

UPSCALE SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER TRAVELER 2012™

THE PUBLICATION FOR THE FIRST AND BUSINESS CLASS TRAVELER

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 2

Editor's Notes
Europe Trip

PAGE 3

Beware of Codeshare
Rail Europe 2 for 1

PAGE 4

Destination Turks and Caicos -
Grace Bay Beach
Grace Bay Club
Beaches

PAGE 5

Destination Turks and Caicos -
Grace Bay Beach (cont)
Point Grace

PAGE 6

Frequent Flier Seats (Cont)

PAGE 7

Pasadena, California
Langham Huntington

PAGE 8

British Airways Offers AARP
Member Discounts
United Airlines 787 Dreamliner

For subscription information call
310-823-1970 or 800-355-9176

HOW TO FIND FIRST AND BUSINESS CLASS FREQUENT FLYER SEATS

One way is to book your seats 331 days in advance. The airlines release some seats 331 days ahead of time and release them one minute after midnight in the country where the airline's headquarters is based. If you get your departure seats at that time you have to do the same thing 331 days before your return date. This approach only works for those who know what they want to do almost a year ahead of time.

Every airline has a yield management department that decides when airlines make seats available for Frequent Flyers. Peter Greenberg the Travel Editor for *CBS This Morning*, and the head of Greenberg Worldwide, says that the airlines release seats for Frequent Flyers every week at one minute after midnight on Tuesday in the country where the airline headquarters is based. It doesn't mean that there won't be seats released throughout the year. Usually those are seats that have been cancelled or when new flights have been added. It appears to us, that when they load the system for First and Business Class, they tend to delay the release of the more expensive seats until the last four days.

Upscale Traveler did a 45 day study on the availability of seats from Los Angeles to London on British Airways in First and Business Class in the 45 day period prior to the Olympics in London. In every four day period before departure, we found First and Business Class seats available except for one day. In one four day period just before the Olympics started, we found a total of 47 Business and First Class seats available for the three daily flights available from Los Angeles. Since these seats are the most valuable financially, the airlines want to sell as many of these seats to maximize their return and hold these empty seats a longer time. We found that many seats were released exactly four days in advance.

If you have certain dates in mind, you should check the Seat Charts online in First and Business Class for the flights you are interested in. Many people say that you cannot count on the Seat Charts. I agree, but in First Class, it should be accurate because most airlines will not overbook First Class and almost every First Class flyer wants their seat assigned at booking. If you look at the Seat Chart ten days ahead of time and only see a few seats, they probably won't become available.

(Continued on Page Six)

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

YES, I want to substantially reduce my travel costs and increase my quality of life while traveling. Please sign me up for a subscription to UPSCALE TRAVELER at the rate of \$125 per year or \$225 for a two year subscription. Add \$20 per year for foreign subscriptions.

Charge my:

Am. Ex. ___ VISA ___ MC ___

Card No.: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Phone: () _____

Fax: () _____

Title: _____

Company _____

Address City, State, Zip: _____

Make checks payable to:

UPSCALE TRAVELER

4521 Alla Road - Suite No. 3

Marina del Rey, California 90292

Tel:(310) 823-1970 Fax:(310) 823-8840

This newsletter is dedicated to providing information to the sophisticated traveler, who wishes to travel in comfort and style, and substantially reduce travel costs. UPSCALE TRAVELER pledges that the opinions expressed in this newsletter are as free from bias as possible. All information is gathered from sources believed to be reliable; however we cannot guarantee its accuracy.

PUBLISHER

Nancy Whitmore

SENIOR EDITOR

Ralph Whitmore

FEATURES EDITOR

John Whitmore

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

George Ward

Subscription rates:

U.S.: \$125 for 1 year, \$225 for 2 years.

Foreign subscriptions: add \$20 per year

E-mail: upscale@interworld.net

Web: www.upscaletraveler.com

UPSCALE TRAVELER is a newsletter established in 1994, which is published ten times a year by: UPSCALE TRAVELER 4521 Alla Road, Suite No. 3, Marina del Rey, California 90292. Copyright © 2012 Upscale Traveler, Inc.

EDITORIAL

I am about to take my annual trip to Europe and will do several stories on the "Best of Europe". I enjoy going to Europe in the middle of September because I believe it is the best time of the year to go. Almost everyone has gone back to work. The schools are back in session and the many people who leave the Middle East to escape the heat have returned home. The restaurants and businesses that close during summer vacation will be open.

The weather along the Riviera is ideal and the water in the Mediterranean is still warm. It is easier to get reservations and the prices can be better.

Last summer the Euro was \$1.49. It is now \$1.23 or has improved in value by about 20% in the past year. Although hotels and restaurants will try to raise their prices overall, you are certainly better off financially this year than last year. Unfortunately, the Olympics has helped raise airline prices. Now that the Olympics are over we should see some reductions this fall.

I recommend that this is the perfect time to take an Upscale Cruise in the Mediterranean. The advantage is that there are some good values now and some of the Cruise Lines can offer you much better prices on First and Business Class Air than you could possibly obtain on your own. You also eliminate the hassles of checking into and out of hotels or trips to the airport to fly from one city to another.. This is a great time of year to visit the many interesting places in the Mediterranean. You will also find that it is easier to arrange tours, because there are fewer people looking to take a tour.

In addition, I expect to use my British Airways Points and Amex Membership Rewards Points to fly on short notice in either First or Business Class, as we have mentioned in another story in this issue.

I plan to use a First Class Rail Europe Select Pass to travel throughout Europe. On my last trip I took Rail Europe's Thalys train from Paris to Brussels. I always remember that it only took me 2 hours and 15 minutes from my hotel in Paris to my hotel in Brussels.

I will be staying in some of the best hotels in the world, and will enjoy seeing some of the many new hotels to keep up to date with the best in Europe.

Although I will be working all of the time, this is what I enjoy doing. The eternal quest of looking for the best at the right price.

BEWARE OF CODESHARE FLIGHTS

A codeshare flight is a flight which is operated by one airline, but is also marketed by other airlines. The main advantage of this system is that, if the airline, whose miles you want to use, is a codeshare partner, you may be able to use your airline miles for a free ticket. That is, if frequent flyer seats are available on your specific airline for this specific flight. If you have any problems on the flight, the airline that flies the plane set the rules.

One of the most important things you must do is check the price for your ticket on the airline that is flying the plane and then check the price if you buy the ticket from the codeshare partner. There can be a big difference in the codeshare prices. For instance, British Airways is offering a round trip flight in Business Class on BA flight 292 on September 10 from Los Angeles to London with a return flight on BA 283 on September 15 for \$6,575. American Airlines is a codeshare partner and is offering the same ticket on the same planes for \$12,011 or \$5,436 higher than the airline flying the plane. We used the dates of September 10 return September 15 for both airlines. This is why you must check the prices of both airlines. Why would you use American Airlines, when you could save \$5,436 and have a ticket on the airline with complete control over the flight?

If the prices are the same when you compare the prices, you need to decide which airline to buy your ticket from. If it is important to you, decide where you want to earn the Frequent Flyers Miles. If this doesn't matter buy your ticket on the airline flying the flight.

One problem with codeshare flights is the lack of consistency of seats and services. The airline that flies the flight determines the pitch in the different classes of service. The airline that is flying the flight may offer less space or less service than the codeshare airline. You should compare the the differences between the two airlines.

RAIL EUROPE OFFERS SPECIAL 2 FOR 1 SWISS FALL PASS

Book two travelers on a Swiss Saver 4-day Pass or Swiss Saver 4-day Flexi Pass by November 21, 2012 and only pay the rate for one traveler. Valid for travel from September 1 to November 30, 2012. First Class is from \$380 and Second Class is from \$238. The two travelers must travel together at all times.

The Swiss Pass is already a great deal offering extensive travel on the Swiss system including trains, buses and boats. All that stress-free travel provides the opportunity to take advantage of the more than 400 museums for free. There's no smarter way to see more of Switzerland than with a Swiss Pass from Rail Europe. It helps make every minute of your trip quality time. In a country of legendary watchmakers, isn't that the least you should expect?

Here's what you get:

This rail pass gives you unlimited travel on the Swiss Travel system.

Choice of a 4-day Consecutive or 4-day Flexi passes.

Includes a Swiss Museum Pass with free access to over 400 museums.

Each rail pass is valid for 2 travelers, additional travelers can purchase a regular Swiss Pass.

Child Policy: The Swiss Family Card is a terrific value that allows children (6-15 years of age) to travel free when accompanied by a parent or guardian. Each Swiss Family Card is valid for up to 7 children. Swiss Family Cards are free and can be picked up at any Swiss train station prior to boarding your first train. Children under age 6 travel free when sharing an adult traveler's accommodations.

TURKS AND CAICOS GRACE BAY

Grace Bay Beach is the Best Beach in Providenciales in the Turks and Caicos, and some say one of the best beaches in the world. It has 12 miles of spectacular powdery soft white sand and clear, blue-green water that is extremely tranquil and free of rocks and seaweed.

GRACE BAY CLUB

The Grace Bay Club (www.gracebayclub.com, 800-946-5757) is the "Best Hotel on Grace Bay Beach" and signifies luxury in the Turks & Caicos. The resort features 82 ultra-spacious suites, every one no less than 600 sq. ft and oceanfront views. The Club offers four categories of accommodations - The Hotel, The Villas, The Penthouses and the Estate. It is a member of Leading Hotels of the World.

Grace Bay Club is the resort that first lured jet-setters to the Turks and Caicos. The resort is perched on 11 acres of immaculate beach front property with white powdery sand and turquoise blue water. Grace Bay Club is the original luxury resort on the island. The Resort features an infinity bar, pool, beach beds, personalized concierge service and an authentic Caribbean staff creating a true Caribbean experience.



The highlight of the island is beautiful 12 mile Grace Bay beach, where the hotel enjoys a prime beach front location. An all-suites resort, Grace Bay Club comprises three sections. The Villas and the Estate are ideal for families and the Hotel facilities, which are reserved for guests age 12 and older only. All accommodations are just steps from the beach and boast stunning ocean views. Amenities include spacious terraces, separate bath and shower, air conditioning, complimentary high-speed internet access and full American breakfast daily. Many suites have kitchens or kitchenettes. It is interesting that this is the only hotel I have stayed in that offered free international phone calls.

Anacaona is the only gourmet ocean-front restaurant on Providenciales featuring fresh ingredients and modern presentations. The Menu relies primarily on fresh seafood, primarily fish. The ambiance of this adult-only restaurant reflects the native heritage that inspires its name, which means flower of gold.

The hotel spa, Anani offers exceptional treatments in spaces designed to provide a relaxing experience. Each spa therapy is an exotic ritual that allows you to escape to a place of total relaxation and well being.

BEACHES TURKS AND CAICOS RESORT

Beaches (www.beaches.com, 649-946-8000) is a multi-faceted fantasy world, where pastel pink bungalows are nestled in tropical gardens resplendent with graceful palms. It is Caribbean wonderland of adventure and luxury for kids of all ages. The hotel is made up of three distinct areas, Beaches offers the beautiful surroundings of the Italian Village, the sophisticate style of the French Village and the seaside garden paradise of the Caribbean Village. This resort is a favorite among families and kids.

If you are a grandpa or a family and are looking for a place to take all of your kids and grandchildren for fun. This is the place to go. Beaches really knows how to make families happy. I have never seen so many happy kids.

The hotel has 614 rooms and suites scattered over 65 acres. All rooms include: air conditioning, king or double beds, satellite TV, refrigerator, hair dryer, telephone, private bath and showers. All rooms are tiled.



Beaches offers Suites with Butler Services. Your wish is their command. With the uncompromising attention to detail of a personal butler trained to the highest standards by the elite Guild of Professional English Butlers, you will be pampered throughout your stay in extraordinary ways.

The hotel has 16 different dining facilities ranging from casual food to gourmet dining. This is in addition to 13 different bars. The all-inclusive designation means you get a lot of value for your money. All meals and drinks are included.

POINT GRACE IS “THE BEST BOUTIQUE HOTEL ON PROVIDENCIALES”

If you want to get away to a small boutique hotel on the best beach, Point Grace (www.pointgrace.com, 888-209-5582) is the perfect place. The Beach has been voted by the British Sunday Times and Conde Nast in a readers poll as the “Best Beach in the World.” Point Grace is a unique boutique hotel with only 28 luxurious one, two, three and four bedroom suites and penthouses. The largest of the Suites can accommodate up to 8 guests. Here, in a setting seemingly untouched by time, each suite has been designed to include every luxury leaving you free to encounter your own personal state of grace.



The thing we most liked about the hotel, is the fact that it was quiet. There wasn't any cha cha music or volleyball playing in their fabulous pool. If you wanted to go to the beach, it was a very short walk. The pool was very close and so was the dining room. This is the place to go, if you want to relax, think, spend time with a special friend or just take life easy. This is a haven of quiet serenity.

One of the unique things about Point Grace is its manager, Ms. Beverly Williams. She is experienced and manages the property very well. Because of the size of the property and her experience as a manager, she is a visible hands-on manager. She makes things happen instantly and seemingly without any effort.

The Thalasso Spa at Point Grace is a full service European style Thalassotherapy spa. They have combined their knowledge of famous Thalgo Spas of France and have created a relaxing Caribbean ocean front environment for your enjoyment and restoration.

For more than twelve years Grace's Cottage has been acclaimed as the island's finest dining experience. Grace's Cottage features picturesque outdoor seating under gazebos, on the terrace or under the stars.

(Continued from Page One)

It is quite common to find that ten days before the date you want that more than 30% of First or Business Class are not sold or do not have a seat assigned. The airlines want to sell all of these seats or at least use them for upgrades rather than have them empty when the flight leaves. They may program them on Tuesday night to begin releasing them four days ahead of time.

I need to be in Europe on September 17 and need to know for certain that I will be there. I called British Airways and asked them to search their computer for any availability in the United States for 2 First Class seats to London. They found 2 seats from Washington Dulles to London and assigned me the seats I wanted. These were probably seats that had been cancelled or perhaps they added a new flight.

The advantage I have now is that I know I will be in London exactly when I want to. I can now make my ongoing plans definite. I can always get a ticket on short notice from Los Angeles to Dulles in First or Business Class to connect at Dulles in Washington, D. C.

Now I will closely watch for 2 non-stop tickets from Los Angeles to London particularly during the last four days. I feel confident that I will find them and will change my reservation for two for a total cost of \$130. Not bad for a one way ticket priced at \$9,406. My total one way cost from Washington was 60,000 Avios points plus \$463.00. If nothing else works out for my trip, I have saved \$ 8,944 on each one way ticket or a total of \$17,888 for two tickets. One way Dulles to London in First Class is \$9,407 minus my cost \$463 equals \$8,944 times 2 tickets equals \$17,888. The charge from Los Angeles will be 75,000 Avios points and \$450.70. If necessary, I can use the same method on my return.

I received 100,000 Avios points free when I signed up for the free British Airways card and have since increased the points by 20,000 using my credit card. Upscale Traveler recommended that all of our subscribers sign up for this card. In addition, we recommended you also get the American Express Membership Rewards Card on which you received 50,000 Membership Rewards points, which could be transferred to several airlines, including British Airways. Later we advised everyone that AMEX had a special offer of a 50% bonus, if you transferred to one of their airlines. That means you would have on British Airways 75,000 free points from AMEX and 100,000 points on British Airways for a total of 175,000 points without counting the points you earned using your British Airways Credit Card. The maximum points needed from the West Coast to London round trip in First Class is 150,000 Avios points.

You should always call the airline direct to check on available First and Business Class seats and to book your flights. Their Website does not show all of their availability.

The other thing that helps, if you want a Frequent Flyer seat, is to fly from a city that has multiple flights. New York has 8 flights a day to London on British Airways. Los Angeles has three and Chicago and San Francisco have two. Obviously, the more flights you have to choose from the better your chances are.

It seems strange, that this week there is almost no availability on British Airways for First and Business Class in the four-day period before traveling from Los Angeles to London. In the same four-day period from London to Los Angeles everything was available. It is possible they cut the flights after the Olympics and are also selling Upgrades before the flight.

This method I have suggested is not perfect. We do not want to suggest to you that it is. You need to try it yourself and see if it works for you.

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

The City of Pasadena is located just 11 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. Pasadena is unique in that it is home to 16 historically designated districts, such as Bungalow Heaven and Garfield. Today, at least 10 per cent of the city's 22.5 square-mile area is historically designated.

Pasadena does not have the glitz of Beverly Hills. The people who live there are more likely to be famous for a Nobel prize in Chemistry, as for an Academy Award. It is known for the Rose Bowl and The Rose Parade. For a town its size, it has more quality museums than many much larger cities. The city is famous for its art. They have the Huntington Library, Art Collection and Botanical Gardens, the Norton Simon Museum, The Pacific Asia Museum and The Pasadena Museum of California Art. These are all located within the small city of Pasadena and are all close by.

Home to Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Los Angeles, Pasadena offers a myriad of dining options. With more than 500 restaurants, there is a broad range of cuisines served in a variety of environments ranging from outdoor cafes to fine dining rooms.

Pasadena is a great place to relax in a classy environment after a hard day at work or to enjoy a cultural weekend.

THE LANGHAM HUNTINGTON

The Langham Huntington (pasadena.langhamhotels.com, 626-568-3900) is located in an area that is surrounded by mansions and is very close to the famous Huntington Library, Art Galleries and Botanical Gardens. The hotel has been a famed Pasadena landmark since 1907 capturing the grace and elegance of a bygone era. The hotel has 23 acres of gorgeously landscaped grounds.



The hotel is the Best Hotel in Pasadena. The Langham offers guests deeply comfortable rooms, grounds that epitomize gracious Pasadena living, and a fantastic indoor/outdoor bar and pool. They have a picture bridge with 40 murals of California history. The hotel has 380 rooms, 338 Suites, eight newly renovated cottages and 30 Club Level rooms featuring upgraded amenities and access to a private lounge with food and beverage presentations daily, along with Concierge services.

The hotel's famous restaurant is The Royce. David Feau is the Chef de Cuisine. He has worked with many famous chefs in Europe. He has run Lutece in New York and in Las Vegas. and was also Executive Chef for Cafe Pinot in Los Angeles. The Royce Chef Feau's celebrated style is described as "New American Cuisine" featuring modern interpretations of classic dishes. The menu is comprised of lighter California fare prepared with French influences and refined technique, emphasizing fresh seasonal produce and the best quality products from around the world.

The Huntington Spa is an 11,000 square-foot haven of wellness, featuring a state-of-the-art fitness center and 13 treatment rooms, including one couple's room. It offers services such as massages, facials, body treatments, manicures, pedicures and hair services.

BRITISH AIRWAYS OFFERS AARP MEMBERS DISCOUNTS

British Airways is offering exclusive discounts to members of AARP. If you are not an AARP member you can quickly and easily become one by going to www.aarp.org and going to Join/Renew, or you can call 800-566-0292. Anyone 50 or over can get all the benefits of membership in AARP for only \$16 a year. And membership includes your spouse or partner. Joining online is fast and secure. You become a member right away and receive your membership number online.

This offer is available to book through October 31, 2012. It is available for travel through March 31, 2013. When you see a red 'D' next to the fare display during the booking process, you can be assured that the discount has been applied.

Cabin	US to UK	US to Europe and beyond
World Traveller (Economy)	\$75* Off	\$100* Off
World Traveller Plus (Premium Economy)	\$150* Off	\$200* Off
Club World (Business)	\$400* Off	\$400* Off
First	\$400* Off	\$400* Off

*Dollar discount is off round-trip fares originating in the USA. American Airlines and American Eagle flights with a BA flight number qualify for the discount as long as they connect to BA operated transatlantic flights. The discount is applied each way for a round-trip flight (i.e. For a \$400 discount, \$200 discount will be reflected in each way price).

UNITED AIRLINES UNVEILS FIRST 787 DREAMLINER

United Airlines unveiled on August 2nd its new Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which will revolutionize the flying experience for United customers and crews while delivering unprecedented operating efficiency, comfort and lower emissions. The airline showcased its first 787, fresh out of the paint hangar at Boeing's Everett, Washington facility. United is the North American launch customer for the Dreamliner, and expects to take delivery of its first 787 in September. The airline has firm orders for 50 787s, for delivery by 2019.

Primarily built with composite materials, the 787 has 30 percent more range and uses approximately 20 percent less fuel than similarly-sized aircraft, while reducing emissions and noise during takeoffs and landings. With these advantages, the 787 will open up new non-stop destinations that customers would not be able to otherwise reach on United, such as the recently-announced Denver-to-Tokyo service that starts next spring.

The aircraft cabin is configured with 36 seats in BusinessFirst, 72 seats in Economy Plus and 111 seats in Economy. Customers will be more comfortable with improved lighting, bigger windows, larger overhead bins, lower cabin altitude and enhanced ventilation systems, among other features. The 787's inflight entertainment system features an all-new design that offers more intuitive browsing and more filtering options, giving customers the option of searching for programs by language.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters From Our Readers: The staff at UPSCALE TRAVELER encourages letters, E-mail, and faxes concerning both the content of our newsletter and travel tips based on your own experience. We cannot acknowledge all letters, answer all questions, or return submissions.