

Consultant's Corner

This is our third installment of the Consultants Corner and I promised a focus on vacation travel. As the leaves begin to change color and there is a nip in the air (depending on where you live), you may be thinking of the upcoming holidays. Do you want to go skiing or perhaps take a cruise over the holidays? And, it really isn't too early to be thinking of Spring Break.

Did you know that TravelFocus through its TravelVacations brand has a dedicated team of experienced leisure professionals with 25+ years' experience?

From a simple trip to Las Vegas to a Caribbean cruise, to custom independent trips; our leisure team has the knowledge and the contacts to plan the perfect trip for you.



David Gorecki - VP Operations

Leisure specialists are located in both our Dallas and Chicago offices. They can be reached at the same dedicated number that you call for corporate reservations, just press option 5 on the call prompter to be routed directly to them.

The team consists of Susie Caldwell in Dallas, Lynne Carlson, Carol Felgenhauer and Colleen Manor in Chicago along with Judy Byerly and Elaine Walsh in Dallas and finally but not least, Donna Neri, Reid Gross, and Barbara Pinkowski in Chicago.

With so much information on the Internet, many people feel well

informed when planning their vacation. They may think, "why should I use a travel professional for my vacation?" How do you know that the internet site is reputable? What do you do if you arrive at your destination and it is not up to your expectations? If your vacation is booked through our vacation department, we have reliable people at reputable companies to assist you.

Our Leisure specialists are dedicated to their craft, and travel extensively to keep their knowledge current. Many of them also take continuing education modules from the various vendors to keep abreast of the changes in the products lines and offerings. (For instance, believe or not, I am a certified Disney specialist and I have my mouse ears to prove it!!).

They are able to offer you the little tips that you can only learn from someone who has experienced the destination. And, in the unlikely event that something goes wrong on a trip that TravelVacations has arranged,

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Continued Consultant's Corner

they are a phone call away to help you make the necessary changes so you can continue to enjoy your vacation. Again, who would assist you if your trip was booked on the internet?

Our buying power and global reach, and our relationship with our suppliers and consortium memberships allows us to offer excellent prices and we can often supply special amenities at no extra cost. Our leisure specialists take pride in what they do. They consult with you regarding your interests and design an experience that is a truly personalized vacation. They will be able to advise on what destinations are workable with your budget.

There is nothing better than someone who can describe the experience to you and show you pictures because they have been to the destination. I use a recent example of an educational trip to Bora Bora (don't laugh-- it really was a short 5 day educational trip) hosted by the Four Seasons. What an experience!! Every morning I woke up to a beautiful sunrise and walked out to my bungalow deck, and dove right into the bluest water I had ever seen. It truly was paradise and it is on my short list of destinations for my 30th wedding anniversary next year.

By the way, did you know that TravelVacations has access to two houses for rent on the island of Kauai all year round? It is a great destination for a family vacation. You rent the house and tell everyone else to come join you!!

A vacation is such a personal experience. Think about the amount of money you spend. Do you want to trust that to an unknown's posting on the web? Or, would you prefer to deal with a professional whose mission is to create a memorable experience customized just for you?

Thanks!

Dtg and the [TravelVacations](#) Team

dgorecki@travelfocus.com or 214-915-9066.

David Gorecki
VP Operations

TravelVacations - A Food & Wine Lover's Paradise

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American Airlines will Relocate to Terminal 2 at San Francisco International Airport



American Airlines, will relocate its operations to San Francisco's new Terminal 2 in spring 2011 from its current location in Terminal 3. In conjunction with the terminal move, American will construct a new Admirals Club lounge, and will be the only lounge located in Terminal 2.

American will have 14 ticket counter positions and 20 self-service machines to offer a smooth check-in.

Unique in its design and amenities, the approximately 575,000 square foot terminal will boast six security screening lanes, free Wi-Fi throughout the terminal, more comfortable lounge areas with ample electrical outlets, plus 12 restaurants and nine retail stores, including a gourmet market with a wine bar and spa.



Located in Boarding Area D, just beyond the security checkpoint, the Terminal 2 Admirals Club will span more than 9,000 square feet and offer seating for up to 165 guests. Upgraded amenities will include a multifunctional business center with HP PCs, a walk-up cyber café with HP TouchSmart computers and complimentary high-speed Internet, a TV lounge with flat-panel TVs and private spa-like showers.

American Airlines to begin service between Dallas/Fort Worth and Rio de Janeiro



American Airlines will begin three days a week service between DFW and Rio de Janeiro (GIG) starting Dec. 16. The seasonal service will run through April 4, 2011, and then resume for the summer season between June 9, 2011, and Aug. 22, 2011. The service will resume for the 2012 season on Nov. 22, 2011. The flights will be flown using Boeing 767-300 aircraft that offer two-class service with 28 Business Class seats and 191 Economy Class seats.

The seasonal service via DFW is a perfect complement to American's upcoming new daily flight from JFK that begins Nov. 18 and AA's existing daily flight from Miami. American also begins nonstop service four days a week between Miami and Brasilia starting Nov. 18.

Here is the new schedule effective Dec. 16 – April 4, 2011:
AA 251 from DFW to GIG on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday
Departs: 7:45 p.m. and Arrives: 10:25 a.m. (next day)**

AA 250 from GIG to DFW on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday
Departs: 11:15 p.m. and Arrives 6:25 a.m. (next day)**

**These times are accurate at the time the service begins but may be adjusted later due to Daylight Saving Time in both the U.S. and Brazil



Airlines make \$2.1B in fees and extras in 2Q

U.S. airlines collected \$2.1 billion in fees and extra charges from passengers in the second quarter, up 13 percent from the first three months of the year, the government said Monday.

The fees and extra charges helped major U.S. airlines post their first profitable quarter since 2007. Most of the fees came from checked bags, which rose 16 percent to \$893 million. Reservation fees totaled \$594 million, up from \$553.9 million in the first quarter of this year.

Airlines reported \$618 million in so-called ancillary revenue, which includes revenue from frequent-flier award program mileage sales and pet fees. Other fees, such as revenue from seating assignments and on-board sales of food, drink, pillows, blankets, and entertainment are not broken out by the government.

Overall, Delta, the world's largest airline, made the most money in total extras at \$682 million. American is next in line, followed by US Airways.

Spirit, the only airline charging for carry-on bags, gets more than 24 percent of its revenue from fees and extras. That's tops among U.S. airlines. Next in line is Allegiant, which collects about 10 percent of its total revenue from extras.



US Airways announces two European routes from Charlotte hub

US Airways announced September 20th that it will “expand its international presence” at its Charlotte hub. The carrier plans to add daily seasonal service to both Dublin and Madrid, beginning in May.

US Airways says the new flights will complement its daily nonstop year-round service to the same destinations from its “international gateway” of Philadelphia.

“Our new summer service from Charlotte will meet the peak travel demand for Madrid and Dublin,” US Airways Senior Vice President, Marketing and Planning Andrew Nocella says in a press release. He says the Charlotte routes will give the airline’s customers from the Southeast and West “another convenient option for traveling to two of our most popular destinations in Europe.”

US Airways’ Charlotte-Madrid service will begin May 4 and run through Oct. 29. The carrier will fly the route with Boeing B767-200ER jets configured with 18 business-class seats and 186 in coach. The Charlotte-Dublin service runs from May 6 through Sept. 30 and will be on Boeing B757-200 jets with 12



Continued US Airways announces two European routes from Charlotte hub

seats in business class and 164 in coach.

As for Charlotte, US Airways says “the new flights bring the number of international destinations US Airways serves from its largest hub to 31 -- six cities in Europe and 25 in Latin America and the Caribbean.”

The move also received attention in Ireland, as well. Irish Central writes the Charlotte route is “a major coup for Tourism Ireland which has always wanted more southern U.S. access.”

The Irish Times notes US Airways’ Charlotte-Dublin service is “the first new service to be announced for Dublin airport’s Terminal 2 building, which is expected to open in November. T2 will handle all of Aer Lingus’s flights and those services operated by long-haul carriers from Dublin.”

Ritz-Carlton launches hotel loyalty program

In a world where even your local coffee shop probably has a loyalty program, Marriott’s luxury Ritz-Carlton chain is joining the ranks of those rewarding regular customers. The company says The Ritz-Carlton Rewards program is based on “strong customer feedback” for a world-class offering. The new program may also be a sign of how luxury hotels have had trouble filling their rooms in tough economic times. Ritz-Carlton guests will be able to earn points for stays at both Ritz-Carlton and Marriott properties. And Marriott Rewards members will now also be able to collect points for staying at Ritz-Carlton properties.



The Ritz-Carlton®

Of course, this being Ritz-Carlton the company is doing things upscale when it comes to rewards. Herve Humler, president and COO of The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, says they’ve inked partnership deals with luxury tour company Abercrombie and Kent; fashion icon Vera Wang; National Geographic Expeditions, for photography workshops; and Neiman Marcus. “This is just the beginning. We will continue to add global partners offering our members the very best in customized and one-of-a-kind memorable experiences,” Humler says in a press release. Ritz-Carlton Rewards guests can also redeem points for stays at the chain’s own properties, as well as for flights on 30 airlines and luxury cruises on Crystal Cruises, The Yachts of Seabourn and Silversea.

TravelVacations - Plan you family vacation to A Bar Ranch

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Along the banks of the North Platte River, in the heart of southern Wyoming's Medicine Bow Mountains, lies the A Bar A Ranch. Established in 1926, it is one of the oldest guest ranches in the country. It is also one of the largest: 140,000 acres for guests and staff to explore surrounded by National Forest and Wilderness Area.

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WIDGET ON THE GO

American Airlines Lunches Its Latest Customer Convenience Tool

The mobile Wi-Fi Widget gives customers an even more convenient way to identify Wi-Fi equipped aircraft while on the go, because it's now available on any Internet-equipped mobile device.

The Wi-Fi Widget makes it easy for customers to identify Wi-Fi equipped flights within 24 hours of departure. Launched on AA.com in November 2009, the widget provides customers the ability to check if their flights are scheduled with a Wi-Fi equipped aircraft.

American knows that customers are mobile, and having information they want and need on the go can simplify and enhance the travel experience for them. The Wi-Fi Widget has been a customer favorite since its launch. To check for Wi-Fi access on a specific flight, go to AA.com/wifiwidget on a mobile device within 24 hours of departure. Once there, enter a flight number or select the departure airport from a drop down menu to find out if the flight is scheduled to be Wi-Fi equipped.

While on board a Wi-Fi equipped flight, customers can make hotel or car reservations, check their AAdvantage® accounts, book additional flights and more – with complimentary inflight access to AA.com. Customers can also enjoy full access to the Web, VPN, social networking sites and e-mail access for as little as \$4.95 per Gogo Inflight Internet session.

Wi-Fi is now available on American flights within the continental United States on all Boeing 767-200 aircraft and select MD80 and 737 aircraft. In August 2008, American became the first U.S. airline to launch the Gogo service. Since then, thousands of customers traveling on American aircraft have enjoyed onboard Wi-Fi service while flying throughout the United States. For more information on American's Inflight Internet offering please visit AA.com/wifi.



American Airlines Domestic Admirals Club Lounges to Offer

Complimentary Alcoholic Beverages - Another Service Admirals Club Members Have Asked For

This drink is on us! Beginning Oct. 1, American Airlines is offering travelers another benefit of membership in its Admirals Club® lounges. American will offer alcoholic beverages, including wine, beer and spirits, free of charge to customers visiting any of its domestic clubs, in addition to complimentary coffee, tea, soft drinks and juices.

“Updating our beverage selection to include complimentary alcoholic beverages is another example of American’s commitment to reinvest in our premium products and enhance the travel experience for our loyal members and guests,” said Nancy Knipp, American’s President – Admirals Club. “Our customers have asked for free drinks and we are delighted to respond to their request by providing this service for our existing and new members at our clubs worldwide.”

Domestic clubs will offer well brand liquors, as well as beers and house wines as a complimentary service

Continued American Airlines Domestic Admirals Club Lounges to Offer Complimentary Alcoholic Beverages

on Oct. 1. Premium liquors and wines and a selection of Amora™ fresh food items will be available for purchase in all U.S. Admirals Club lounges.

Menu items vary by location, and include fresh salads, sandwiches, hot entrees and small bites.

Seasonal and regional specialties are featured

throughout the year, with special chef demonstrations offered at select clubs. All menu items are available to enjoy in the club or for carry-out. Customers visiting an international Admirals Club location will continue to enjoy complimentary alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages as they do today.



American's clubs feature an array of amenities for business and leisure travelers to relax, refresh or recharge before, between or after flights. Members and one day pass holder's at all domestic Admirals Club lounges, including San Juan, can enjoy complimentary Wi-Fi access powered by T-Mobile. For those who prefer to use the multi-functional Business Center within the club, newly installed HP Compaq 8000 Elite Business PCs allow customers to check e-mail and conduct business on a highly secure, stable and efficient device. The Cyber Cafes feature brand-new HP TouchSmart PCs with built-for-touch applications that allow customers to experience music, photos, games and video in a visually-engaging manner beyond what a mouse or keyboard can do.

American operates more than 40 Admirals Club lounges in airports throughout the world and continues to reinvest in its products with new technology and lounge refurbishments. For example, American completed extensive renovations to its Boston Logan Admirals Club in July and to its London Heathrow Admirals Club and Flagship Lounge facilities in May. American is also building a brand-new Admirals Club lounge at San Francisco International Airport (SFO), in conjunction with the airline's relocation to SFO's Terminal 2 next spring. For more information on Admirals Club lounges, including Admirals Club membership and one-day pass information, log on to www.aa.com/admiralsclub.

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Full-body scanner arrives at Minneapolis airport

Security officials at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport began using a new, high-tech body scanner at one of its checkpoints Wednesday, saying the full-image technology is a critical tool to help head off potential threats.

The full-imaging scanner — the first in Minneapolis — screens passengers for metallic and nonmetallic items, including plastic or chemical explosives and weapons that could be hidden under clothes.

Civil rights groups have expressed concern that the machines, which produce a blurry outline of a person's body, are too revealing. But security officials say they've taken steps to protect privacy. "Passenger privacy is paramount," said Tom Connors, the Transportation Security Administration's federal security director in Minneapolis.



TSA has 224 imaging technology units at 56 airports, with plans to double that number by the end of the year. Minneapolis installed its first at Checkpoint 10, a lower-traffic spot that connects parking ramps to concourses and is used primarily by business travelers and crew. The airport expects to get more of the machines this fall.

Minneapolis will use the "millimeter wave" technology, one of two types of scanners used by the TSA. It bounces radio waves off a person's body to produce a black-and-white image. Connors said the machine is safe, and the energy emitted is less than what is permitted for a cell phone.

A volunteer demonstrated how the machine works. Just like a metal detector, he had to remove his shoes before entering. He also had to take everything out of his pockets including paper and tissues, not just metal items. He walked into the machine and stood sideways with his arms over his head while it scanned his body. It took a few seconds.



In another room, a security officer views the image. The security officer who looks at the image is in a closed-off area not accessible to the public. The officer also won't see the passenger, and the officer who guides the passenger through the machine won't see the image. The image can't be stored, printed or transmitted elsewhere, and once it is viewed, it is immediately deleted. If there is an anomaly on the image, the officer at the checkpoint is notified and the traveler will be screened further.

Reporters were brought into the viewing area to see

Continued Full-body scanner arrives at Minneapolis airport

an image of a female volunteer. The black-and-white image showed a front and back view of the woman, and a fuzzy, shadowy outline of her curves and body contours. It did not show her clothing or genitals, but her underwear lines were visible. Her face was blurred to protect privacy. Travelers can opt to skip the machine and get a pat down instead.

“If you refuse the scan, then you’ll get a pat down,” Connors said. The same goes for travelers who refuse to go through the standard metal detectors. Someone with wrong intentions could try to avoid a scan by looking for alternative checkpoints that only have metal detectors. When asked about that possibility, Connors said there are layers in TSA’s security measures, such as behavior detection, to stop those threats. “You could go elsewhere, but you could run into (another security measure) elsewhere that’s random,” he said.

Travel group gains support for airline fee rule

A group of travel executives said it has stirred up plenty of support for a government rule that would require airlines to display extra fees prominently on their websites and in travel reservation systems. The Consumer Travel Alliance, Business Travel Coalition and American Society of Travel Agents on Thursday delivered a petition to the Transportation Department with 50,000 signatures from consumers who want airlines to spell out fees more clearly. Thursday is the last day for public comment on proposed government rules to enhance passenger rights and make airline fares and fees more transparent.



In addition to requiring airlines to fully disclose baggage and other fees, the new rules call for refunds of fees and reimbursement for expenses when bags are lost or not delivered on time. Airlines would also have to give notice when baggage fees are increased, and notify passengers buying tickets whether they must pay to check up to two bags.

The travel industry effort to support government rule changes, called “Mad as Hell about Hidden Fees,” began two weeks ago. It claims that fees can boost ticket price by 26 percent when one bag is checked and by 54 percent when a passenger checks two bags and chooses a seat with extra legroom.

The group wants all ticket outlets to have the same information on fares and fees for travelers. More than half of all airline tickets are sold by third parties, such as travel agents and websites like Expedia or Orbitz.

“Airlines should be able make a fair profit and set fares and fees that allow them to do so, as long as travelers can see and compare all of those fees in advance,” said Paul Ruden of the American Society of Travel Agents. The Transportation Department said Monday that U.S. airlines in the second quarter made \$893 million on baggage fees, \$594 million from reservation change fees and \$618 million from charges for things like frequent-flyer sales and transporting pets.

Virgin Group to move into hotels



Following forays into industries ranging from mobile phones to space travel, Sir Richard Branson has set his sights on a new challenge – the hotel sector. With an initial investment of \$500 million, the billionaire investor has confirmed his Virgin Group seek to build a portfolio of properties in a number of key US cities over the next three years.

Destinations are set to include New York, Las Vegas and Miami. “We are keen to discover a range of interesting, authentic and high quality 150 to 400 room properties in appealing neighborhoods,” Virgin Hotels said in a statement.

“Our valuable target audience includes the high income, well-educated, metropolitan ‘creative class’.”

Air France Will Fly From Orlando Next Year



Air France will offer nonstop from Orlando to Paris starting next year. Travel from The Magic Kingdom to Paris just got easier.

Air France announced Tuesday that it will start nonstop service from Orlando to Paris next June.

The airline will operate three flights per week from Charles de Gaulle Airport in France to Orlando International Airport in Florida.

The launch of the Orlando-Paris service is the first new long haul for Air France in six years.

Orlando tourism officials say international travel to Orlando is expected to increase in the next two years.

Virgin America has won Condé Nast Traveler’s Best Business/First Class

Condé Nast Traveler magazine ranked Virgin America as the Best Business/First Class among domestic airlines in its 2010 Business Travel Poll for the third consecutive year. Two independent firms asked 25,900 Condé Nast Traveler readers identified as business travelers to rate hotels, airports and airlines on a variety of criteria. Final scores (out of 100) represent the percentage of readers who rated a hotel, airport, or airline “excellent” or “very good.” Virgin America rated an overall score of 89.7 — its two nearest competitors ranked at 82.2 (Midwest) and 68.1 (Continental) respectively. The award will hit newsstands in the October issue of Condé Nast Traveler.



Since its August 2007 launch, Virgin America has swept the major reader-based travel awards, including Condé Nast Traveler’s 2008 and 2009 Readers’ Choice Awards. The carrier’s premium Main Cabin Select

Continued Virgin America has won Condé Nast Traveler's Best Business/First Class

service, offers 38-inches of seat pitch, complimentary food and cocktails, an all-access pass to entertainment options, dedicated overhead bin space, one free checked bag and priority check-in/boarding.

In addition to a Main Cabin that offers leather seats with a deeper, more comfortable pitch, Virgin America's First Class cabin features international-grade amenities, including plush white leather seats with 55 inches of pitch and lumbar massagers.



Southwest Airlines to buy AirTran, expand into new markets

Southwest Airlines Co. Monday (9/27/10) took a bold step to knit together its national network in buying rival low-fare carrier AirTran Holdings Inc. for \$3.4 billion in cash and assumed debt. "This absolutely changes things," Southwest chief executive and chairman Gary Kelly told analysts on a conference call.

The Dallas-based airline had sworn closely to an idea of growing itself "organically" by buying new Boeing 737 aircraft and deploying them in new markets such as New York, Washington D.C. and Denver. Recently Kelly and other Southwest executives have been up front that the carrier, the nation's largest by passengers carried, would be a player in the industry's rapid consolidation. Overnight, Southwest gains a valuable market presence in Atlanta and can connect a series of new flights from its newest markets along the East Coast through Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport, the world's busiest by daily flights. AirTran's growing presence in Milwaukee meshes with Southwest's foray into that market.



The deal also gives Southwest an immediate international network that it currently lacks. AirTran flies to Mexico and the Caribbean. Southwest and AirTran said the new airline will operate from more than 100 different airports and serve more than 100 million customers. AirTran and Southwest's networks had been overlapping more frequently. Southwest strengthens itself – along with eliminating a competitor – in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and gains more pricing power in Florida's low-profit leisure markets.

Southwest shares jumped 8 percent on the news to \$13.26 in early trading Monday. Orlando-based AirTran Holdings' shares soared 60 percent to \$7.25. Both carriers' boards of directors have approved the acquisition, which still requires shareholder approval. Southwest values the purchase at \$1.4 billion. Under the proposed deal, AirTran shareholders will receive \$3.75 in cash and 0.321 Southwest share for each share of AirTran, valuing it at \$7.69 a share. That would be nearly a 70 percent premium over AirTran Holdings' previous closing price.

The acquisition comes a year after Southwest failed in its bid to purchase Frontier Airlines out of bankruptcy, losing to Republic Airways Holdings. Key questions with the integration include what Southwest will do with AirTran's fleet of 86 Boeing 717 aircraft. Southwest has only Boeing 737s in its fleet, though AirTran's 52 Boeing 737-700s add to Southwest's total of nearly 550 737s. The 717s are smaller than most Southwest planes, but if the airline chooses to keep them they might work on shorter routes. The airlines will operate separately for the time being until final approval of the acquisition. AirTran has 8,500 employees and splits its management between Orlando, where the airline is based primarily for tax reasons and from its roots as a leisure carrier, and between Atlanta, where it operates its largest hub.

Continued Southwest Airlines to buy AirTran, expand into new markets

Analysts are interested in what the merger means for Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines Inc., which swallowed Northwest Airlines and was the largest airline in the world until the merger of United Airlines and Continental Airlines closed this summer. Southwest becomes a much-better-financed competitor than AirTran to fight for share in Delta's key markets such as Atlanta. Delta shares were off slightly in trading Monday to \$11.53.

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American Airlines Receives U.S. Department of Transportation Approval to Fly Between Los Angeles and Shanghai, China - New Flights To Begin April 5, 2011

FORT WORTH, Texas, Oct. 7 /PRNewswire/ -- American Airlines, a founding member of the oneworld® Alliance, today issued the following statement:

“We are very pleased that the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) has granted us the authority and frequencies needed to begin new service between Los Angeles and Shanghai, the largest market for travel between the United States and China that is not presently served by a U.S. airline. These new flights will enrich American's customer service offering to China and will expand American's schedule at Los Angeles International Airport, one of its five cornerstone cities.

“We thank DOT officials for their expedited review of our request and we look forward to launching these new daily flights on April 5 using 247-seat Boeing 777 aircraft, which feature 16 First Class, 37 Business Class and 194 Economy Class seats.

“This has been a terrific week for the employees, customers, and shareholders of American Airlines. We have launched our new joint business with our immunized trans-Atlantic and oneworld partners, British Airways and Iberia. We have announced new service from New York Kennedy to Budapest, as well as a second Barcelona flight, plus new service from Chicago O'Hare to Helsinki and a second flight between Miami and Madrid. In addition, DOT has tentatively granted trans-Pacific antitrust immunity for American and its oneworld partner Japan Airlines.”

