

Airlines

Airlines Revamp Systems for Holidays

Several airlines have announced special holiday preparedness efforts, which include adding staff, practicing de-icing and upping their capability to give advance notice of service disruptions. If a plane is stuck on a runway for three hours, Northwest's captains can initiate a plan for passengers to deplane. Airlines are adding extra time between flights to try to reduce missed connections and minimize delays. Northwest has pushed back up to 20 minutes the last two banks of flights for the Detroit Metro and Minneapolis/St. Paul airports; United has added more than a minute to the service time it allots to cleaning and preparing aircraft between flights to ensure timeliness. Northwest is instituting its annual "Holiday Incentive Program" which recognizes the toll holiday travel season takes on staff; United is offering incentive and overtime pay for key dates. Delta Airlines is sharing its anticipated passenger numbers with government and airport authorities to make sure they've got the frontline staffing to handle those passengers, especially with U.S. Customers and the Transportation Safety Administration. (Source: airline press releases).

FAA Posts Airport Delays on Special Website

The Federal Aviation Administration is posting airport delay information online. General information, including if operations are running smoothly or if there are delays, can be obtained simply by clicking on the airport on a map of the United States. For detailed information, including current average delay times and the reason for the delay, click on the airport. The FAA will also email delay information to travelers' pagers, cell phones or BlackBerry devices. Users can register for the free "Aviation Information System" at the www.fly.faa.gov site. (Source: FAA press release).

Clear Security Express Service Offers Preferred Pricing to Corporate Cardmembers

Clear, which operates registered traveler security express lanes at U.S. airports, is offering American Express corporate cardmember preferred pricing. Corporate cardmembers will receive preferred pricing on Clear's annual membership and appointment enrollment privileges at Clear's network of off-airport city enrollment centers. Clear is installing enrollment stations in some American Express Travel offices, including the office at the World Financial Center.

American Plans to Sell American Eagle

AMR Corporation, parent company of American Airlines, said that it plans to divest American Eagle, its wholly owned regional carrier. It said that the divestitures would provide the carrier provide new opportunities for American Eagle's employees. AMR also believes that the divestiture will enable American to focus on its mainline business, while ensuring American's continued access to cost-competitive regional feed. Once the two airlines are separated, they will continue to work together, AMR said. (Source: American Airlines press release).

Passport Changes

As of January 23, 2007 passports are required for travel between the United States and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean (except for travel to or from U.S. territories by U.S. citizens), and Bermuda. As of October 1, 2007, exceptions are no longer being made for those who have applied for their passport but haven't received it. Please make sure that you have your passport with you when you arrive at the airport for your travel between the areas mentioned above.

United Expands Out of Washington Dulles

United Airlines will serve nine new East Coast cities out of Washington-Dulles International Airport, starting in January. The cities are: Bradford, Pa.; Jamestown, N.Y.; Parkersburg, W.Va.; Altoona, Pa.; Beckley, W.Va.; Clarksburg, W.Va.; Johnstown, Penn.; Morgantown, W.Va.; and Shenandoah Valley, Va. (Source: United press release).

Hotels

Hilton Garden Inn Opens in New York's Chelsea

The 169-room Hilton Garden Inn New York Chelsea has opened. It has a convenience mart, restaurant, lounge area with fireplace and complimentary business center. Guestrooms have high-speed wired and wireless internet access and the hotel has a workout facility. The hotel is on West 28th Street and near major corporations such as Nike, Federated Department Stores and the SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology. (Source: Hilton press release).

Hyatt Place Boston Opens

The Hyatt Place Boston/Medford has opened four miles from downtown Boston and near Logan International Airport. The 157-room hotel is part of brand that is designed to accommodate business travelers balancing personal and professional activities; the hotel combines casual hospitality with comfortable and functional amenities such as free Wi-Fi, oversized desks, a free fitness center, free shuttle service to Wellington and Davis Square T stations and Tufts University, a coffee and wine bar, free continental breakfast as well as a made-to-order menu. (Source: Hyatt Place press release).

Car Rental

Budget Discounts Rentals for American Express Cardholders

Budget Rent A Car System is offering a special promotion for American Express cardmembers through May 31. Customers paying for a Budget rental with any American Express Card they will save up to \$50 on that rental and receive an American Express branded rewards card worth up to \$100. Discounts start at \$10 for a three or four day rental and go up to \$50 for a 29-day or more rental. Reward cards start at \$10 for a three or four-day rental and go up to \$100 for a 29-day or more rental. You must provide a coupon number when you book the rental. They are: three and four days, MUWZ102; five to 14 days, MUWZ103; 15 to 20 days, MUWZ104; 21 to 28 days, MUWZ104 and 29 or more days, MUWZ105. (Source: Budget press release).



Spotlight On.....

Car Rental Satisfaction

Customers frustrated by air delays are also showing greater dissatisfaction with car rental service, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2007 Rental Car Satisfaction Study. Enterprise ranks highest, followed by Hertz and National. Enterprise did best on costs and fees, pick-up process, rental car, return process and shuttle bus/van. National does well in telephone reservations. Enterprise is a clear front runner, which could bode well for service provided by the two car rental companies it just acquired, Alamo and National. On the negative side, car rental customers are facing higher fuel prices and decreased availability of new rental vehicles. And, they're seeing increased wait times—22 minutes to pick up, 14 to return—which are longer than it takes to get a boarding pass, check luggage, go through security or check in to a hotel room. (Source: J.D. Power press release)

***From all of us at Milne Travel American Express, have a
Save and Happy Holiday Season!!!***

Milne Travel American Express is committed to providing you with useful information on the latest developments in the travel

