

## BURKHALTER TRAVEL NEWS: DECEMBER 2018

### SCROLL DOWN FOR THESE SECTIONS:

LATEST NEWS -- AIRLINE UPDATES -- AIRPORT NEWS -- HOTELS -- TOOLS, TIPS AND TECHNOLOGY -- BURKHALTER TOURS --  
BURKHALTER OFFICE LOCATIONS

### LATEST NEWS

- **HEADS UP!** Marriott International announced that a recent **breach of its Starwood guest reservation database** exposed the personal information of up to 500 million people. The company set up an [informational website](#) and a call center, **877-273-9481**, to answer questions. **The U.S. Federal Trade Commission** is also offering recommendations at [this site](#).
- **More about the Marriott/Starwood breach:** The breach affected *all* Starwood customers, not just members of the Starwood Preferred Guest program. **Properties involved** include W Hotels, St. Regis, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Westin Hotels & Resorts, Element Hotels, Aloft Hotels, The Luxury Collection, Tribute Portfolio, Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts, Four Points by Sheraton and Design Hotels) **during the four years prior to September 11 of this year.**
- A splinter pilots' union is **threatening to strike against Virgin Atlantic** right before **Christmas**, demanding that the airline recognize it at the negotiating table. The Professional Pilots Union is threatening to walk out days before the holiday rush if the United Kingdom airline doesn't negotiate with the group and include it in a staff benefits review. After 72 percent of its 400 members voted in favor of striking against the company, the union said it could strike as early as Dec. 22. The strike could last into early January.
- **Lyft customers can no longer split fares** with a fellow rider through the ride-sharing app. Lyft abruptly announced that they have removed the feature. The company has emailed riders with an update, stating: "We wanted to give you a heads-up that you're no longer able to split the fare for your ride in the Lyft app." A spokesperson confirmed the change without providing any additional explanation, saying only that "Split Pay is no longer available in the app."
- As we head into the peak holiday travel season, note this: Carry-ons stuffed with gifts can add a lot of pounds to bag weight. While **Hawaiian Airlines** and **Frontier Airlines** are the only two major U.S. carriers that **limit the weight of carry-on items** (25 pounds on Hawaiian and 35 pounds on Frontier), in general, airlines **DO** put restrictions on the size of a carry-on. If you're not familiar with your airline's size and weight restrictions, research them in advance of arrival at the airport.
- **The last strike against Marriott properties has ended**, with workers in eight cities receiving wage increases. The contracts also assure that housekeepers and certain other workers will be equipped with panic buttons with location tracking in case of emergency.

# AIRLINE UPDATES

## ALASKA AIRLINES

- Alaska Airlines is considering joining the Oneworld marketing alliance dominated by American Airlines, British Airways, and Qantas, though likely not as a full-fledged member. Alaska is among the only larger North American airlines not tied to one of the three major global alliances.
- Alaska Airlines recently started selling tickets for its planned **new service out of Paine Field in Everett, Washington**, with flights due to **start on February 11**. The airport --24 miles north of downtown Seattle, just off Interstate 5 – has built a new passenger terminal to handle the expected revival of commercial flights there. Alaska said its schedule at Paine will be a bit larger than first planned, since it has acquired five additional gate times there from Southwest. The carrier now plans to operate up to 18 flights a day out of Paine Field to San Francisco International, San Jose, San Diego, Portland, Phoenix, Orange County, Los Angeles International and Las Vegas, using Horizon Air E175s. United and Southwest also plan to offer flights from Paine Field. Ask your Burkhalter agent for details.

## AMERICAN AIRLINES

- American Airlines is expanding its codeshare agreement with **China Southern Airlines** to cover both airlines' most popular routes between the US and China. The carriers will also offer reciprocal frequent-flyer benefits and access to each other's lounges.
- American Airlines is **dropping flights** between its Philadelphia hub and Mexico City on January 9. That means the route will have lasted six months since flights only began in July.
- **Quebec City** has a new trans-border link. American Airlines will add seasonal service from its **Chicago/O'Hare** hub. Daily E175 flights will operate between June 6 and September 3.
- American is joining a rapidly-growing trend: **Testing biometric boarding**, this time at Los Angeles International/LAX. More [here](#).
- Earlier this month, American Airlines rolled out **new food-for-sale menu** items inspired by fast-casual Mediterranean restaurant Zoës Kitchen. Some of the new items include a breakfast sandwich on a waffle brioche bun, the Zoës Gruben signature turkey sandwich, a grilled chicken wrap and a hummus dip. These items will be available for purchase on most domestic flights longer than three hours in Main Cabin.
- Five years ago this month American merged with US Airways to create the largest airline in the world. [Here's a look](#) at what they've accomplished since December 2013.

## DELTA AIR LINES

- Delta officially opened its first fully biometric terminal – the Maynard H. Jackson International Terminal at its Atlanta hub (Terminal F). International passengers departing from ATL on Delta, Aeromexico, Air France, KLM or Virgin Atlantic [can now use facial recognition](#) technology for check-in kiosks and baggage drops in the lobby, for identification verification at the TSA checkpoint, and for aircraft boarding at the departure gate. Arriving international travelers can also use it to go through Customs and Border Protection processing.
- They've been talking about it for a while, and now Delta has started testing **Basic Economy award tickets** on select domestic routes, with plans to roll them out on a widespread basis in the coming months. **All Standard Basic Economy Rules will apply.** Read more [here](#).
- Delta has rolled out a **Pre-Select Meal option** to include all international and domestic **Delta One** routes. Delta One business class passengers flying to/from the U.S. and Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America as well as on all long-haul domestic Delta One routes can select and confirm their meal choice in advance online. Travelers in eligible markets will receive an email from Delta three days prior to their flight, asking them to select their first choice meal. All that's needed to participate is a valid email address, listed in the customer's SkyMiles account or in their passenger record. [More here](#).
- Delta follows other carriers **upping inflight alcohol prices across the board**. All prices increase by a dollar, so the cost of a domestic beer is now \$8 and craft or imported beer is \$9 on Delta. Wine is now \$9. Liquor and specialty cocktails are \$9, too.

## SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

- Southwest recently announced it is donating more than \$500,000 to charitable organizations across the U.S. thanks to the carrier's 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual LUV Classic Golf Tournament. The carrier supports children facing serious illness by helping organizations with dollars they can use to improve the lives of kids who are receiving treatment. In total, the carrier has donated more than \$17,500,000 to charities across North America since starting the tournament in 1985. If you are interested in learning more about how you can support next year's tournament, which is scheduled for Oct. 11, 2019, visit this [link](#).
- Southwest Airlines is keeping everyone guessing as to when the low-fare carrier will begin selling tickets to Hawaii and when the flights will start. That's likely because Southwest doesn't know. Standing in the way is the absence of a ratified contract with the carrier's mechanics after six years of negotiations and a tentative contract that was voted down earlier this year.

## UNITED AIRLINES

- United Airlines is rolling out a **new class of service** for travelers looking for something between the two extremes on some of its longest international flights. The carrier recently started selling seats in so-called **premium economy class**. Travelers willing to pay more than the regular coach-

class fare will get bigger seats with deeper reclines than those in regular economy, along with amenity kits, free alcoholic beverages and noise-reducing headphones, among other perks. United said the premium economy class, which it is calling "**Premium Plus**," will be on 21 international routes by May and service will begin on some international flights starting on March 30, 2019.

- United will begin flying a **787-10 on March 30 from Newark to Frankfurt and Tel Aviv**; on April 29 to Paris and Barcelona; and on May 22 to Brussels and Dublin. United's 787-10 features 44 Polaris business class seats, 21 Premium Plus (premium economy) seats, 54 Economy Plus extra-legroom seats and 199 standard economy seats
- United plans to enter into a **joint business agreement** with Compañía Panameña de Aviación, or **Copa**, and Aerovías del Continente Americano, or **Avianca**, pending government approval. The partnership, according to the three airlines, would result in new non-stop routes and additional flights on existing routes.
- **United Airlines** joins its major competitors in **restricting lounge access**. Like American and Delta, passengers now need a same-day boarding pass on United or Star Alliance carriers to enter a **United Club** even if they're a member or purchased a day pass

## **INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES**

- **Air France** is planning to **reduce the number of Airbus A380s in its fleet**. Reportedly, the carrier is planning to return five of the 10 double-deckers to its lessors by the end of 2019, following an audit led by the airline's new CEO, Benjamin Smith. The results of the audit revealed that the plane has become **too expensive to run**, especially when compared to the Boeing 777-300(ER)s that the airline deploys on similar schedules.
- **TAP Air Portugal**, the flag carrier of Portugal, is headed to Chicago's **O'Hare International Airport**. The Portuguese carrier announced recently that it will begin nonstop service five times a week between O'Hare and Lisbon, Portugal **starting June 1**. TAP Air Portugal, a member of the Star Alliance global airline alliance along with Chicago-based United Airlines, will operate the route on an Airbus A330-900neo, an efficient new model aircraft that a handful of carriers are just starting to fly.
- Australian airline **Qantas is cracking down on heavy carry-on bags**. Passengers whose bags exceed the airline's carry-on weight limit of 7 kilograms (**15.4 pounds**) will be forced to gate-check them. Qantas defended the move, saying it was attempting to make the boarding process "fair" for all travelers, because many passengers attempt to game the system by overloading carry-on bags to avoid having to check luggage.

## AIRPORT NEWS

- **A Sleepbox Micro-Hotel is set to open at Washington Dulles Airport.** The Sleepbox Nap Lounge located at Terminal A will offer 16 rooms. Scheduled to open in time for busy Christmas travel week, the staffed post-security micro-hotel will be located between gates A6 and A14, offering small, stand-alone sound-proofed rooms (with no bathrooms or showers) that can be rented via the Sleepbox [website](#) for an hour or more or overnight.
- **Los Angeles World Airports and Southwest Airlines** officially unveiled the **revamped Terminal 1**, which has undergone \$516.7 million in renovations. The updated terminal features a more efficient, centralized screening area, more seating, and new dining and shopping options. More [here](#).
- **Oakland International** has realigned **curb space assignments** for **ride pick-ups** from **Terminals 1 and 2**. Arriving passengers who have summoned ride-share pick-ups with an app now will find their rides along the third curb out from the terminals, in section 3C, where more space has been allotted for these vehicles. Those with door-to-door reserved rides now use section 2F along the second curb.
- **Charlotte/Douglas** has a new beer option: **NoDa Brewing**, a local favorite, has opened in Concourse A. The bar and restaurant is operated by HMSHost, the huge airport dining operation.
- **Toronto/City**, the close-in airport connected by tunnel to downtown Toronto, has eliminated a signature amenity: free perks such as soft drinks, coffee and snacks. The reason? The freebies conflicted with the airport's new bars and restaurants, which opened last month.
- **Austin/Bergstrom** flyers take note: The ride-hailing and taxi pickup location has moved. It's now at the consolidated rental car facility.

## HOTEL UPDATES

- Los Angeles-based Unite Here Local 11 has confirmed that **union workers at 24 hotels in Los Angeles and Orange County, Calif., voted overwhelmingly on Dec. 6 to strike beginning Dec. 12** if a new contract is not ratified in the interim. The vote comes after a record-breaking 20 hotel strikes have already been carried out in more than 10 cities across the country so far this year.
- One of the top **Hawaii** destinations for **Starwood Preferred Guest/Marriott Rewards members** – the St. Regis Princeville on Kauai – is **no longer part of the program** following its sale to new owners. The hotel will be renovated and rebranded as the 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay. For the time being, the hotel will be known as the Princeville Resort

- **Chicago/O'Hare** has still another near-airport hotel. The 165-room **Rose Hotel**, part of Hilton's Tapestry Collection, is now open in Rosemont's Pearl District a mile from ORD.
- **Burkhalter Travel** has negotiated **special 2019 rates** for these **Milwaukee Airport hotels: Best Western Plus, Four Points by Sheraton**, and the **Crown Plaza**. These are excellent rates for business travelers as well as leisure travelers looking for Park and Fly options for winter getaways. Ask your Burkhalter agent for details!

## TOOLS, TIPS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Data from Airlines for America and the US Department of Transportation show that **passengers paid less for air travel in 2018** than they have in the previous nine years. The average domestic round-trip fare in 2018 was \$338, excluding ancillary fees, and \$360 with the fees included.
- **Directional signage at San Francisco/SFO** now leads travelers to "**App-based rides**" at roadway curbs or in the center parking lot.
- **If your stars align "just so" in 2019** and you find yourself seated in **first class on an Emirates' flight**, you'll be offered a glass of Dom Pérignon Vintage 2008. Emirates recently opened a dedicated first and business class catering unit (EKFC3) at Dubai International airport, which spans six levels and covers every aspect of food delivery, hygiene and preparation. Emirates is the number one global partner of Dom Pérignon, boasting a 27-year relationship.
- Last month we wrote about the newly-opened **consolidated rental car center at Chicago O'Hare/ORD**. [The multi-modal facility](#) would normally be accessible via the airport's people-mover system, but since that is going through long-term shutdowns for maintenance and enhancements, O'Hare is advising arriving passengers with rental car reservations to use free shuttle buses that will operate 24 hours a day from the baggage claim levels. The buses' digital display will read "Rental Cars/Parking Lot F".
- The Hunter College NYC Food Policy Center at the City University of New York and DietDetective.com has released the 2018-19 **Airline Food Study** rating foods for eleven airlines. [Read this](#) to learn where your favorite carrier ranks.
- **Beer Here, there and everywhere**. How much does a [pint of beer cost around the world?](#) Deutsche Bank analyzed 50 cities and Dubai topped the chart, closely followed by New York and San Francisco. The cheapest? Manila, where a pint costs just \$1.50.
- Commuters traveling through **Rome's Fiumicino international airport** will soon have a direct link to Italy's **high-speed rail network**. Beginning December 18, **Frecciarossa fast trains** will connect the capital's main airport to Florence, Pisa, La Spezia, Genoa and Venice.

## BURKHALTER TOURS

*This month, it's all about Alaska! We are offering three terrific Alaska trips in 2019 and you can learn all about them at our January Alaska Shows with Holland America and Burkhalter staff:*

- **Madison, Dane County** and area travelers: **Thursday, January 24**, Madison Marriott West (1313 John Q Hammons Drive) Doors open at 6:00pm – Show begins at 6:30pm
- Travelers in **southwest Wisconsin and the Greater Dubuque, Iowa** area: Join us **Wednesday, January 23** at the Stone Cliff Winery (600 Star Brewery Drive, Dubuque). Doors open at 6:00pm – Show begins at 6:30pm

**Space is Limited** and **RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED**. **RSVP by Friday, January 18**. Call **Kelly** at 608/833-9339 or 800/556-9286 ext. 211, **Kristen** at ext. 252, or email [tours@burkhaltertravel.com](mailto:tours@burkhaltertravel.com).

### ALASKAN ADVENTURE - June 25 – July 7, 2019

**From \$4,699** - This leisurely-paced journey into Alaska's heartland combines an extensive seven-day land tour, including three nights in Denali National Park and a seven-day cruise. Extensive sightseeing is also included in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Seward, Glacier Bay, Haines/Skagway, Juneau, Ketchikan and Vancouver. See complete brochure details [here](#) including pricing options, (ask about Special Offers). Learn more at the Alaska Show, call any Burkhalter office or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#).

### ALASKA'S BEST - July 13 -- 24, 2019

**From \$4,128** - This shorter cruise tour offers a delightful combination of port-intensive cruising with a two-night stay at Denali Nat'l Park, including their terrific Tundra Wilderness Tour. Cruise ports include Ketchikan, Juneau and Skagway along with a full day of cruising in Glacier Bay National Park. Price includes roundtrip transportation from Madison to Chicago and air from Chicago. See complete brochure details [here](#) including pricing options, (ask about Specials!). Learn more at the Alaska Show, call any Burkhalter office or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#).

### ALASKA AND THE YUKON - August 2 -- 14, 2019

**From \$4,957** - Our most popular tour, this is the ultimate exploration of Alaska, extending into its neighboring Yukon Territory! Land tour overnights include Anchorage, Fairbanks and Skagway in Alaska, stays in Dawson City and Whitehorse in the Yukon, two nights in Denali National Park, including the Tundra Wilderness Tour. Wrap up with a four-night cruise starting in Skagway, stopping in Ketchikan, and spending a full day in Glacier Bay. Price includes roundtrip transportation from Madison to Chicago and air from Chicago. See complete brochure details [here](#) including pricing options, (ask about Specials!). Learn more at the Alaska Show, call any Burkhalter office or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#).

## BURKHALTER TRAVEL COMPANIES OFFICE LOCATIONS

### **Madison West**

6501 Mineral Point Road  
608-833-5200/800-556-9286

### **Fitchburg**

3050 Cahill Main  
608-441-0151/888-522-4269

### **Stoughton**

Chalet Travel, 226 S. Forrest  
608-873-8133/800-733-6970

### **Madison East**

615A North Sherman Avenue  
608-241-7500/800-414-7166

### **Prairie du Sac**

180 Washington Street  
608-643-4599/800-242-8457

### **Brookfield**

Olson Travel, 200 S. Executive Dr.  
Suite 101  
262-782-0110/800-847-5921

### **Oregon**

763 N. Main Street  
608-835-8474/800-537-0419

### **Baraboo**

141 Third Avenue  
608-356-4999/800-660-8359

### **Dubuque IA**

Travel Headquarters, 2095 JFK Rd  
563-588-3456/800-383-0563

Visit our website at [www.burkhaltertravel.com](http://www.burkhaltertravel.com)

*Burkhalter Travel News is researched, edited, and written by [Betty W. Stark](#)*

To unsubscribe, send an e-mail to [Burkhalter Travel Agency](#) with "remove from e-list" in the subject line.