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Check Airfares Before Deciding To Fly Or Drive

By Frank Vanderlugt

In the days when gas cost 25 cents a gallon, it was an easy decision which was the cheaper

method of travel, flying or driving. Driving was the standard mode of transportation, and flying was a luxury. However, with airlines in a cutthroat competition for customers, and gasoline becoming increasingly expensive, this may no longer hold true under all circumstances. The economy of both options should be evaluated for each planned trip. Don't assume that flying is the most expensive option, especially if you use the following tips to get the cheapest fares.

In order to figure out how much gas you'll need to reach your destination, find out the mileage both ways and then use an online fuel consumption calculator. Of course, how much gas you will use depends on whether you drive a Hummer or a Kia. For long trips, add on some money for wear and tear on your car and the tires.

In addition, add up the costs of food and beverages consumed en route, as well as hotel costs if the car trip lasts more than one day. Hotel costs alone can add up to a few hundred dollars for a two-way trip, and since cross-country airfares can be less than five hundred dollars, this expense alone may make it cheaper to fly. If you are travelling with a family, the hotel bill stays relatively constant while the airfare per person adds up quickly. However, for a single person or even a couple, air fare may very well be comparable.

Check out airfares with at least three online travel agencies. You will find a wide difference in fares, because each agency may have different specials, and charge different service fees.

When planning your trip, book as far in advance as possible. Economy seats on desirable flights sell out fast, especially during peak season. If possible, book your air travel during the off season, and avoid travelling at Christmas and New Years, spring break and the summer vacation season from July to August. Airfare specials are often offered in spring and fall, making flying much more economical.

Students or a seniors should inquire for special rates. Airlines give student discounts, and seniors may be able to get a good deal on airfare from the AARP. If you belong to a club or service organization, ask if they are affiliated with any airlines or have a discount travel program.

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If you are travelling in a large group and are contemplating using individual cars or a long bus ride, check the cost of charter aircraft. Sometimes it is cheaper to reserve an entire plane than buy individual tickets. It's a lot more pleasant to take a short plane trip together than sit for an entire day stuffed together in a vehicle.

Last but not least, consider how much time you will save by flying. If you only have a week or two for your vacation, driving may cut into your free time significantly. It's tiring, too, and you may need a day or two to recuperate after a day of driving. It may be worth a bit of extra money to save a lot of aggravation. Airfares out of large airports can be more expensive than out of smaller municipal airports, so if you are travelling to a large city, check smaller airports nearby. The trip may be much cheaper with only a small detour. Be sure to consider cab fare or rental car rates to get to final destination.

Frank Vanderlugt is interested in cheap airfares.

<http://www.airfaresdirectory.com>

Discount Travel – Finding Low Airfares

By Brandon C. Hall

Unless you are planning a short domestic trip, the cost of airfare is usually a deciding factor in an overseas trip. Most people with moderate incomes simply can't afford to fly regularly, as much as they would like to. There are, however, some people out there who are flying all the time on regular incomes. The secret to achieving this is a willingness to be flexible and shop around with airfares, as well as employing some tried and true discount travel techniques.

The key to getting a cheap flight is to shop around, and the internet makes this easy for almost anyone to do. There are a plethora of websites that will conduct searches around the world for cheap airfares. Although the internet is a valuable tool in discovering cheap airfares, it's important that you don't rely on it entirely. Many sites claim they are searching "all flights" for the cheapest possible fare, but you really don't have any way of knowing what they do and don't have access to. Oftentimes the cheapest flights can come from the airlines themselves, and you'd be well advised to check their sites as well in your search.

No matter how much research you do online, you should always visit some travel agents. Keep in mind that these people make their livings selling airfares, and will often have access to deals that aren't available to you online. Think of it this way: if you really could always get the cheapest flight online, travel agents would be out of business. The fact that they are not suggests that good deals are to be found the old fashioned way: by visiting the office of a travel agent.

When looking for discount travel, you should also explore non-traditional methods of finding flights. Websites like

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<http://priceline.com>

offer reverse auction systems, that is: you place a bid of what you're

willing to pay on a given route on a given date, and if it turns out that an airline is willing to release a seat for that price, your credit card is billed and a ticket is issued.

Another good avenue to explore is "bucket shops" – companies who buy bulk tickets from airlines at a heavy discount. They don't have the choice that a travel agent has, of course, but if you're flexible you can often get a good deal. A typical bucket shop system will work as follows: you give them a week-long window during which you'd like to fly and some destination choices, and then if something comes up at the last minute you can have it at a heavy discount.

Another rarely explored discount travel technique is to look into bucket shops and travel agents located in ethnic neighborhoods. Often, foreign airlines sell discounted tickets to these shops, which in turn serve an ethnic community regularly traveling to their home country. These shops have access to tickets from airlines that often aren't available at your regular travel agent, and can offer a significant savings.

The important thing to remember in terms of discount travel is to explore as many avenues as you can. The more flexible you are willing to be, the cheaper your fare is likely to be – but even if you're stuck with rigid dates, a comprehensive search will often result in airfares that are significantly lower than those commonly advertised.

Save hundreds on your next trip by picking up your discount travel guide at (

<http://findprofit.infodawg.hop.clickbank.net>

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