

BURKHALTER TRAVEL NEWS: AUGUST 2017

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LATEST NEWS

- **HEADS UP:** Passengers at all U.S. airports will soon face **more scrutiny of larger electronic devices in security lanes**. The new process will require that all devices larger than a cell phone be removed, and each placed in a separate bin. Expect delays as travelers adapt to the new procedure. The new procedure will NOT apply to travelers who have Pre-Check clearance. Read more [here](#).
- **North Korea Travel Alert:** Effective September 1, 2017, U.S. passports are not valid for travel to, in, or through North Korea unless they are specially validated by the Department of State. The Department of State strongly urges U.S. citizens to avoid all travel to North Korea/the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) due to the serious risk of arrest and long-term detention. In the past, North Korean authorities, under North Korea's system of law enforcement, have imposed unduly harsh sentences, including for actions that in the United States would not be considered crimes.
- **Additional security measures** have been put in place at **Sydney and other major Australian airports** after police recently foiled an attempt to bring down a plane. Four men were detained following raids across Sydney, on suspicion of plotting an 'elaborate' attack. Officials are cautioning travelers to Australia to allow extra time for security clearance procedures.
- If your upcoming travel itinerary includes arrival at or departure from the airport in **Barcelona, Spain** be aware that strikes there have been and will likely continue to affect on-time departures into the second half of August.
- The U.S. General Services Administration has published its **2018 Per Diem Rates**, a guide for government travel that is also referenced by private sector companies. Details are [here](#).
- **Heading to Honolulu?** Don't text and walk in crosswalks or you could be hit with a fine. It's the first major U.S. city to pass legislation prohibiting "distracted texting" and it goes into effect on October 1. There's more [here](#).
- **Car rental companies** are increasingly offering 'connected cars' that make the rental and driving process easier. **Enterprise** (they also own National and Alamo) has introduced LaunchPad, which eliminates the need for long waits at the counter. **Hertz** recently launched Ultimate Choice, a program available at top 24 U.S. airports that lets customers select any vehicle within their assigned zone based on loyalty status and chosen car class. **Avis** Car Rental announced that it will double its fleet of fully-connected cars by 2018, bringing the total to 100,000.
- The latest version of **Google Earth for iOS devices** has arrived. Look for details about the new features [here](#).

AIRLINE UPDATES

ALASKA AIRLINES

- Alaska Airlines announced plans to begin flying from Paine Field in Everett, Washington, a facility about 25 miles north of Seattle that does not currently have commercial passenger airline service. The carrier said its service would begin in the fall of 2018 and would come only after a passenger terminal is built at the airport.
- Alaska plans to launch in 30 more markets in the next six months. That comes after launching in 20 markets in the past nine months, plus inheriting other routes after completing its acquisition of Virgin America in December.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

- American Airlines has updated its iOS smartphone app to allow users to rebook their flights when there are delays or cancellations and order food from airport restaurants. The new app will first be available at Texas' Austin-Bergstrom International, Dallas/Fort Worth International, Los Angeles International, and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International airports.
- American Airlines' full fleet of Boeing 777-200 aircraft has been retrofitted with a two-class configuration. The shift allows the carrier to offer passengers a more consistent product.
- American will start new daily service from Los Angeles to Beijing on Nov. 5. The carrier recently invested \$200 million in China Southern Airlines in a deal that hinged on a parking slot exchange.
- American Airlines recently updated its mobile app to notify passengers if their bags will arrive late. If luggage will be severely delayed, app users can fill out a form telling the airline where to deliver the bags, saving them a trip to customer service.
- American is facing a lawsuit from flight crew over its new uniforms, following thousands of complaints over the past few months about 'adverse reactions' since they were introduced. For several months crew members had complained of rashes, headaches, fatigue, and even respiratory problems, with over 3,500 complaints logged. Months after the official issue of the new uniforms, the airline gave crew the option of wearing an alternative.
- American Airlines has launched micro-websites for three of its largest hubs: Chicago, New York City and Los Angeles. The tailored sites show off special high-end services available at the hubs, including concierge service, lounge access and first-class cabin check-in. More [here](#). The carrier also offers a paid "Five Star Service" at [select airports](#).

DELTA AIR LINES

- Delta Air Lines will launch new daily nonstop service between Milwaukee General Mitchell International and Salt Lake City International later this year. The new daily nonstop flights begin December 21 and will operate year-round on Wi-Fi-equipped Embraer E-175 jets, featuring 12 seats in first class, 12 seats in Delta Comfort+, and 52 seats in Economy. Ask your Burkhalter agent for details.
- Delta is testing a new system that will let some passengers board its planes using just their fingertips. Members of Delta's SkyMiles loyalty program who are enrolled in the private verified-traveler service Clear will be able to board flights at Reagan Washington National Airport in D.C. by scanning their fingerprint, instead of a traditional boarding pass, at the gate.
- Delta Air Lines just took delivery of a new Airbus 350 aircraft, the first to be operated by a U.S. airline. Delta expects to launch a Detroit-to-Tokyo route when the plane officially begins service on October 30.
- Though Delta SkyMiles are routinely being devalued, they can have a lot of value when donated to a good cause. Recently a frequent Delta traveler donated back to Delta a significant number of miles for the opportunity to join 46 Delta and 16 Aeromexico employees in a project to build six Habitat for Humanity Houses in Chula Vista, Mexico. One of the team members produced a video of the work the frequent traveler and the airline employees did in Chula Vista. You can see it [here](#).

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

- Southwest Airlines will launch daily nonstop flights between Milwaukee General Mitchell International and William P. Hobby Airport in Houston. The new service begins March 8 and will operate year-round on full-size Boeing 737 aircraft. The carrier also recently announced nonstop flights from Milwaukee to both Nashville and Cleveland starting in November.
- Southwest Airlines employees benefit from a generous profit-sharing policy that rewards them for the company's success. Southwest has paid out profit-sharing bonuses for 43 consecutive years and has also never implemented layoffs or cut wages.
- Apparently the bonuses make Deionte Ruffin, a Southwest baggage handler at Denver International very happy. He entertains travelers every day with an energetic dance on the tarmac. Join him [here](#).
- Southwest and its flight planners are fully tuned in to the upcoming solar eclipse of the sun on Monday August 21. Look [here](#) for details about their eastbound flights---departing Seattle, Portland and Denver---considered the best for viewing. If you're onboard, don't forget your protective glasses.

UNITED AIRLINES

- Not long after Alaska Airlines announced plans to fly from SEATAC-alternative Paine Field in Everett, Washington, United Airlines also announced they will begin service there, also in the fall of 2018, with a schedule of six daily flights split between its Denver and San Francisco hubs. United's Everett service would be in addition to its existing service from Seattle-Tacoma International.
- This winter, United Airlines will raise the number of flights and seats available at Montana's Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport to and from San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York/Newark, Houston, Denver and Chicago.
- United is upping its trans-Atlantic schedule at Denver, where it will add seasonal nonstop service to London Heathrow from March 24 through October 16, and at Newark Liberty, where it will extend its Rome schedule through the fall and winter.
- CommutAir, a regional airline that is 40 percent owned by United Airlines, has reached an agreement with the larger carrier to speed the retirement of its 21 Bombardier turboprops and acquire 21 more Embraer ERJ145 jets. The carrier operates out of 30 cities in the Midwest (including Milwaukee), Northeast and Canada.
- United has dropped winter flights from Newark to Shannon, Ireland and Glasgow, Scotland. The Glasgow flights are off the schedule from October 29 to May 4. Shannon flights won't operate between November 26 and March 9.

INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

- **British Airways** will launch regularly-scheduled double-decker Airbus 380 service between **Chicago O'Hare** and **London Heathrow** on May 8, 2018. The jumbo A-380 can accommodate up to 469 passengers in four cabins across two full decks running the length of the aircraft. The new A-380 service will be used on one of BA's two daily flights between Chicago and London.
- Warsaw-based **LOT Polish Airlines** will launch non-stops to **Budapest, Hungary** from both **Chicago/O'Hare** and **New York/Kennedy**. The O'Hare-Budapest route launches May 5 with two weekly flights. There will be three weekly flights from JFK starting May 3.
- **Air France** is resuming flights to **Nairobi** from its **Paris/CDG** hub. The airline ended the route 17 years ago, but it returns next March with three weekly flights using Boeing 787 Dreamliners. This is good news for Delta Air Lines and SkyTeam flyers who can now connect to the Kenyan capital via Paris. There are currently no non-stops between the United States and Kenya although **Kenya Airways** is hoping to add flights next April.

AIRPORT NEWS

- **Terminal B at Newark Liberty International** recently unveiled **Scandinavian/SAS's** renovated lounge. Check it out [here](#).
- Are you interested in **lounge trends for first class passengers**? Read this [Forbes article](#)
- **Customs and Border Protection** has implemented **facial recognition** biometric exit technology at **Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport** and **Houston's William P. Hobby Airport**. The system takes a passenger's photo and compares it to photos from travel documents to verify his or her identity.
- At four airports--**Austin, Washington/National, Washington/Dulles** and **Chicago/O'Hare**--PreCheck travelers no longer have to show boarding passes at the security checkpoint. Identities will be checked via photo ID and a new credential-authentication system. PreCheck lines at other airports will get the new process in the weeks and months ahead.
- **Airport food delivery apps** make it easier to fly. Hungry travelers usually have little choice but to leave their gate and stand in line for food, but they don't have to do that in **Baltimore** and, soon, **San Diego**. Read more [here](#).
- **Miami International Airport** has become the first in the world to **incorporate mobile passport control into its own app**. Miami partnered with air-transport information technology company SITA in developing the service. Look for **details** [here](#).
- Tired travelers can **rent sleeping pods** and **shower time** in the Nine Hours Hotel at **Tokyo's Narita International Airport**. More information [here](#).
- **Portland, Oregon**, travelers take note: An airport version of the popular local [Tamale Boy](#) restaurants has opened on the **D Concourse**.
- There are three **Escape Lounges** in the United States: **Minneapolis, Hartford** and **Oakland**. They have been accessible with **Priority Pass**, the card many travelers now have thanks to an American Express, Chase or Citi credit card. But now the [Escape clubs](#) have ditched Priority Pass for an exclusive relationship with the Amex Platinum Card. Meanwhile, Priority Pass has lined up a replacement in Minneapolis and cardholders can now use the [PGA Lounge](#) in **Terminal 1**. Cardholders also receive \$15 to use for meals, beverages and "experiences" at the golf-themed club.
- Before long there will be no more Styrofoam containers at **Atlanta/Hartsfield**. On Oct. 1 they'll switch to compostable packaging.

HOTEL UPDATES

- Autograph Collection property **EMC2 in Chicago** is taking advantage of new technology features that include robots and live streaming of the kitchen. Rooms incorporate Amazon Alexa devices, and a pair of robots, Cleo and Leo, make room deliveries.
- According to Chris Elliott's recent article in The Washington Post, "**resort fees**" that are charged by full-service and mainstream hotel properties have escalated dramatically, and the FTC might be ready to do something about it. Read more [here](#).
- Hilton has debuted the **Waldorf Astoria Chengdu** in the Chinese city's financial zone, reaching a milestone of 200 properties across the Asia-Pacific region. The hotel features 289 guest rooms, an ice shower, salt rooms and views of Chengdu's skyline.
- Veteran travelers who remember Chicago's Gold Coast classic **Ambassador East Hotel** and its celebrity-packed **Pump Room** might also recall that it was purchased in 2010 by a New York City nightclub owner who renamed it "Public" and gave it a major modernization. It didn't work out quite as Ian Schrager planned, so he sold it recently to Journal Hotels and they restored some of the revered classic elements—including the name, or at least part of it. They have also rehired Rich Melman's Lettuce Entertain You dining empire to re-conceptualize the closed Pump Room, which is set to reopen this fall. The restaurant name has not been announced. The "new" hotel is called "Ambassador Chicago."

TOOLS, TIPS AND TECHNOLOGY

HANDY TRAVEL APPS:

- **2PackPoint** - This **packing list organizer** helps you plan and organize exactly what you'll need for any type of trip. Look for it [here](#) for **Android or iOS**. It's Free!
- **Parkwhiz** - If you're traveling by car and don't know the city well, [Parkwhiz](#) will help you **find a parking space in a secure garage or parking lot** in 160 different cities nationwide. Shop around to find the best rates available and reserve in advance. Available on: [Android](#) and [iOS](#). Cost: Free!

BURKHALTER TOURS

It's summer now....soon autumn....then winter, then, "It's SO cold and snowy and dreary here...why did we wait so long to book a Burkhalter Tours getaway?!" Do NOT let this happen to you! Our featured Tours this month offer exciting opportunities to escape the cold, whether cruising and sightseeing in the Hawaiian Islands or exploring the stunning beauty of New Zealand. Read on.....

CRUISING THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS - February 9 - 17, 2018

Typically, visitors to Hawaii hop from one island to another on short flights, unpacking and packing as they move from hotel to hotel. Not so, on this trip! After a Honolulu overnight at the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort and Spa and a tour of Pearl Harbor and the USS Arizona Memorial, you'll board NCL's *Pride of America* and sail off to Maui for a couple of days of beaches and exploring, then on to the Big Island to discover both the Hilo and Kona areas. Next stop, Kauai with its lush flowers, beautiful beaches and rugged canyons (fact: more than 60 feature films have been shot on location in Kauai!), and return to Honolulu with time for more touring. **Hint:** If you want to extend your stay in the islands, we can help you plan that too!

Per person from \$3,399 including round-trip air from Chicago, overnight in Honolulu, selected cabin (prices vary by category) and ALL meals onboard the ship, sightseeing, onboard entertainment, \$50 per stateroom on-ship credit. See brochure details [here](#), call any Burkhalter office TODAY or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#). **Ask us about special offers!**

BEST OF NEW ZEALAND - February 21 - March 8, 2018

It will be Summer Down Under when you arrive in beautiful New Zealand, where we predict you'll love the dramatic scenery, intriguing cultural heritage and fascinating history that make it one of the best places in the world to visit. Among many unique experiences are a local farm visit and barbecue lunch in Marton, a wine-tasting and tour at a Queenstown winery, dinner in the home of a Rotorua family and a scenic train ride in the "southern Alps!" There's more: a tour of Auckland and the nearby Bay of Islands, Rotorua's geothermal wonders and Maori culture, majestic Wellington, historic Christchurch, the Franz Josef Glacier, and an excursion into Fjordland National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, for a cruise in spectacular Milford Sound. And enjoy a free day in Queensland, with a special farewell dinner.

\$6,399 including air from Chicago, 13 nights accommodations, 21 meals, admissions, sightseeing and SO much more! Call any Burkhalter office TODAY or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#) to request a copy of the brochure. **Ask us about \$230pp savings until 10/1/17!**

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, 17550 W.
Bluemound
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

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