



FCF's Perspective On Emirates Award Changes and How You Can Still Save Up to \$9,454 / 58%

July 2021

**Book flights now for travel through May 2022 and save up
58%.**

First the bad news. Emirates is no longer offering a tiered-award structure, having discontinued their First Class Flex Classic Rewards. That leaves us with their First Class Flex Plus Classic Rewards, which were the higher priced option for First Class round-trip and one-way bookings. Cue sad-faced emoji.

Happily, there's also good news. Emirates is an Amex partner, so you can buy points at 2.5 cents each. So even if you pay the Flex Plus (everyday) Classic Reward cost to Dubai, you are still saving up to \$9,454/58%.

Before and after First Class award costs...

To/From Dubai	Regular Published Fare	Cost Before Price Increase	Value Per Mile: Before	Cost After Price Increase	Value Per Mile: Now
Boston	\$14,596	217,500	6.7¢	272,500	5.4¢
Chicago	\$14,596	217,500	6.7¢	272,500	5.4¢
Los Angeles	\$16,266	247,500	6.6¢	310,000	5.2¢
Newark	\$14,596	217,500	6.7¢	272,500	5.4¢
New York	\$14,596	217,500	6.7¢	272,500	5.4¢
San Francisco	\$16,266	247,500	6.6¢	310,000	5.2¢
Seattle	\$16,266	247,500	6.6¢	310,000	5.2¢
Washington, DC	\$14,956	217,500	6.9¢	272,500	5.5¢

It's also worth noting that if you have Japan Airline miles or Marriott points, you can still book Emirates First Class through September 1 for travel up to 330 days out.

Dubai Is Now Open to Tourists

The only requirement is that you'll have to present a valid negative COVID-19 PCR test taken no more than 72 hours before departure.

Emirates also has a [vast route network beyond Dubai](#). [Visitor info here](#).

What You Can Book Now: First Class

Emirates A380	Depart			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
San Francisco	March		April, May			April, May
Washington, DC	Aug., April	Jan., Feb.	March, May	Aug., Sept.	May	

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

FIRST CLASS A380 SEAT

Emirates has reintroduced the spacious A380 on its routes from New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. This is a great ride, frankly, one of the best First Class suites in the world. The shoulder-high enclosed compartment offers sliding doors for optimum comfort and privacy during the flight. And depending on the specific aircraft and route, the number of suites ranges from 8 to 14, in a 1x2x1 configuration.

Then it gets personal. Each suite has an 80.5" lie-flat seat, a mini-bar, vanity table, mirror, wardrobe, and a 27" monitor to catch up on all those movies you've been meaning to see. A380 suite passengers also get to use the in-flight Shower Spas, that's a cool (or steaming hot) experience in itself. [Check it out here.](#)



COST COMPARISON

While it's a bummer that Emirates changed their award chart options, THIS chart will demonstrate there is still good opportunity, especially when you check out the last two columns that show how much you'll still save by using miles. Sure it's an expensive experience, but in my mind, it's well worth it for many.

Sample Cost Comparison When Using Amex: From San Francisco

Cost: Before / Now	Amex Points Required	Cost Per Point	Total Cost	Regular Published Fare	Difference	
Before	247,500	2.5¢	\$6,188	\$16,266	\$10,079	62%
Now	310,000		\$7,750		\$8,516	52%

LOW OR NO EMIRATES MILES?

Getting Emirates miles is relatively simple. They're a points transfer partner with three major credit card reward programs — Amex, Chase, and Marriott — so it's easy to get Emirates miles. Our research shows that transfer times from Amex and Chase are nearly instantaneous, while Marriott points can take up to three days.

NO AMEX POINTS? NO PROBLEM.

You can buy up to 500,000 Amex Rewards points per year for just 2.5 cents each. Given that the baseline First Class fare from San Francisco to Dubai is \$16,266, you can buy 310,000 Amex Rewards Points for \$7,750, and add in taxes with the Emirates loyalty program for around \$400, to **save \$8,516** — that's 52% off.



How to enjoy international seat comforts on current domestic flights, now...

Many of you know that on most North America and Hawaii routes, the seats up front are only slightly better, and (believe it or not) often even *less* comfortable, than some Premium Economy seats on international flights. Here's the truth: There are seats, and then there are *seats*.

And right now, thanks to the lockdown's causing airlines to pull their premium aircraft off international routes, there's a new "wing" (the collective noun for aircraft) of domestic flights that are offering those plush international seats.

So for travelers looking to hit the skies in comfort, the trick is to know which flights are offering them.

SWEET SEATS

All routes are not created equal. Take American's Phoenix-Maui route, which flies on both A321s and B777s. The fares are exactly the same, but the seats are not. Business Class on the B777s recline to 180 degrees, but the A321s only recline a few inches. Or take United's Chicago-Denver route, which flies on both B737s and B777s, with the same fares. The Business Class on B777s recline to 180 degrees, but the B737s only recline a few inches. That's a big difference in comfort for no difference in price. Note the highlighted differences in these screenshots...



Departure · Mon, Jul 5

Select flight

\$1,796
round trip

9:15 AM · Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX)

Travel time: 6 hr 26 min

12:41 PM · Kahului Airport (OGG)

American · First Class · Airbus A321neo · AA 355

Standard recliner seat

In-seat power & USB outlets

Stream media to your device



Departure · Mon, Jul 5

Select flight

\$1,796
round trip

11:30 AM · Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX)

Travel time: 6 hr 12 min

2:42 PM · Kahului Airport (OGG)

American · First Class · Boeing 777 · AA 432

Lie flat seat

Wi-Fi

In-seat power & USB outlets

On-demand video



Departure · Mon, Jul 5

Select flight

\$684
round trip

8:15 AM · Denver International Airport (DEN)

Travel time: 2 hr 27 min

11:42 AM · O'Hare International Airport (ORD)

United · First Class · Boeing 737MAX 9 Passenger · UA 416

Standard recliner seat

Wi-Fi

In-seat power outlet

Stream media to your device



Departure · Mon, Jul 5

Select flight

\$684
round trip

9:50 AM · Denver International Airport (DEN)

Travel time: 2 hr 25 min

1:15 PM · O'Hare International Airport (ORD)

United · First Class · Boeing 777 · UA 763

Lie flat seat

Wi-Fi

In-seat power & USB outlets

On-demand video

IFS AND BUTS. HOW TO GET A FREE IN-CLASS SEAT UPGRADE

Your odds of getting an international Business Class seat are 100% on American's Los Angeles- and Las Vegas-to-Miami; Charlotte-, Chicago-, and Dallas-to-Honolulu; and Dallas-to-Kona and Maui routes. That's

because they only feature the better seats. Your odds of getting an international Business Class seat from Phoenix to Honolulu or Maui are 50%.

On United, the chances of getting an international Business Class seat on a domestic flight aren't so great, although they are on the Transcon and Washington, DC-San Francisco route, along with a bunch of others to Hawaii, including Chicago to Honolulu, Kona, and Maui; Denver to Kauai, Kona, and Maui; Houston, Newark, and Washington, DC, to Honolulu; and Newark to Maui.

Your odds of getting an international Business Class seat on Delta are 100% on the Atlanta – San Diego and Portland routes. Las Vegas to Atlanta six out of seven flights have international aircraft. Atlanta – New York has 22 flights but only one has an international aircraft. Of six routes to Hawaii, five have the international aircraft, Los Angeles to Honolulu your odds are 25% while Atlanta, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City and Seattle your odds are 100%.

KNOW YOUR SEAT NUMBERS

For North America and Hawaii, if you know American's 23, Delta's 41, and United's 32 flights that use an international aircraft with those comfortable international Business/First Class seats, you'll have a simple way to get an **in-class seat upgrade**. That's right, a significant seat upgrade by simply knowing where to find them.

Where are they? Glad you asked. Here are the routes showing the total number of flights, and those that offer the better seats.

American Business From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
Boston - Miami	6	2
Charlotte - Miami	8	1
Dallas - Chicago	9	1
Dallas - Las Vegas	9	1
Dallas - Los Angeles	12	3
Dallas - Miami	8	3
Dallas - Philadelphia	7	1
Dallas - Phoenix	10	1
Las Vegas - Chicago	4	2
Las Vegas - Miami	2	2
Los Angeles - Chicago	8	1

American Business From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
Los Angeles - Miami	6	6
New York - Miami	16	5
Orlando - Chicago	5	1
Orlando - Philadelphia	4	1
Charlotte - Honolulu	1	1
Chicago - Honolulu	1	1
Dallas - Honolulu	2	2
Dallas - Kona	1	1
Dallas - Maui	2	2
Phoenix - Honolulu	2	1
Phoenix - Maui	2	1

Based on July travel date, varies on certain days of the week.

United Business Class From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
Chicago - Denver	9	2
Chicago - Houston	9	1
Chicago - Los Angeles	8	1
Chicago - Orlando	5	1
Chicago - San Francisco	7	2
Chicago - Washington, DC	4	1
Denver - Houston	9	2
Denver - Newark	6	1
Houston - Los Angeles	8	1
Houston - Newark	7	2
Houston - San Francisco	6	2
New York (JFK) - Los Angeles	2	2

United Business Class From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
New York (JFK) - San Francisco	2	2
Newark - Las Vegas	4	1
Newark - Los Angeles	5	3
Newark - San Francisco	5	3
Washington, DC - Los Angeles	3	1
Washington, DC - San Francisco	3	3
Chicago - Honolulu	1	1
Chicago - Kona	1	1
Chicago - Maui	1	1
Denver - Kauai	1	1
Denver - Kona	1	1
Denver - Maui	2	2
Houston - Honolulu	1	1
Newark - Honolulu	1	1
Newark - Maui	1	1
Washington, DC - Honolulu	1	1

Based on July travel date, varies on certain days of the week.

Delta Business Class From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
Atlanta - Anchorage	1	1
Atlanta - Boston	10	1
Atlanta - Cincinnati	6	1
Atlanta - Denver	8	1
Atlanta - Detroit	11	1
Atlanta - Los Angeles	11	1

Delta Business Class From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
Atlanta - Minneapolis	9	2
Atlanta - New York	22	1
Atlanta - Orlando	13	1
Atlanta - Phoenix	6	1
Atlanta - Portland	3	3
Atlanta - Salt lake City	9	5
Atlanta - San Diego	5	5
Atlanta - San Francisco	5	2
Atlanta - Seattle	4	1
Denver - New York	2	1
Detroit - Minneapolis	6	1
Detroit - Phoenix	4	1
Detroit - San Diego	2	1
Las Vegas - Atlanta	7	6
Minneapolis - Portland	3	2
Minneapolis - San Diego	3	1
New York - Los Angeles	7	7
New York - San Diego	2	2
New York - Anchorage	1	1
New York - Las Vegas	1	1
New York - Miami	8	2
New York - Minneapolis	10	1
New York - Phoenix	2	1
New York - Salt Lake City	3	1
New York - San Francisco	4	4
Orlando - Salt lake City	4	1
Phoenix - Detroit	4	1

Delta Business Class From/To	Average daily non-stop flights per day	Average non-stop flights per day with premium aircraft
Seattle - New York	4	2
Los Angeles - Honolulu	4	1
Atlanta - Honolulu	1	1
Minneapolis - Honolulu	1	1
Salt lake City - Honolulu	1	1
Salt lake City - Kahului	1	1
Seattle - Honolulu	2	2

Based on July travel date, varies on certain days of the week.

So, to drill down further, here are the American flight numbers with those better seats, along with the days they operate. Because they are subject to change and often do, be sure to always check before booking.

North America						
American Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Boston - Miami	AA1259	Mon. through Sat.	777-200	AA1074	Sun. through Fri.	777-200
	AA2247	Sun. through Sat.		AA958	Sun. through Sat.	
Charlotte - Miami	AA543	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA543	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
Dallas - Chicago	AA2412	Sun. through Sat.	787-9	AA1579	Sun. through Sat.	787-9
Dallas - Las Vegas	AA1599	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA1599	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
Dallas - Los Angeles	AA1085	Sun. through Sat.	777-300	AA2789	Sun. through Sat.	777-300
	AA2697		787-9	AA2459		787-9
	AA2853		777-200	AA2853		777-200
Dallas - Miami	AA1042	Fri. through Mon.	777-300	AA2524	Thu. through Fri.	777-300
	AA1107	Sun. through Sat.		AA1753	Sun. through Sat.	
	AA2823			AA2924		
	AA2239		777-200	AA2821		777-200
	AA646		787-8	AA1219		787-8

North America						
American Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Dallas - Philadelphia	AA1185	Sun. through Sat.	787-8	AA952	Sun. through Sat.	787-8
	AA2533					
Dallas - Phoenix	AA520	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA1887	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
Las Vegas - Chicago	AA1559	Sun. through Sat.	787-8	AA1559	Sun. through Sat.	
	AA1562	Thu.	787-9	AA2464	Thu.	787-9
Las Vegas - Miami	AA1551	Sun. through Sat.	787-8	AA1551	Sun. through Sat.	787-8
	AA2187		777-200	AA2187		777-200
Las Vegas - Philadelphia	AA1585	Sun. through Sat.	787-8	AA1585	Sun. through Sat.	787-8
Los Angeles - Chicago	AA841	Sun. through Sat.	787-9	AA374	Sun. through Sat.	787-9
Los Angeles - Miami	AA1268	Sun. through Sat.	777-300	AA1228	Sun. through Sat.	777-300
	AA1535			AA1274		
	AA529			AA2289		
	AA2289			AA1454		
	AA340			AA2283		
	AA2286		777-200	AA1061		777-200
New York - Miami	AA1466	Sun. through Sat.	777-300	AA1357	Sun. through Sat.	777-300
	AA1610			AA1466		
	AA309			AA571		
	AA2268		777-200	AA2906		777-200
	AA2906			AA771		
	AA688			AA1199		
	AA768			AA1208		
Orlando - Chicago	AA1173	Sun. through Sat.	787-9	AA1173	Sun. through Sat.	787-9
Orlando - Philadelphia	AA1979	Thu.	787-8	AA1979	Thu.	787-8
	AA1719	Sun. through Sat.		AA1719	Sun. through Sat.	

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change

Hawaii						
American Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Charlotte - Honolulu	AA569	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA552	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
Chicago - Honolulu	AA75	Sun. through Sat.	787-9	AA74	Sun. through Sat.	787-9
Dallas - Honolulu	AA123	Sun. through Sat.	787-9	AA8	Sun. through Sat.	787-9
	AA5		777-300	AA102		777-300
Dallas - Kona	AA229	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA230	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
Dallas - Maui	AA119	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA6	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
	AA7		787-8	AA116		787-8
Phoenix - Honolulu	AA692	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA693	Sun. through Sat.	777-200
Phoenix - Maui	AA432	Sun. through Sat.	777-200	AA645	Sun. through Sat.	777-200

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change.

Here's the same for United:

North America						
United Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Chicago - Denver	UA 0407	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 0443	Sun. through Sat.	777
	UA 0691			UA 0763		
Chicago - Houston	UA 0794	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 1899	Sun. through Sat.	787
	UA 2682	Tue., Thu., Sat.	777	UA 1258	Tue., Thu., Sat.	777
Chicago - Los Angeles	UA 2649	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 2622	Sun. through Sat.	787
Chicago - Orlando	UA 1944	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 1500	Sun. through Sat.	777
Chicago - San Francisco	UA 0305	Mon. through Sat.	777	UA 1191	Mon. through Sat.	777

North America						
United Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
	UA 2645	Sun.				
	UA 1608	Mon. through Fri., Sun.	787	UA 0476, UA 2033	Sun. through Sat.	787
Chicago - Washington, DC	UA 2170	Sun. through Sat.	787			
Denver - Houston	UA 0313	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 1515	Sun. through Sat.	767
	UA 1645		777	UA 1790		777
Denver - Newark	UA 1729	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0487	Sun. through Sat.	767
Houston - Chicago	UA 1258	Tue., Thu., Sat.	777	UA 2682	Tue., Thu., Sat.	777
	UA 1899	Sun. through Wed., Fri. through Sat.	787	UA 0794	Sun. through Sat.	787
Houston - Denver	UA 1515	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0313	Sun. through Sat.	767
	UA 1790		777	UA 1645		777
Houston - Los Angeles	UA 1647	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 1535	Sun. through Sat.	787
Houston - Newark	UA 1768	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 0762	Sun. through Sat.	787
Houston - San Francisco	UA 0624	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0505	Sun. through Sat.	767
	UA 2372	Mon., Thu., Sat.	787	UA 2260	Mon., Thu., Sat.	787
New York (JFK) - Los Angeles	UA 0515	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0514	Sun. through Sat.	767
	UA 0517			UA 0516		
New York (JFK) - San Francisco	UA 0521	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0520	Sun. through Sat.	767
	UA 0523			UA 0522		
Newark - Denver	UA 0487	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 1729	Sun. through Sat.	767
Newark - Houston	UA 0762	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 1768	Sun. through Sat.	787
Newark - Las Vegas	UA 2075	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 1611	Sun. through Sat.	777
Newark - Los Angeles	UA 0554	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 0673	Sun. through Sat.	787
	UA 0751			UA 1990		
	UA 0744		767	UA 0479		767

North America						
United Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Newark - San Francisco	UA 1991	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 1149	Sun. through Sat.	767
	UA 2333		777	UA 2304	Sun. through Wed., Fri. to Sat.	777
	UA 2632		787	UA 2093	Sun. through Sat.	787
Washington, DC - Los Angeles	UA 2276	Sun., Tue. through Sat.	787	UA 2613	Sun. through Mon., Wed. through Sat.	787
Washington, DC - San Francisco	UA 0277, UA 2435	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 1164	Sun. through Sat.	787
	UA 1742		767	UA 1707		767

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change.

Hawaii						
United Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Chicago - Honolulu	UA 0219	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 0218	Sun. through Sat.	777
Chicago - Kona	UA 0066	Sun. through Mon., Thu. through Sat.	787	UA 0067	Sun. through Mon., Thu. through Sat.	787
Chicago - Maui	UA 0202	Sun. through Sat.	787	UA 0348	Sun. through Sat.	787
Denver - Kauai (OGG)	UA 1736	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 1430	Sun. through Sat.	777
	UA 1808		767	UA 1720		767
Denver - Kona	UA 1758	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 1731	Sun. through Sat.	767
Denver - Maui	UA 1736	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 1430	Sun. through Sat.	777
	UA 1808		767	UA 1720		767

Hawaii						
United Routes To/From	Flight numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Houston - Honolulu	UA 0253	Sun. through Sat.	777	UA 0252	Sun. through Sat.	777
Newark - Honolulu	UA 0363	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0362	Sun. through Sat.	767
Newark - Maui	UA 0042	Sun. through Mon., Thu. through Sat.	767	UA 0043	Sun. through Mon., Thu. through Sat.	767
Washington, DC - Honolulu	UA 0345	Sun. through Sat.	767	UA 0344	Sun. through Sat.	767

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change.

And for Delta:

North America						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Atlanta - Anchorage	DL1409	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1409	Sun. through Sat.	767
Atlanta - Boston	DL1038	Mon., Wed.	330	DL0719	Mon., Wed.	330
Atlanta - Cincinnati	DL2682	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL2512	Sun. through Sat.	767
Atlanta - Denver	DL1600	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1001	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL1698			DL1598		
	DL0973	Sat.		DL2525	Tue. through Fri.	
				DL1221	Sat.	767
Atlanta - Detroit	DL1154	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL1031	Sun. through Sat.	330
	DL0840		767	DL2372		
	DL1664			DL2875		767
				DL9754		350
				DL2190		767
				DL2190		330

North America						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Atlanta - Los Angeles	DL0363	Tue., Thu. through Sun.	767	DL0915	Sun. through Tue., Thu. through Sat.	767
	DL0823	Tue., Wed.		DL0373	Wed., Thu.	
	DL0523	Mon.	350			
Atlanta - Minneapolis	DL2162	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1724	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL2167	Mon., Tue., Thu., Fri., Sun.	330	DL2248	Sun. through Tue., Thu. through Fri.	330
	DL1052	Tue., Wed.		DL2967	Mon., Tue.	
	DL2140	Tue.		DL1770	Tue., Wed.	
Atlanta - New York	DL0416	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL0045	Sun. through Sat.	330
	DL8788		767	DL1447		
	DL2237			DL1387		767
	DL8783					
	DL2161					
	DL0461					
Atlanta - Orlando	DL1555	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1265	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL2422			DL2282		
	DL1477	Mon., Fri.		DL1580	Mon., Fri.	
	DL1513			DL2567		
	DL1633			DL1107	Tue., Sat.	
	DL1533	DL1533				
	DL1546	DL1544				
	DL1575	Mon. through Sat.		DL1551	Mon. through Sat.	
Atlanta - Phoenix	DL1100	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL0940	Sun., Mon., Fri., Sat.	767
	DL0377			DL0786	Mon. through Thu.	330
Atlanta - Portland	DL0713	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1150	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL0841			DL2042		

North America						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
	DL0833			DL2861		
Atlanta - Salt lake City	DL0849	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL0917	Sun. through Sat.	330
	DL0858			DL2867		
	DL0912			DL2442		
	DL0378			DL0908		
	DL0859		767	DL0924	767	
	DL0857			DL0916		
	DL0913			DL0919		Sun., Wed., Sat.
	DL0881		Wed., Sat., Sun.	350		
	Atlanta - San Diego	DL0455	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0738	Sun. through Sat.
DL0992		DL0820				
DL2136		DL0831				
DL0965		DL0965				
DL0552		DL2862				
Atlanta - San Francisco	DL0715	Mon., Tue., Thu. through Sat.	767	DL0715	Mon., Tue., Thu. through Sat.	767
	DL0769	Sun. through Sat.		DL0560	Sun. through Sat.	
	DL0824			DL0824		
	DL0821	Thu., Fri., Sun.		DL2382	Sun., Thu., Fri.	
Atlanta - Seattle	DL0339	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0356	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL1371			DL0878		
	DL0781	Mon., Tue., Thu. through Sat.		DL0845	Sun. through Tue., Thu. through Sat.	
	DL2353	Mon., Tue., Thu. through Sun.				
Denver - New York	DL0875	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0970	Sun. through Sat.	767
Detroit - Minneapolis	DL9755	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL0887	Thu., Sat.	350

North America						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
	DL1229	Thu., Sat.	350			
Detroit - Phoenix	DL2182	Mon. through Thu.	767	DL1074	Sun. through Sat.	330
	DL0567	Sun.	330	DL1276	Sun. through Thu.	
Detroit - San Diego	DL2219	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL2249	Sun. through Sat.	767
Las Vegas - Atlanta	DL0836	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0357	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL0863			DL0460		
	DL0877			DL0836		
	DL0899			DL2555		
	DL0834			DL0834		
	DL0717			DL0362		
	DL0870					
Minneapolis - Portland	DL1228	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL1326	Sun. through Sat.	330
	DL2333			DL1426		
Minneapolis - San Diego	DL1274	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1209	Sun. through Sat.	767
New York - Anchorage	DL0892	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0790	Fri. through Sat.	767
	DL0756	Fri., Sat.				
New York - Las Vegas	DL0752	Mon. through Thur.	767	DL0752	Mon. through Thur.	767
	DL1675	Sun. through Sat.		DL1471	Sun. through Sat.	
New York - Los Angeles	DL0302	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0324	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL0309			DL0328		
	DL0313			DL0392		
	DL0703			DL0735		
	DL1087			DL2335		
	DL2186			DL2521		
	DL2435			DL2503		

North America						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
	DL0326	Sun. through Tue., Thu. though Sat.		DL1131	Sun. through Tue., Thu. through Sat	
				DL0323	Sun., Mon., Thu., Fri., Sat	
New York - Miami	DL1269	Sun. through Wed.	767	DL1327	Sun. through Wed.	767
	DL1301			DL1750	Mon. through Thu.	
New York - Minneapolis	DL8805	Sun. through Sat.	330			
New York - Phoenix	DL0795	Tue. through Thu., Sat.	767	DL0795	Tue. through Thu., Sat.	767
New York - Salt Lake City	DL0706	Mon., Tue., Thu. through Sat.	330	DL0772	Tue. through Thu.	330
	DL0728	Mon.		DL2379	Mon.	
	DL0654	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL8788	Sun. through Sat.	767
				DL1463	Mon., Tue., Thu. through Sat.	
New York - San Diego	DL0699	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0428	Sun. through Sat.	767
				DL0903		
				DL0892		
New York - San Francisco	DL0311	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL0300	Sun. through Sat.	767
	DL0651			DL0310		
	DL1095			DL1095		
	DL1722			DL1722		
Orlando - Salt Lake City	DL2177	Sun. through Tue., Thu. through Sat.	330	DL2541	Sun. through Tue., Thu. through Sat.	330
	DL0770		767	DL0572	Sun., Mon., Wed. through Sat.	767
Phoenix - Detroit	DL1074	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL2182	Mon. through Thu.	330
	DL1276	Sun. through Thu. through Sat.		DL0567	Sat.	
Seattle - New York	DL0693	Sun. through Sat.	767	DL1308	Sun. through Sat.	767

North America						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
	DL1716			DL0308	Mon., Thu., Fri.	330
	DL0327	Mon., Thu., Fri.	330			
	DL8789	Sun. through Sat.				

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change.

Hawaii						
Delta Routes To/From	Flight Numbers**	Days of Operation	Aircraft	Return	Days of Operation	Aircraft
Los Angeles - Honolulu	DL0333	Sat., Tue., Thu.	767	DL0331	Tue., Thu., Sat.	767
Atlanta - Honolulu	DL0650	Sun. through Sat.	330	DL1552	Sun. through Sat.	330
Minneapolis - Honolulu	DL0435			DL0788		
Salt Lake City - Honolulu	DL2454			DL0681		
Salt Lake City - Kahului	DL0316			DL0366		
Seattle - Honolulu	DL0444			DL0705		
	DL1628			DL2239		

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change.

“WHAT KIND OF EQUIPMENT ARE YOU ON?”

That was a line of jargon that Frank Abignale used in the film “Catch Me if You Can” to convince others that he was a seasoned pilot. You only need to read this chart. Note that these schedules are for service through July 31 and can change at the last minute, so there’s a chance you’ll miss out (although you’d have to be very unlucky).

Airline	Aircraft	Version	Number of Seats	Cabin	Configuration	Seat Width	Seat Recline
United	777-300ER	1	60	3	1-2-1	22	180 Degree lie-flat
	767-300	1	30	2	2-1-2	20.6	

Airline	Aircraft	Version	Number of Seats	Cabin	Configuration	Seat Width	Seat Recline
		2	30	2	1-2-1	20.6	
		3	46	3	1-2-1	20.6	
	767-400	1	39	2	2-1-2	20.6	
	787-800	1	36	3	2-2-2	20.6	
		2	28	4	1-2-1	20.5	
	787-900	1	48	3	2-2-2	20.6	
		2	48	4	1-2-1	20.5	
	787-10	1	44	3	1-2-1	20.5	
American	777-300ER	1	52	4	1-2-1	20.5	
	777-200	1	37	3	1-2-1	21.9	
	788	1	20	3	1-2-1	21	
		2	28	2	1-2-1	21	
	789	1	30	3	1-2-1	21	
Delta	767-300ER (K)	1	26	4	1-2-1	20.5	
	767-300ER (Z)	2	26	3	1-2-1	20.5	
	767-400ER	1	40	3	1-2-1	20.5	
	767-400ER	2	34	4	1-2-1	19.9-20	
	330-300	1	34	4	1-2-1	19.7	
	330-900	2	29	4	1-2-1	21.3-22.5	
	350-900	1	32	3	1-2-1	22-24	
		2	32	4	1-2-1	20.46	

** Schedule through July 31. Flight number and aircraft subject to change.



Secret Game-Changing Upgrades to Europe in First Class

July 2021

The luft we all need. The upgrade we all want. Easily missed if you follow conventional wisdom. Plus much cheaper than many Biz Class seats, and why 19 is the new 14.

In keeping with the general good news vibe of this July report, we're very happy to advise that Lufthansa First Class is back. *Und* how!

It had been on the back burner for the last few months (apparently there's been a lockdown?) but now aircraft with First Class seats are back on these routes:

- Chicago, Los Angeles and Miami – Frankfurt. Operating now.
- Newark and New York/JFK – Frankfurt. Returns August 1.
- Houston – Frankfurt. Returns September 1.

Gotta hand it to the Germans. They keep their cards close to their *Brust*, but unfortunately that also means availability is a bit of a mystery as Lufthansa has historically only made First Class seats available to partners 14 days prior to departure. Recently, though, **FCF has discovered First Class seats available as far out as 19 days, and availability-rich** with partners Air Canada (an Amex points transfer partner) and Singapore Airlines (Amex, Chase and Citi), **for up to four seats a pop. Pow!**

This changes the game as many of you are taking off to Europe. Here's what you want to be thinking about, three weeks from departure until all the way up to your ride to the airport. I once changed a flight in a yellow taxi on the way to the airport in Miami. Why? Because my perfectly ideal flight just wasn't available.

Until then.

Most of you won't go that far to upgrade and I don't blame you. But two minutes of research once or twice a day starting 21 days or so ahead of your trip can land you an amazing First Class seat. More on the two-step strategy [here](#).

So you've already paid for your ticket. No big deal. If you find that First Class seats open up, just cancel the ticket you already purchased and use it for another trip later. Instead, use your Amex or Chase points for a First Class ticket with Lufthansa and you're taking steps to become an upgrade ninja. **Just don't cancel your original reservation until AFTER your big score, and confirm everything like ticket numbers and seats.**

If you have an award ticket with another airline, cancel it the same way you would a paid ticket, which is even less of a hassle. Get your refund, and fly First Class on Lufthansa. Need a Lufthansa carrot dangled in front of you? Look no further than this cabin shot.



Get the point of this special report?

THE GOLDEN KEY(S)

As for partners:

- I discovered this hole in the otherwise predictable system with Air Canada, an Amex partner and Singapore Airlines, Amex, Chase, and Citi partner, had similar availability, two seats on the outbound and four seats on the return on three times as many days as other partners All Nippon, LifeMiles and United. See the comparison chart below for more details.
- All Nippon had two seats only on a couple of dates outbound. There were none on the return flight and All Nippon does not allow award bookings within 96 hours of a flight.
- We found four seats a handful of days on the return only using United and LifeMiles. There was none outbound.

Lufthansa Mileage Partners	Transfer Points / From	Level of Award Space
Air Canada	Amex	Great
All Nippon	Amex	Little
LifeMiles	Citi	Little
Singapore	Amex, Chase, Citi	Great
United	Chase	Not Great

FCF Treasure Map: Dates in July with First Class - Per June 30 Survey

Mileage Program	Route	Outbound		Return		
1 Seat	2 Seats	1 Seat	2 Seats	4 Seats		
Air Canada	Chicago - Frankfurt	2, 6, 13, 18, 19	3, 5, 7		3, 8, 19	1, 6, 7, 14
All Nippon		4	5			
LifeMiles				1	1	1
Singapore		2, 6, 13, 18	3, 5, 7, 19		3, 8, 19	1, 6, 7, 14
United					7	1
Air Canada	Los Angeles - Frankfurt			5		1, 2
All Nippon						
LifeMiles				1		

Mileage Program	Route	Outbound		Return		
Singapore	Miami - Frankfurt			5		1, 2
United				1		
Air Canada				6, 7, 10		2, 3, 4, 10, 11
All Nippon						
LifeMiles					4	2, 3
Singapore				6, 7	10	2, 3, 4, 11
United					4	2, 3

MY FAVORITE PICKS

1. **Amex Points Collectors:** Air Canada, because of it's low taxes. It charges 200,000 miles and only \$50 to \$250 in taxes round-trip. Plus 200,000 miles isn't bad when you consider that most (way inferior) Business Class seats run in the mid-100,000s anyway. To be clear, we're talking about a First Class ticket that normally goes for \$10,300 to \$23,600.

FRA → ORD Jul 19 3:11
Modify
EN Customer Support

Departing flight

Monday, July 19, 2021

Sort and filter
Economy Class
Premium Economy
Business Class
First Class

10:45 Frankfurt Chicago Operated by Lufthansa	Non-stop 9h15m	13:00	-	-	70K + CA \$235	100K + CA \$235
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Preview seats
Details

5:57 PM
7/1/2021

1. **Chase Points Collectors:** Singapore Airlines still a relatively good deal at 215,000 miles, but you're going to pay \$1,224 in taxes. **That's \$1,024 more in taxes for Chase than Amex.** Poof... there goes the ever-alluring Chase spend category bonuses at supermarkets and gas stations. Gonzo. [Fuggedaboutit.](#) (Remember, if you are getting free advice, you are the product ;)

WHAT ABOUT UNITED MILES?

United, a Chase transfer partner, charges 242,000 miles plus \$147 in taxes round-trip, but the airline **has almost no Lufthansa First Class availability**.

Let's compare the costs, but remember the aforementioned availability levels... MUCH better with Air Canada (low taxes) and Singapore (high taxes) ...

Lufthansa First Class To/From Frankfurt	Lufthansa	Air Canada	All Nippon	LifeMiles	Singapore	United
Chicago	182,000	200,000	165,000	174,000	215,000	242,000
Houston		240,000				
Los Angeles		200,000				
Miami						
Newark						
New York		180,000				

DON'T FALL INTO THE FIRST-MUST-BE-WAY-MORE-EXPENSIVE-THAN-BUSINESS TRAP

Lufthansa's First Class can actually be cheaper than many airlines' Business Class seats. For example, the lowest Delta Business Class trip for New York-Frankfurt that we've seen recently, booking through Delta, is 570,000 miles round-trip. But First Class on Lufthansa is just 180,000 to 242,000 miles, with low-tax Amex partner, Air Canada.

SCORE WITH UNITED MILES?

If you're flexible and you find seats using United, don't fret, *Fraulein* and you bought United miles when they went on sale, or transfer Chase points to United. That said, United had very little Lufthansa First Class availability, so be careful here.

Cost If Buying United Miles On Sale

Lufthansa First Class To/From Frankfurt	Cost to Buy 242,000 United Miles On Sale At ~1.8 Cents Each	Regular Published Fare	Difference / Savings	
Chicago	\$4,356	\$10,313	\$5,957	58%
Houston**		\$15,251	\$10,895	71%
Los Angeles		\$11,200	\$6,844	61%
Miami		\$10,313	\$5,957	58%
Newark*		\$8,858	\$4,502	51%
New York*		\$8,858	\$4,502	51%

Service expected to begin *August 1, 2021 / ** September 1, 2021.

NO AMEX POINTS? NO PROBLEM.

Getting Air Canada miles is relatively simple. They're a points-transfer partner with Amex, and transfer times are nearly instantaneous.

What's better? You can buy up to 500,000 Amex Rewards points per year for just 2.5 cents each. Compared to the baseline First Class fare from Chicago to Frankfurt of \$10,313+, if you buy 200,000 Amex Rewards Points for \$5,000, and add in taxes at ~\$247, you would **save \$5,066** — that's 49%. That'll buy you a lot of bratwurst.

Lufthansa First Class To/From Frankfurt	Air Canada Miles Required	Cost At 2.5 Cents Per Amex Point	Regular Published Fare	Difference / Your Savings	
Chicago	200,000	\$5,000	\$10,313	\$5,313	52%
Houston**	215,000	\$5,375	\$15,251	\$9,876	65%
Los Angeles	200,000	\$5,000	\$11,200	\$6,200	55%
Miami			\$10,313	\$5,313	52%

Lufthansa First Class To/From Frankfurt	Air Canada Miles Required	Cost At 2.5 Cents Per Amex Point	Regular Published Fare	Difference / Your Savings	
Newark*	180,000	\$4,500	\$8,858	\$4,358	49%
New York*			\$8,858	\$4,358	49%

Service expected to begin *August 1, 2021 / ** September 1, 2021.

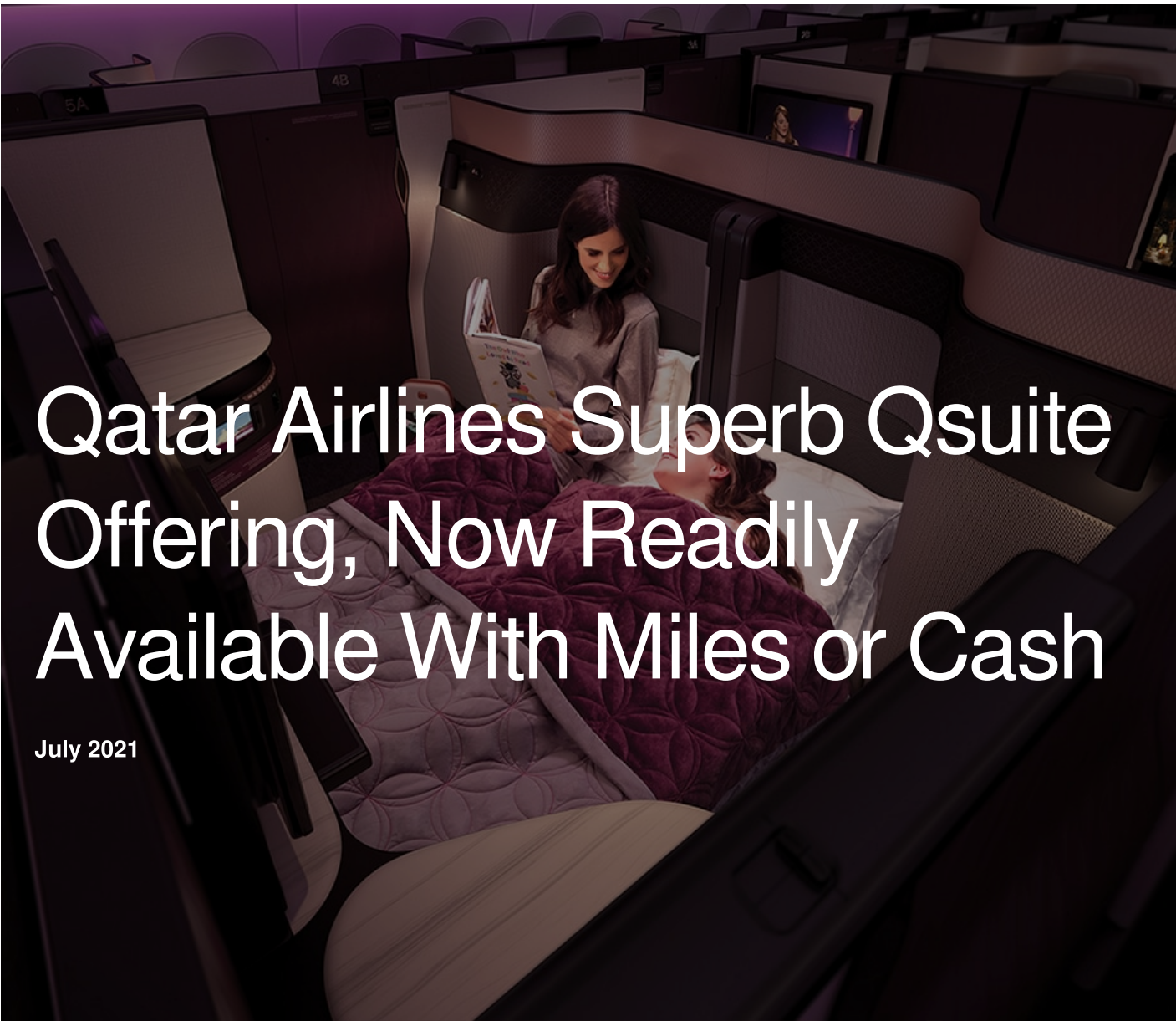
IF YOU ARE ALREADY BOOKED ON AN AWARD TICKET, DON'T FORGET ABOUT ONE-WAY TICKETS.

So what if the availability is spotty? That means you're unlikely to find seats at the last minute for both your outbound and return flight, at the same moment. If you already have an award ticket, think about searching for availability for both directions, but settle for [one-ways](#) as they become available. Just cancel that piece of your original ticket. No problem.

See you up front.

RELATED FCF SPECIAL REPORTS

- [80/20 in 2020—Putting the Pareto Principle to Work for a Better Travel Credit Card Life](#)
- [When to Use Which Star Alliance Partners for Award Travel](#)
- [How to Avoid High Award Taxes and Make Your Award Trip a Truly Free One to Europe on Star Alliance with Amex Points](#)
- [Mining for Miles Availability: 10 Common Mistakes Most Travelers Make](#)

A photograph of a woman sitting in a Qatar Airways Qsuite airplane cabin, reading a magazine. The cabin is dimly lit, and the woman is wearing a light-colored top. The Qsuite seats are visible, with their privacy screens and overhead storage bins. The text "Qatar Airlines Superb Qsuite Offering, Now Readily Available With Miles or Cash" is overlaid on the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Qatar Airlines Superb Qsuite Offering, Now Readily Available With Miles or Cash

July 2021

**Now up to 60% off with miles, or 77% with cash, for travel
September through May 2022**

We love Qatar Airways Qsuite Business Class offering. So much so that we were moved to commission a poet to attempt to capture the depth of joy that this flying experience brings:

ODE TO THE QSUITE

How sweet is the Qsuite seat? Sweet enough to eat. A real treat.

Not a very good poet, mind you, but he will have to do for now. But even better than poems is the list of available routes we have for Qsuite availability, *and* how you can save a poetic 77% using American miles. Let's take a look at actual availability...

FCF's Qsuite Treasure Map...

To/From Doha	Depart			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., Nov., Jan., Feb. to April	Oct., March	Oct.	Oct.	Sept., Oct.	
Houston	Sept., Nov., Dec.	Oct.	Sept. to Nov., Jan. to May	Sept., Oct.	Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., March to May	Oct., Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., March, April, May
Philadelphia	Sept., Nov., Jan. to March	Sept., Oct., Nov., April, May	Oct., Jan. to May	Sept., Nov., Jan, Feb., March, April, May	Feb., March, April, May	Sept., Oct., Feb., March
San Francisco	Oct., Nov., Jan.	Feb., May	Jan., Feb., March, April, May	Oct., Jan., Feb.	Oct., Nov., Jan., May	Jan., Feb., March, April, May
Washington, DC	Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec., March, April, May	Sept., Oct., Jan., Feb., March, April	Sept., Jan., Feb.	Nov., Dec., Feb.	Sept.	Sept.

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

WHY DO WE LOVE THE QSUITE? LET US COUNT THE WAYS

The Qsuite seat is 21.5 inches wide and reclines to a fully lie-flat bed 79 inches long. The center section seats are set close together and can conveniently become a double bed for couples or families traveling together. And coolest of all, it has a sliding door for a unique private experience.



QATAR PARTNERS & AWARD COSTS

Qatar partners with American Airlines, Japan Airlines, and Cathay Pacific...

Qatar Qsuites To Doha From	Everyday Miles	Qatar	American Miles	Japan Miles	Cathay Miles
Boston	280,000	340,000	140,000	110,000	180,000
Houston				130,000	
Philadelphia				110,000	
San Francisco				130,000	
Washington, DC				130,000	

COST IF YOU BUY (PARTNER) AMERICAN MILES WHEN ON SALE

Here we've bought AA miles for 1.8 cents per mile, which is a typical sale cost. These sales come up frequently and can make a huge difference when you use award miles versus paying cash. It brings that Boston-Doha fare, for example, down from \$10,966 to \$2,520, a savings of \$8,446 or 77%. Now that's a savings worth writing a poem about.

Qatar Qsutes to Doha From	Partner Miles		Cost per mile when on sale	Cost	Regular Published Fare	Difference	
Boston	American	140,000	0.018	\$2,520	\$10,966	\$8,446	77%
Houston					\$8,738	\$6,218	71%
Philadelphia					\$9,246	\$6,726	73%
San Francisco					\$8,338	\$5,818	70%
Washington, DC					\$8,637	\$6,117	71%

ALOHA TO DOHA

Just about the only connection you *can't* make from Doha is to Hawaii, but surely that's coming soon. In the meantime, you can use it as a super-hub. Fly to Doha in the amazing Qsuite with big savings, then go exploring.



American Airlines Use Your American Miles Before They Get Shaken and Stirred

July 2021

Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy. Will AA Leave Mile Savers High and Dry?

This is a top secret decrypted report from FCF's "inside operative," Agent F, reporting from "The Front." She's our 007 equivalent in femme fatale red, bringing us the hidden airline secrets that even airline board members are yet to find out. Well, some, anyway...

DISPATCH 0700 HOURS (VIA STILETTO SHOEPHONE)

Agent F to FCF HQ:

Team, I have received high-quality intel that American Airlines will soon do away with their award chart just as their enemies, Delta and United, have done in recent years. STOP.

I fear for AA travelers right now because under more dynamic pricing, their miles may suffer a significant devaluation, as happened with other carriers. STOP.

Please alert our readers that they should burn their AA miles now before the AA award chart is terminated. STOP.



DISPATCH 1030 HOURS (VIA DIAMOND RING-CAM)

Agent F to FCF HQ:

Team, I'll be quick as I'm at an Airline executive's mansion, hiding under a bed. There's good news to report. Tons of sweet deals are available now. Of 32 American Airlines routes we checked, 23 have award availability, and nine don't (but I'm working on it). Refer to the following charts to see existing deeply discounted awards. STOP.

American Business Class From/To	Depart			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
Charlotte - Dublin			May			May
Charlotte - Frankfurt			Aug. to April	May	Feb.	Aug. to Jan., Feb., March, April
Charlotte - London	Nov., Dec., April, May	Dec., April	Nov., Feb., March	Aug., Nov., Jan.	Nov., Jan., Feb., May	Dec., Feb., March, April, May
Charlotte - Madrid	May		April		May	April
Charlotte - Munich			Nov. to May			Nov. to May
Chicago - London		May	Nov. to April, May		May	Nov. to April
Dallas - Amsterdam	Aug., Oct.	Aug., Oct.		Aug.	Aug., Oct.	Aug., Oct.
Dallas - Frankfurt	Aug., Oct., Nov., Dec., March to May	Aug., Nov., April		Sept., March to May	Aug., April, May	Aug., Oct., April
Dallas - London	Jan., Feb., April, May	Jan., Feb., April	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., March	July, May	July	Nov. to April
Los Angeles - London	Nov., Dec., Jan., April	Dec., Jan.	Feb., March	April	Jan., May	Nov., Dec., Feb., March
Miami - London	Sept., Nov., Dec., Feb.	Aug., Oct., Nov.	July, Aug., Oct.	Aug., Oct., Dec.	Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.	July, Aug., Sept., Nov., Feb.
Miami - Paris	Jan.	Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., March	May	Dec., May	Nov., Dec., Jan. to April
New York - Barcelona		May	Nov. to April, May			Nov. to May
New York - Madrid	Sept., May	Dec., April	Oct., Nov., Jan. to March			Sept. to May
New York - Milan	Oct., March, April		Nov. to Feb.	July, Aug., Sept., Oct., May	July, May	Nov. to April
New York - Paris	Aug., Oct.	April	Nov. to March, April	Aug., May	Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb. to April

American Business Class From/To	Depart			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
Philadelphia - Amsterdam	Aug., Nov., Jan., Feb., March	Aug., Nov., Dec.	Dec.	Oct., Jan., April, May	Sept., Nov., Jan., April	Aug., Sept. to Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., March
Philadelphia - Dublin	Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb.	Nov., Dec.	Oct., Nov.	Aug., Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb., April, May	Oct., Nov., Feb., May	Nov., Dec., Jan.
Philadelphia - London	Aug., Oct., Dec., Jan., May	Oct., Jan., May	Nov., Dec., Feb. to April	Sept., Oct.	Nov.	Aug., Nov., Dec. to May
Philadelphia - Paris	Dec., Jan., Feb.	Nov., Jan.	Nov., Dec., Jan.	Jan., April, May	Nov., Feb., March, May	Nov., Dec., Jan. to April
Philadelphia - Zurich	Jan., Feb., March, April	Jan., March, April	Nov., Dec.	April, May	Jan., March, April	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb, March
Raleigh - London	Feb., April	April	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., March	May	Nov., Feb.	Nov., Dec., Jan., March, April
Seattle - London	Nov., Dec., Feb., April	Jan., Feb., April	Jan., March	Nov., Dec.	Sept., Dec.	Aug., Jan. to May

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

Routes with little or no award space	Fares
Dallas - Madrid	\$3,495
Dallas - Paris	\$3,900
Dallas - Rome*	\$4,413
Chicago - Athens*	\$5,405
Miami - Barcelona	\$3,291
Miami - Madrid	\$4,645
New York - Athens	\$4,055
Philadelphia - Madrid	\$3,995
Philadelphia - Rome	\$4,413

Urgent: Remember, **high-fare Business Class destinations** offer a high-value return on miles. As sharp-eyed readers will recall, we recently published a [special report on when it's best to use your miles here](#). STOP.

Whoops, that was a poison dart. Gotta run. STOP.

DISPATCH 1230 HOURS (VIA LIPSTICK MIC)

Agent F to FCF HQ:

Team, I'm now hiding from the Airline executive's henchmen. Remember, **when using the available discount-rate long-haul flight as a "bridge,"** the connecting flight from the U.S. and/or international hub can be either booked in Business Class or economy, based on availability. If only economy is available on the short connecting flights, tell our readers not to let that deter their travel plans. The most important part is getting the long-haul flight in the class they want. STOP.

DISPATCH 1400 HOURS (VIA RUBBER DUCKY CAM)

Agent F to FCF HQ:

Team, that was close. I'm hiding in the jacuzzi with my head underwater. **This is urgent!** Tell readers that if they've had any inkling to travel with American miles over the next 11 months, they need to snap up these deals immediately, as they'll surely be kicking themselves if they miss out. STOP.

Must take a breath. STOP.

DISPATCH 1730 HOURS (VIA EARRING MORSE CODE)

Team, I've discovered a hidden lair under the airline executive's mansion. They have an army of henchmen down here wearing appallingly fashioned gray jumpsuits. But I managed to download more information from their hard drives. It says this:

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

DISPATCH 2030 HOURS (VIA KITCHEN TELEPHONE)

Agent F to FCF HQ:

Phew, that was a close call. I eluded the henchmen by posing as a flight attendant and giving an escape chute demonstration, which they fell for perfectly. See you up front. STOP.



Seeing Rollercoaster Fares? Have FCF's 2-Step Plan in Your Pocket

July 2021

FCF's anti-gouge Hawaiian hula 2-step tactic, that works on any route.

As we enter a post-lockdown world of travel more resilient than ever and certainly as keen as ever to *go places*, isn't it nice to see the airlines coming to the party with sympathetic pricing? Oh wait, that was just a dream I had...

Unfortunately, the airlines aren't doing that at all. It's actually quite the contrary. Instead, they're gouging one day and dangling low-hanging fruit the next.

NAVIGATING THE NEW WORLD

So, what's a poor premium flyer to do with all this? Well, a good first step is to fight high fares with miles and grab low fares with cash. It's a double-handed backhand aimed at keeping the airlines in their court (as if that's possible). Well, at least you'll have a better chance of winning.

First, let's look at the example that inspired this report, which you may find hard to believe. Or maybe not.

On June 9 and 10, we saw nonstop Business Class fares on American to all islands in Hawaii for \$4,497. Yet, if you made a stop in Honolulu, you could pay just \$1,287. Talk about a luau of a price difference.

And THEN, one day later on June 11, American's nonstop Business Class fares to Kauai plummeted to \$1,147 and Honolulu plummeted to \$851 for some dates. **That's a \$3,646 difference.** Though some dates were still as high as \$2,189.

The screenshot displays a flight search interface with two identical search sections. Each section shows a round trip from Los Angeles to Kauai in Business Class for one passenger. The first search results in two options: a 1-stop flight via Honolulu (HNL) for \$1,287 and a nonstop flight for \$4,497. The second search, performed a day later, shows the nonstop fare has dropped to \$1,147.

Search	Origin	Destination	Class	Passengers	Flight Details	Fare
First Search	Los Angeles	Kauai	Business	1	9:00 AM – 10:37 PM American, Hawaiian 15 hr 37 min LAX-LIH 1 stop 9 hr 18 min HNL	\$1,287 round trip
					9:00 AM – 1:00 PM American 6 hr LAX-LIH Nonstop	\$4,497 round trip
Second Search	Los Angeles LAX	Kauai LIH	Business	1	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM American 6 hr LAX-LIH Nonstop	\$1,147 round trip

This is the rollercoaster ride we're talking about. We were wondering if American was waiting to see if Delta and United would follow suit. When that didn't happen, did they give up and bring their fares back down?

The Two-Part Plan

ROLLERCOASTER MINDSET PART I: WHEN FARES ARE HIGH

Your pesky brother-in-law Derrick wants the whole family to lock in tickets now for your sister's surprise 40th luau, so the whole family can arrive at the same time. However, as you flexible travelers know, that's exactly when fares are going to be through the roof, when you have zero wiggle room on your flight criteria.

In this situation we say: If fares are very high at all, use your miles, but with a different mindset.

While we've recently seen free American Business Class awards as low as 28,000 miles in the past (and all the way up to 145,000), we did recently see a handful of dates with free awards for 50,000 each way. So if you have to pay 100,000 miles round-trip, that's still a deal when fares to Hawaii are ridiculously high, as American's points can be frequently purchased for ~1.8 cents each, so you'd be saving \$2,697 in the example we faced last month.

Spending 100,000 miles to confirm your dates and keep Derrick off your back? It can only get better from here.

ROLLERCOASTER MINDSET PART II: WHEN FARES ARE LOW

So, let's say you're feeling pretty good about booking your ticket with miles and THEN you find out that the fares have dropped all the way down to \$851. That's OK. Book your tickets with cash at the lower price, cancel your free award and redeposit your miles, for free.



Save up to 152,000 miles or up to 44% with cash

We've all been singing a pretty sad song for the last year or so.

Out of tune. No rhythm. Bad lyrics. The list goes on...

But as Europe starts to reopen, so does our songbook, and it's music to our ears. So now it's time to jump on booking that longed-for vacation. We're finding some great deals on offer (the risk is baritone-low if you change your mind).

So without further ado, please welcome to the stage FCF's **Top 10 Euro Deals** featured in this chart-topping chart, a combination of the cheapest and best flights. Drumroll please...

Airline/Class	Route	Miles Cost R/T	Normal Fares
Delta Business Class (using Virgin Atlantic miles)	Detroit - Amsterdam	100,000	\$3,360
	Detroit - Paris		\$3,450
	New York - Madrid		\$3,295
	New York - Milan		\$3,448
	New York - Paris		\$3,550
	New York - Rome		\$3,463
Emirates First Class (Amex / Chase Partner)	Newark - Athens	170,000	\$7,480
	New York - Milan		\$6,192
Iberia Business Class (Amex / Chase Partner)	Miami - Madrid	85,000	\$3,245
	New York - Madrid	68,000	\$3,020

Talk about earworms! Look at those savings — right up to 44% off. And there's plenty of availability. Lot's of it, in fact.

DON'T SEE YOUR ROUTE LISTED?

See our report on [“The Art of Skipping Stones & What We Can All Learn from the Boise to Budapest Premium Traveler.”](#) You can often get free or low-cost connecting flights in the U.S. to major hubs and/or within Europe, or just use that transatlantic flight as a “bridge route” at the worst.

FCF's Discount Award Availability Treasure Map...

Airline	Route	Class	Depart			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
Delta (using Virgin Atlantic miles)	Detroit - Amsterdam	Business		Dec.	Nov., Jan., Feb.		Dec.	Nov., Jan., Feb.
	Detroit - Paris		Nov., Dec., Feb.		Jan.	Dec., Feb.	Jan.	

Airline	Route	Class	Depart			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 - Madrid		Nov., Dec.	Feb.	Jan.	Nov.	Feb.	Dec., Jan.
	New York - Milan		Nov., Dec., Feb.		Jan.	Nov., Dec.	Feb.	Jan.
	New York - Paris		Nov., Dec.	Feb.	Jan.	Nov., Jan., Feb.	Dec.	
	New York - Rome		Feb.	Jan., Feb.	Jan.		Feb.	Jan.
Emirates	Newark - Athens	First	Oct., Dec., May	Dec., April	Nov., Jan. to March		Oct.	Nov., Dec. to March, April, May
	New York - Milan		Feb.	Jan.	March		Jan.	Feb., March
Iberia	Miami - Madrid	Business	Oct., Dec., May	Jan.	Jan., Feb to March	Oct.	Dec., Jan., May	Feb., to April
	New York - Madrid		Aug., Nov., Dec.	Jan. to May		Aug.		Dec., Jan. to May

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

CHANGE YOUR TUNE?

If you want to change or cancel your ticket, [Emirates, Iberia and Virgin Atlantic](#) are currently offering a “travel fee waiver” that includes award flights. It means it won’t cost you anything to change your tune. So sing it loud.



European (Re)Union. Great Deals to Germany, Italy, and Switzerland with Miles or Cash

July 2021

Deals from \$2,070 or 100,000 miles.

We know you're keener than sauerkraut to travel again, especially you Europhiles (and I'm one). Good news – we found some pockets of availability and opportunity for those raring to go to Western Europe sometime soon.

We found 20 routes with availability to Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, all bona fide bucket list busters or places to revisit for the tenth time if you get out much.

But despite this availability, fares are often high, so as you'd expect from FCF, we have some scenic workarounds to help you make the best of it.



The hills are alive

Generally speaking, high-priced Business Class destinations (meaning \$3,400 to \$6,200+) offer the best value for your points and miles. FCF published a [special report on when it's best to use your miles here](#).

It's pretty much always the case that it's hard to find great premium travel deals on the exact airline you want, for the exact dates you want, *and* for the exact route you want (do you ever win the lottery?). So we'll show you what's out there and you can take your best swing. Who knows, it might be a home run.

That said, we've reported many unprecedented mileage deals and flash fares over the past few months for travel to Europe [here](#) and [here](#).

LOCK IN NOW, LUCK IN LATER

Many airlines allow fare holds that prevent you from missing that amazing fare find. This gives you time to do more research and then make the call. If so, buy the ticket; if not, cancel the hold. The best time to buy a ticket is when your hold fare is lower than the current "live" fare. For more information, read [How to Lock in Amazing Premium Flash Fares Long Enough to Decide If They're Right for You](#).

GERMANY

Wunderbar Deutschland. From the Brandenburg Gate to Oktoberfest, from bratwurst to Formula One, there's something for everyone in Germany. As of June 20, 2021, residents of the United States are allowed to enter Germany (requirements [here](#)).

Here are a few charts with all the routes FCF has found discount award availability...

FCF's Treasure Map

Airline	Business Class From/To	Depart			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
American	Charlotte - Frankfurt			Aug. to April	May	Feb.	Aug. to Jan., Feb., March, April
	Charlotte - Munich			Nov. to May			Nov. to May
	Dallas - Frankfurt	Aug., Oct., Nov., Dec., March to May	Aug., Nov., April		Sept., March to May	Aug., April, May	Aug., Oct., April
United	Chicago - Frankfurt	Aug., Nov., Dec., March, May	Jan.	Jan., Feb.	Aug.	Nov., Dec.	Jan. to March, May
	Denver - Frankfurt	Aug., Feb, March					
	Houston - Frankfurt	Aug., Jan., March	Feb.		Aug., Jan.	March	Feb.
	Houston - Munich	March	Feb.		March		Feb.
	Newark - Berlin	May	Nov., Dec., May	Nov., Dec., Jan. to April			Nov. to May
	Newark - Frankfurt		Feb.		March, May	March	Feb.
	Newark - Munich	Aug., Feb.			May	March	Aug., Feb., March
	San Francisco - Frankfurt	March	Feb.		Jan.	March	Feb.
	San Francisco - Munich	March	Feb., March		March	Feb.	Feb.
	Washington, DC - Munich	Feb.	Feb.		Nov., April, May		Jan. to March

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

Cost to burn miles you have, buy the miles you don't, or just pay the published fare...

Cost to burn miles you have, buy the miles you don't, or just pay the published fare...

Comparing Purchase Methods

Airline	To/From	Cost In Miles	Cost to Buy Miles When on Sale	Cost If Buying Miles	Regular Published Fares
American	Charlotte - Frankfurt	115,000	1.8 cents	\$2,070	\$3,702
	Charlotte - Munich				\$3,975
	Dallas - Frankfurt				\$3,593
United	Chicago - Frankfurt	120,000		\$2,160	\$4,031
	Denver - Frankfurt	120,000			\$4,231
	Houston - Frankfurt	120,000			\$4,031
	Houston - Munich	120,000			\$3,868
	Newark - Berlin	120,000			\$3,650
	Newark - Frankfurt	120,000			\$3,681
	Newark - Munich	120,000			\$3,668
	San Francisco - Frankfurt	120,000			\$4,231
	San Francisco - Munich	120,000			\$4,218
	Washington, DC - Munich	120,000			\$3,968

ITALY

Ahhh, Italy. Preferito. Land of endless pastabilities. The food, the culture, the scenery, the Vespas. And now, availability, as this *bene* chart reveals...

Airline	From/To	Class	Depart			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
American	New York - Milan	Business	Oct., March, April		Nov. to Feb.	July, Aug., Sept., Oct., May	July, May	Nov. to April
Delta	New York - Milan	Business	Nov., Dec., Feb.		Jan.	Nov., Dec.	Feb.	Jan.

Airline	From/To	Class	Depart			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 - Rome		Feb.	Jan., Feb.	Jan.		Feb.	Jan.
Emirates	New York - Milan	First	Feb.	Jan.	March		Jan.	Feb., March

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

Comparing Purchase Methods

Airline / Amex Partner	To/From	Miles	Amex Mileage Cost	Cost to Buy Miles	Regular Published Fare
American / Cathay Pacific	New York - Milan	122,000	2.5 cents	\$3,050	\$6,192
Delta / Virgin	New York - Milan	100,000		\$2,500	\$3,448
	New York - Rome				\$3,463
Emirates First Class	New York - Milan	170,000		\$4,250	\$6,192

When visiting Italy, you are required to present the [COVID-19 Green Certificate](#) showing that you have completed the prescribed anti-SARS-CoV-2 vaccination cycle at least 14 days prior, that you have recovered from COVID-19 (the certificate of recovery is valid for 180 days from the date of the first positive swab), OR that you have taken a negative molecular or antigen swab test in the 48 hours prior to entering Italy. Children under 6 are exempt.

SWITZERLAND

If the cuckoo clocks or holey cheese don't get you, the mountains and lonely goatherds surely will. It's all the alp you'll need to get over a travel-challenged year. Let's get the cable car rolling with availability that includes...

FCF's Treasure Map

Airline	Business Class From/To	Depart			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
American	Philadelphia - Zurich	Jan., Feb., March, April	Dec.	Nov. , Dec.	April , May	Jan. , March , April	Nov. , Dec. , Jan. , Feb. , March
United	Newark - Zurich	Aug.	Aug. , March	Feb.			Aug. , Feb. , March
	Washington, DC - Zurich	Aug. , March	Feb.	Feb.			Feb. , March

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

Comparing Purchase Methods

Airline	To/From	Cost In Miles	Cost to Buy Miles When on Sale	Ticket Cost When Buying Miles	Regular Published Fare
American	Philadelphia - Zurich	115,000	1.8 cents	\$2,070	\$3,702
United	Newark - Zurich	120,000		\$2,160	\$3,593
	Washington, DC - Zurich				\$3,893

Travelers entering [Switzerland](#) by aircraft must present a negative PCR test. Children under 12 are exempt from testing.

BRIDGE ROUTE CONNECTIONS

Keep in mind that when using the available discounted long-haul award flight as a “bridge,” the connecting flight from the U.S. and/or international hub can be either booked in Business Class or economy, based on availability. If only economy is available on the short connecting flights, it’s no *Katastrophe*, as the most important part is getting the long-haul flight in the class you want first. [More here on “If you don’t see your home airport or destination in an FCF report.”](#)

RISK AND RETURN

American, Delta, Emirates and United are currently offering a “travel fee waiver,” including for award flights. That means it won’t cost you anything to cancel or change your ticket. Read more about it [here](#).