

Discount Travel Providers



Volunteer Resource



Discount Travel Providers

This resource has been put together to help you start planning your trip. Finding flights can be a bit intimidating, especially if it is your first time traveling overseas. Use the tips and travel advice laid out here to explore all the options for airfare and find the best flight to Panama.

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Tips for Traveling Cheaply

This section offers you some ideas to make your airfare come out at the cheapest rate possible.

Travel off-peak

Try to travel during the hours, days or seasons when the best travel discounts are offered. This usually means traveling mid-week and at odd hours of the day. Ask a travel agent for more details or, if you are searching for tickets online, enter in different hours and days of the week when you search for tickets in order to compare prices.

Consider taking the longer route

Direct flights get you to your destination in a shorter period of time, and are therefore the most valuable. If you have time, though, you may get a cheaper deal if you tell the travel agent you do not mind layovers & flight changes to save money!

Book legs of your travel separately

Sometimes it is cheaper to purchase legs of your journey separately versus paying one airline to coordinate your trip into one deal. This is usually the case when you live in a smaller town or in a city that doesn't have an international airport. Research how much it would cost to purchase flights within your country separately from your international airline tickets; compare these to one full-lump sum.

Take into account that the airlines will not be responsible for missing flights due to delays or loss of luggage if you do not book through them. To ensure that you make it to every flight, be sure to schedule in plenty of time to get from one flight to another, keeping in mind you may need to go to a totally different terminal of an airport to catch a second flight. This may mean something like a five hour layover, but it could save you hundreds of dollars.

Use Local Companies

Booking flights with the airlines of the country you are going to can sometimes be the cheapest way to go. Note that the standard may not be what you are used to (for example, you may not be offered a meal on the flight or you may not have your own personal TV station), but you can ask about all this before you make a reservation. Check out a comprehensive list of airlines at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_low-cost_airlines

Round the World Tickets

Are you going all the way to the other side of the world, or do you plan to go to several different countries before returning home again? Ask your travel agent about "round the world" tickets, which can range from approximately US\$1,500 to \$4,000. Sometimes these tickets have set destinations and sometimes they are calculated by miles travelled. Usually you must travel within a certain time frame and go in one direction around the world. For example, you cannot "back step" from the United States to Asia to Europe and then to the Pacific. You will also probably have to fly out of major cities. Be sure you know the conditions of a ticket before you buy it, and make sure your particular route will be acceptable to the company you have chosen.

Some sites you may want to check out are:

- <http://www.aroundtheworldtickets.com/>: small fee charged for changing dates. Major fee for canceling a ticket. Click on "Circle the Globe" itineraries to see destination options. Call 1-800-627-0715 for more information.
- <http://www.airtreks.com/>: unlimited number of destinations and instant price estimates through customer support. Toll Free (USA and Canada): 1-877-AIR-TREKS (1-877-247-8735) or if you are outside of North America: 1-415-977-7100.
- <http://www.roundtheworldflights.com/>: based in the UK. Can search by price range or desired route. Call 0844 844-2540 (UK local call rate), 0845-347-0262, or email sales@gvillage.co.uk
- <http://www.travelmood.com/round-the-world-flight-tickets.asp>: based in the UK. Go to "Contact Us" to find telephone numbers or to fill out a form to receive an email response.

Travel agents will likely have some good advice for finding a round the world ticket, as well.

Finding a ticket

There are several different ways to book a flight. Do your research before making a reservation. Use the advice here to cover your bases.

Call local travel agents

Travel agents will usually know the hottest deals going on at the moment. Feel free to call as many agents as you want; do not feel like you have to stick with one. Consider asking them these questions:

- How much is a flight to (this place)?
- Is it cheaper to arrive at a different time of day?
- Would it be cheaper to travel during a different day of the week?
- Are there any discounts available for the flight?
- Is the flight nearly booked, or do I have time to make my decision?
- Will you please email me the flight details so I can confirm the flight works with my schedule?
- Will you please contact me at (this phone number) or (this email address) if there is a cheaper flight that becomes available?

Search for tickets online

Travelzoo.com has a search engine for cheap flights, plus "Top Deals" information. If you are not traveling from the United States, go to <http://www.travelzoo.com/international/> to get information specific to the place you are flying from. This is a great place to start when trying to find out average costs of your flights.

Some other good bargain-shopping sites are:

www.bargainbox.com (will allow you to enter your set dates and locations so you can easily find flights through 8 travel search engines)

www.expedia.com

www.orbitz.com

www.travelocity.com

www.travelgrove.com

www.sidestep.com

www.kayak.com (gives the option of comparing Expedia, Travelocity, and Orbitz)

www.cheaptickets.com (has limited range of departure airports, mainly in US and European countries)

www.priceline.com (only for US departure airports)

www.hotwire.com (only for US departure airports)

Check for Travel Discounts

Always ask for information about travel discounts or special packages at the start of any conversation during which you may make a reservation. If you wait until you're paying your bill, it may be too late to negotiate for one.

To find out about special deals, you may need to call and speak to someone. Some special travel deals are offered only on Web sites, though. If you want the best travel discount, you'll definitely need to shop around.

Sign up for newsletters

One way to find travel discounts is to sign up for email newsletters that highlight some of the best travel discounts currently available. Most travel providers -- from individual airlines to online travel sites such as Orbitz.com -- offer newsletters, so ask their representatives or check their websites to sign up for them.

Discounts

Student Discounts

STA Travel is well known for giving good rates to young travelers. The main restriction is that you must be 26 years old or younger at the time of travel. Check out their site for more information: or call these toll-free numbers:

US: 1(800) 781-4040

NZ: 0800 474 400

AU: 134 782

Senior discount

Before asking for the senior discount, be sure to check out special promotional discounts or other travel discounts that may be available to people regardless of age. The regular special travel discounts often beat the standard discounts available to seniors. Once in a while, though, you may come across a great deal for seniors.

In many cases, if the person purchasing the tickets or trip is the right age to qualify for the senior travel discount, a traveling companion or the rest of the party will be entitled to the same reduced rates, no matter what their ages.

Beware of Restrictions

Keep in mind that many travel discounts apply only at certain times or may carry other restrictions. Do some research before making your reservations to make sure you are aware of the conditions you are signing into.

Travel by Country

Here is a list of websites that may help you locate specific airlines or travel brokers. They are categorized by the country/region you are leaving from or going to.

Australia

Flight Centre: <http://www.flightcentre.com.au>

Harvey World Travel: <http://www.harveyworld.com.au>

Last minute cheap flights: <http://www.lastminute.com.au/flights.html>

Qantas: <http://www.qantas.com>

STA Travel: <http://www.statravel.com.au>

Travel.com.au: <http://www.travel.com.au>

Canada

Travel Cuts: <http://www.travelcuts.com>

Unitravel: <http://www.unitravel.com>

UK

British Airways: <http://www.britishairways.com>

Campus Travel: <http://www.campus-travel.net>

Cheap Flights: <http://www.cheapflights.co.uk>

Fly Now: <http://www.flynow.com>
Journey Latin America: <http://www.journeylatinamerica.co.uk>
O Connors Travel: <http://www.oconnors.com>
STA Travel: <http://www.statravel.co.uk>
Trailfinders: <http://www.trailfinders.co.uk>
Youth Travel: <http://www.youthtravel.com/home/home.asp>

USA

Air Brokers International: <http://www.airbrokers.com>
Air Courier Association: <http://www.aircourier.org>
Airtech: <http://www.airtech.com>
Airtreks: <http://www.airtreks.com>
Educational Travel Centre: <http://www.edtrav.com>
Expedia: <http://www.expedia.com>
Last Minute Travel: <http://lastminutetravel.com>
STA Travel: <http://www.sta.com>
Student Universe: <http://www.studentuniverse.com>

NZ

Air New Zealand: <http://www.airnewzealand.co.nz>
United Travel: <http://www.unitedtravel.co.nz>
Kayak: <http://www.kayak.com/>

Latin America

TACA: <http://www.taca.com>
LACSA (Costa Rica): <http://centralamerica.com/cr/lacsa/lacsa.htm>
COPA (Panama): <http://www.copaair.com/>
LAN (select country from home page): <http://www.lan.com/>
Avianca (Colombia): <http://www.avianca.co.uk>
Iberia (English site): <http://www.iberia.com/OneToOne/v3/Home.do>

Africa

Kenya Airways: <http://www.kenya-airways.com>
Ghana Airways: <http://www.ghana-airways.com/>
South African Airways: <http://www.flysaa.com>

Other

KLM: <http://www.klm.com>
Singapore Airlines: <http://www.singaporeair.com>
Air Asia: <http://www.airasia.com>
Bangkok Air: <http://www.bangkokair.com>
Jetstar Airways: <http://www.jetstar.com/sg/index.html>
Dragonair: <http://www.dragonair.com>
Eva Airways: <http://www.evaair.com>
Malaysia Airlines: <http://www.malaysiaairlines.com>
Pacific Airlines (for domestic flights in Vietnam): <http://www.pacificairlines.com.vn/>
Philippines Airlines: <http://www.philippineairlines.com/>
SilkAir: <http://www.silkair.com>
Thai Airways: <http://www.thaiair.com>
Vietnam Airlines: <http://www.vietnamairlines.com>