American Airlines > Business Class > Charlotte to Frankfurt > 2027 Travel](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > Boston to Vienna > 4+ Seats](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > Montreal to Vienna > 4+ Seats > 2027 Travel](#)

[Austrian Airlines Business Class with Miles/Points > Washington to Vienna > 4+ Seats](#)

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from Chicago to London](#)

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from Newark to Berlin](#)

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

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

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from Newark to Naples](#)

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from Chicago to Brussels](#)

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from Chicago to Brussels](#)

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

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from Newark to Geneva](#)

[LOT Business Class with Miles/Points Easy from New York to Warsaw > 4+ Seats](#)

[120,000 R/T > Cash OR Miles > Business Class > KLM > Mexico City to Amsterdam > 4+ Travelers](#)

[Miles / Points > 2+ Seats > LOT Polish > Business Class > Chicago to Warsaw](#)

[81,000 Miles / Points R/T > Biz Class > 2+ Seats > Iberia > New York to Madrid](#)

[Use Star Alliance Miles \(or CC Points\) for Business Class from Washington DC to Lisbon > 2027 Travel](#)

[Use Star Alliance Miles \(or CC Points\) for Business Class from Newark to Porto](#)

## **MIDDLE PACIFIC**

[Miles & Cash > United Upgrade > Four Seat Opportunities > from San Francisco to Tahiti](#)

## **MIDDLE EAST**

[400,000 Miles / Points R/T > First Class > 4+ Seats > Etihad Airways > Toronto to Abu Dhabi](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from Orlando to Dubai > 2+ Seats > 2027 Travel](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from Boston to Dubai > 2+ Seats](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from Washington to Dubai > 4+ Seats](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from New York to Dubai > 2+ Seats](#)

[Miles and Points > Emirates Business Class from Dallas to Dubai > 2+ Seats](#)

## **SOUTH AMERICA**

[Miles > Cheap LATAM Business Class from New York to Santiago > 4+ Seats](#)

[American Airlines > First Class With Miles > from New York to Buenos Aires > 2+ Seats](#)

[American Airlines > Business Class With Miles > from New York to Buenos Aires > 4+ Seat](#)

# Special Published Fares



## AFRICA

[Money > Kilimanjaro > Fall/Winter > Biz Class > \\$3,043 to \\$4,373 R/T](#)

[Money > Nairobi > Biz Class > All Year > \\$3,610 to \\$4,168 R/T](#)

[Money > Johannesburg > Biz Class > Spring/Winter > \\$3,400 to \\$4,061 R/T](#)

[Money > Canada/USA to Morocco > All Year > Business with Royal Air Maroc > \\$1,834 to \\$3,347 USD R/T](#)

## ASIA

[Money > Manila > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,641 to \\$4,257 R/T](#)

[Money > Southeast Asia > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,199 to \\$4,331 R/T](#)

[Money > Colombo > Biz Class > All Year > \\$3,070 to \\$4,306 R/T](#)

[Money > Japan > Spring/Summer > Biz Class > \\$3,638 to \\$4,326 R/T](#)

## CARIBBEAN

[Money > Bridgetown > All Year > Biz Class > \\$1,049 to \\$1,308 R/T](#)

[Money > St. Lucia > Summer/Winter > Biz Class > \\$1,031 to \\$1,352 R/T](#)

[Money > San Juan > All Year > Biz Class > \\$622 to \\$908 R/T](#)

[Money > George Town, The Bahamas > All Year > Biz Class > \\$550 to \\$906 R/T](#)

[Money > Nassau > All Year > Biz Class > \\$587 to \\$908 R/T](#)

[Money > Aruba > All Year > Biz Class > \\$876 to \\$1,291 R/T](#)

[Money > St. Maarten > All Year > Biz Class > \\$889 to \\$1,303 R/T](#)

[Money > St. Thomas > All Year > Biz Class > \\$732 to \\$1,261 R/T](#)

[Money > Grand Cayman > All Year > Biz Class > \\$656 to \\$1,305 R/T](#)

## **CENTRAL AMERICA**

[Money > San Jose, Costa Rica > All Year > Biz Class > \\$813 to \\$990 R/T](#)

## **EUROPE**

[Money > Copenhagen > All Year > First Class > \\$4,901 to \\$5,822 R/T](#)

[Money > Budapest > All Year > First Class > \\$4,698 to \\$5,534 R/T](#)

[Money > Amsterdam > All Year > First Class > \\$4,922 to \\$5,833 R/T](#)

[Money > Switzerland > All Year > First Class > \\$5,097 to \\$5,853 R/T](#)

[Money > Italy > All Year > First Class > \\$4,555 to \\$5,623 R/T](#)

[Money > France > All Year > First Class > \\$4,920 to \\$5,800 R/T](#)

[Money > Spain > All Year > First Class > \\$4,344 to \\$5,818 R/T](#)

[Money > Prague > Spring/Summer > First Class > \\$4,858 to \\$5,760 R/T](#)

[Money > Croatia > Spring/Summer > First Class > \\$4,812 to \\$5,830 R/T](#)

[Money > from New York to Paris and Milan > Nonstop Biz Class > with La Compagnie from \\$2,809 R/T](#)

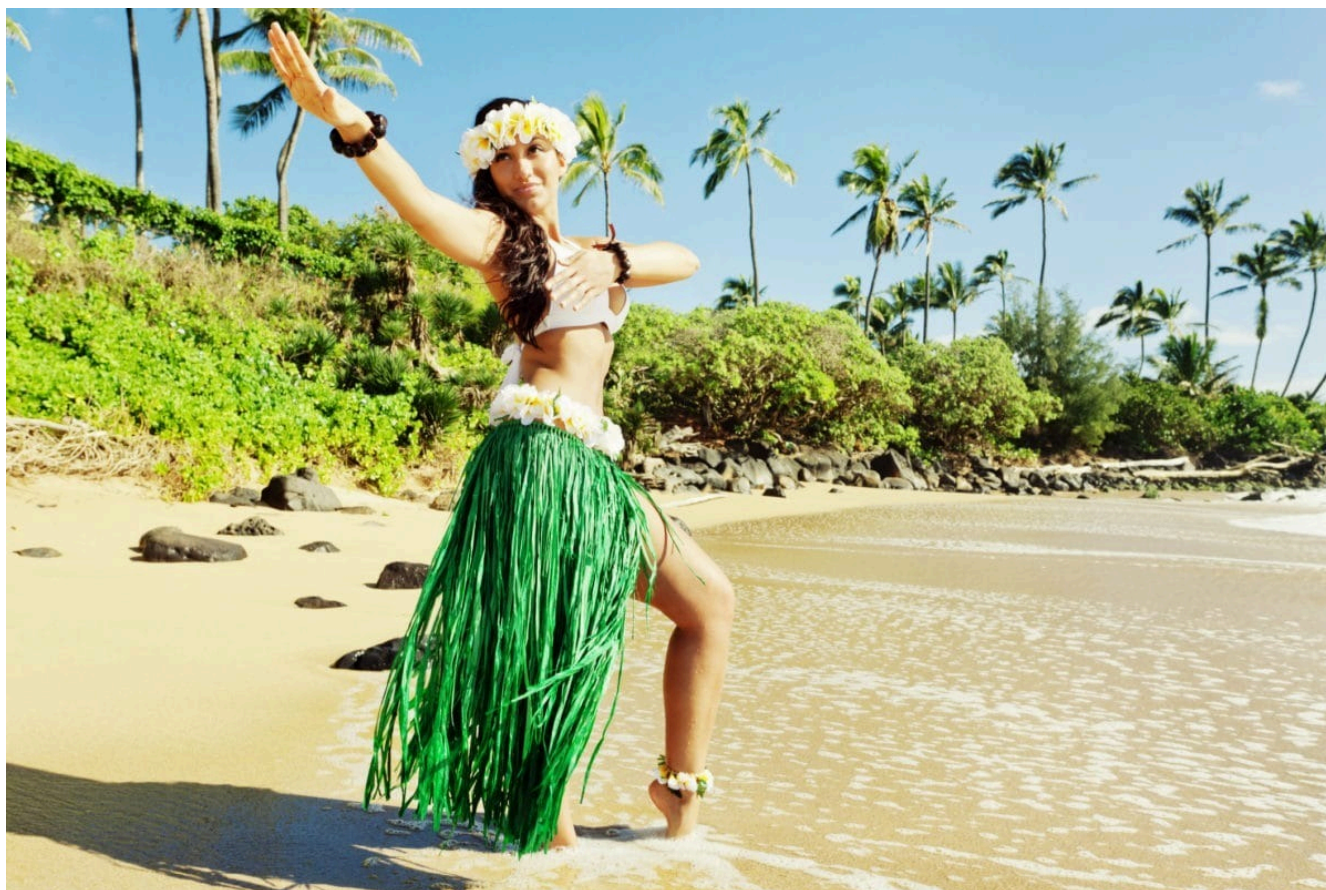
## HAWAII

[Money > Maui > Spring/Summer > Biz Class > \\$1,226 to \\$1,588 R/T](#)

[Money > Kona > All Year > Biz Class > \\$1,166 to \\$1,674 R/T](#)

[Money > Honolulu > Spring > Biz Class > \\$1,286 to \\$1,628 R/T](#)

[Money > Kauai > All Year > Biz Class > \\$1,166 to \\$1,664 R/T](#)



## INDIA

[Money > Bengaluru > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,256 to \\$3,903 R/T](#)

[Money > Mumbai > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,109 to \\$3,973 R/T](#)

[Money > New Delhi > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,220 to \\$3,990 R/T](#)

[Money > Chennai > All Year > Biz Class > \\$3,422 to \\$4,001 R/T](#)

## **MEXICO**

[Money > Cozumel > All Year > Biz Class > \\$717 to \\$1,040 R/T](#)

[Money > Cancun > All Year > Biz Class > \\$582 to \\$992 R/T](#)

[Money > Puerto Vallarta > All Year > Biz Class > \\$705 to \\$1,022 R/T](#)

[Money > Cabo San Lucas > Spring > Biz Class > \\$746 to \\$1041 R/T](#)

## **SOUTH AMERICA**

[Money > Santiago > All Year > Biz Class > \\$2,450 to \\$3,815 R/T](#)

## **SOUTH PACIFIC**

[Money > Australia and New Zeland > All Year > Biz Class > from \\$5,190 to \\$7,421 R/T](#)



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3 N/A	4 45k + \$24	5 45k + \$24	6 35k + \$19	7 45k + \$24	8 35k + \$19	9 35k + \$19
10 40k + \$19	11 45k + \$24	12 45k + \$24	13 45k + \$19	14 N/A	15 35k + \$19	16 35k + \$19
17 N/A	18 45k + \$24	19 N/A	20 N/A	21 N/A	22 N/A	23 35k + \$19
24 35k + \$19	25 N/A	26 N/A	27 45k + \$19	28 45k + \$19	29 35k + \$19	30 35k + \$19
31 35k + \$19						

 <p>AA 255 8:00 am ..... 11:10 am JFK ..... LAX Nonstop 6h 10m</p> <p>AA 255 — Operated by American Airlines</p>	<p>Main 17.5k pts + \$19 One way</p>	<p>Business 35k pts + \$19 One way</p>
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