

BURKHALTER TRAVEL NEWS: MAY 2018

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LATEST NEWS

- **HEADS UP: Lufthansa subsidiary Brussels Airline** has alerted travelers that **they might be on strike May 14, 16,** and beyond, if issues between the pilots union and the company are not settled. Read the alert [here](#).
- **The TSA has launched stricter carry-on screenings nationwide.** In addition to requiring passengers to remove electronics larger than a cellphone, they also want you to take out foods and items that can “clutter bags” and delay screenings. In short, they want you to “organize carry-on bags and keep them uncluttered to ease the screening process” as “it is possible that passengers may experience more bag checks and additional screening of some items.” **Read the extensive rules [here](#).**
- Millions of **electronic door locks** fitted to **hotel rooms** worldwide have been found to be **vulnerable** to a hack. Researchers say flaws they found in the equipment's software meant they could create "master keys" that opened the rooms without leaving an activity log. Read the BBC report [here](#).
- **New airlines** have been added to **PreCheck**: Scandinavian Airlines (SAS); Porter Airlines of Canada; Air Serbia; and Thomas Cook and Condor, the low-fare European carriers with common ownership. Contrary to some published reports, TSA has *not* yet approved British Airways for PreCheck. The new carriers bring to 52 to the number of airlines offering PreCheck. The complete list is [here](#).
- **American Airlines has moved** from Concourse A to Concourse B at **Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport**. The airport will renovate all Concourse A gates over the next two years.
- **New York flyers take note:** A new operator has taken over bus service **to New York/JFK** and **New York/LGA**. Hours have been reduced, on-airport stops trimmed and **service restricted** to the Grand Central Terminal and Times Square. Complete details are [here](#).
- **Air France update:** The French economy minister says **the government will not rescue Air France** if the union walkouts make the airline uncompetitive. Air France has lost €300 million since the recent wave of strikes and walkouts began. The French economy minister warned recently that the future of Air France hangs in the balance following the departure of its chief executive over a continuing strike over pay. The airline's trade union members have already been on strike for several days this year and the chief executive of parent company Air France-KLM, recently announced his resignation after workers rejected a pay deal worth seven percent over four years.

AIRLINE UPDATES

ALASKA AIRLINES

- Alaska Airlines has opened its first passenger lounge on the East Coast, at New York's JFK Airport. Located on the mezzanine level of Terminal 7, [the new Alaska Lounge](#) will provide guests with amenities including custom-made espresso beverages and full-leaf teas; free food and snacks like oatmeal and yogurt bars in the morning and soups and salads in the afternoon and evening; and a selection of microbrews, West Coast wines and cocktails.
- Alaska completed the transition of Virgin America flights to Alaska computers on schedule and with few delays or disruptions. That done, the carrier is dropping Virgin's flights to the East Coast from capacity-restrained Dallas/Love Field. That's good news for Dallas' Love Field-based Southwest Airlines.

AMERICAN AIRLINES

- American announced that it will end its Chicago/O'Hare-Beijing flights after October 22. Among the other routes it has launched and then discarded are New Delhi, Moscow, Helsinki and Frankfurt. For the moment, Beijing flights from American's Dallas/Fort Worth and Los Angeles hubs continue.
- For American AAdvantage members, Citibank will improve benefits on the basic card. Effective July 22, [Citi AAdvantage Platinum](#) cardholders will earn two miles per dollar spent at restaurants and gas stations, as well as a \$100 American flight discount after \$20,000 in yearly spending.

DELTA AIR LINES

- As the latest step in their joint venture, Delta and Korean Air said they have expanded their code-sharing partnership to [the Seattle-Seoul Incheon route](#), putting both carriers' codes on their two daily flights in the market – a Delta 767-300ER that departs SEA at 11:50 a.m. and Korean's 777-300ER flight, with a 2:15 p.m. SEA departure. At Incheon, customers can connect to 18 cities in Asia. Korean and Delta recently moved their operations at Incheon into the airport's new Terminal 2, making for easier connections.
- In other Delta route news, the carrier said it will expand service from New York JFK to the Caribbean later this year, adding a second daily flight to Nassau, Bahamas on October 1; new daily flights to Kingston, Jamaica starting December 20; and Saturday-only service to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, as of December 22.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

- Southwest Airlines will eventually fly to four airports in Hawaii after the carrier launches its much-anticipated service to the state. The four destinations will be Honolulu (island of Oahu), Kahului (Maui), Lihue (Kauai) and Kona (Hawaii's "Big Island"). They recently announced that the California flights will depart from Oakland, San Jose, Sacramento and San Diego. They say they MIGHT add Los Angeles/LAX departures too--emphasis on "might." The airline is still working with the FAA to gain certification for its aircraft to operate the long over-water flights.
- Southwest Airlines will expand its footprint at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport by leasing take-off and landing slots from Alaska Airlines. The extra slots will allow Southwest to provide four more round-trip flights per day, beginning in October.
- Consumer Reports readers have voted. The respected consumer magazine's new survey of the nation's best and worst airlines ranked Dallas-based Southwest Airlines the best carrier in the survey for its economy class product, which is the only product it offers. Southwest scored an 85 for its economy cabin.

UNITED AIRLINES

- United is streamlining food service in its premium cabins on all domestic flights under four hours, and apparently changes are planned for the beverage cart as well. Hot breakfasts are being replaced on some routes with fruit plates and muffins, and more substantial lunches are being switched out for wraps and chocolate. Adjustments to the onboard beverage offerings are being rolled out too. Sprite Zero is gone (apparently not all that popular) and tomato juice was replaced with Mr. and Mrs. T's tomato mix. A [major backlash](#) ensued among passengers (and flight attendants) who agreed that dropping tomato juice was a big mistake. As of late Thursday May 10, **tomato juice is back onboard**. And they've added Stella Artois too. On the liquor and spirits front, Jim Beam won't be offered. Nor will Courvoisier or Amaretto. More details [here](#).
- United Airlines is dropping many routes into secondary Mexican cities. Among the routes being eliminated: Mazatlan to Chicago and Houston; Villahermosa and Huatulco to Houston; and Leon-Los Angeles. Also ending: United's non-stops between Denver and Mexico City.
- Nearly two years after first announcing its Polaris business class brand and products, United Airlines finally opened a second club. On April 30, the San Francisco Polaris Lounge opened in the International Terminal near Gate G92. The club has 440 seats spread over two levels and 28,000 square feet. Meanwhile, delays continue for other openings. Now the Newark lounge is scheduled for "early June," the Houston/Intercontinental club is due "this summer" and the Los Angeles facility will arrive "this fall." All four were originally scheduled to open last year. There is also no information on a timeline for four other clubs announced in 2016.

INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

- **British Airways** will become the only carrier to operate a **non-stop flight between Europe and Durban, South Africa** when it launches a service from Heathrow to the South African city in October. The three-times-a-week direct flight will start on October 29. The new route adds to the airline's existing twice-daily flights between Johannesburg and London and daily flights between Cape Town and London.
- **Avianca Brasil** will boost frequencies on its **Miami-Sao Paulo**, Brazil route from one daily roundtrip to two starting November 30, using an Airbus A330-200.
- **Qantas is making some changes in its U.S. schedules next winter.** At **San Francisco**, the Australian carrier will add a seventh weekly frequency to Sydney effective December 17, using a 747. At **Los Angeles International**, Qantas will end 747 flights effective December 3, replacing them with A380s or 787-9s. An A380 will replace the remaining 747 flights on the Los Angeles-Sydney route, giving the carrier all-A380 service from LAX to both Sydney and Melbourne. And at **Dallas/Ft. Worth**, Qantas will trim its schedule to six A380 flights a week effective February 4, 2019.
- **South African Airways (SAA)**, the national flag carrier of South Africa, has maintained a Skytrax 4-Star rating, in both business and economy class, for a 16th consecutive year. The Skytrax rating signifies that South African Airways' product and service standards on long-haul, regional and domestic flights continue to perform at the high standard that meets 4-Star levels. As measured alongside many international carriers throughout the world, a 4-Star rating indicates airlines that are providing a good standard of product and staff services across all customer-facing categories.
- **China Southern Airlines** introduces an additional route to **Vietnam** with a **Guangzhou – Da Nang** service. Starting June 1, the Skyteam member's Boeing 737-700 aircraft will operate this route on a daily basis.
- Road warrior/columnist **Joe Brancatelli** shares his views on his **favorite Asian airline**: "**Cathay Pacific's business class** is as good as you'll find. It was upgraded again in 2016 when the A350s were introduced. The beds are comfortable--and they're comfortable as seats, too. Meals are fine, if not wildly creative or showy. The top-notch flight attendants respect your privacy and come when you call rather than make a spectacle of their omnipresence. Cathay on the ground is solid, too. Proprietary clubs are refreshing and comfortable."
- **Emirates** is investigating how a woman flew 4,200 miles from Manchester, England to India on her husband's passport, which she said she had picked up at home by mistake. The passenger claims she only spotted the error when she tried to fill out an immigration form on arrival in Delhi. She was refused entry to India and had to return to Dubai to await overnight delivery of her own passport. Manchester airport officials said they will immediately retrain all staff.

AIRPORT NEWS

- **Tampa International/TPA** has two new dining options. **Mise en Place**, a branch of a well-known American restaurant downtown, is located in Airside F. **PDQ**, a national quick-serve chicken chain that launched in Tampa in 2009, opened in Airside C.
- **London** and **Windsor**, two smaller airports in **Ontario, Canada**, will get connections to **Montreal** from Air **Canada**. The daily commuter roundtrip flights launch on July 2.
- **The Chicago Department of Aviation** said it has teamed up with **Boingo Wireless** to start offering [unlimited free Wi-Fi](#) service for all travelers at O'Hare and Midway airports. The upgraded service replaces the previous system, which offered free Wi-Fi in the airports, but only for 30 minutes. With the new unlimited free Wi-Fi, travelers will encounter "rolling advertisements every 45 minutes,"
- **Phoenix Sky Harbor** is the **latest U.S. airport to get a medical facility** for travelers and employees. **USCareWays** and partner **Paradies Lagardere** have opened a **walk-in urgent care** facility in the airport's **Terminal 4, on Level 3** inside Drugs & More. It's **open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.** The airport said the new clinic is intended to assist passengers with "non-life-threatening illnesses, minor injuries and select on-site prescription needs." The facility can help out with ailments like ear infections, asthma, anxiety, flu, cold/coughs, dehydration, UTIs, rashes, lacerations, contusions, sprains and other maladies.
- TSA officers **screening checked luggage** at **Dallas Love Field** don't have to manually pull bags from conveyor belts for manual screening. Robotic tables bring the bags right to the officers and deliver them back to the conveyor when screening is complete.
- **Plaza Premium Lounge**, the world's largest independent airport lounge network, has announced the official opening of its operation in at the **Rome Fiumicino Airport/FCO**. Located in **Terminal 3 (Area E)**, at the Extra Schengen Departures on the Upper Level, the facility is open 24 hours a day to travelers regardless of airline or class of travel. The 300-seat Lounge houses six shower rooms, complimentary Wi-Fi, several entertainment options, ample recharging stations, and food and drink in an elegant setting. Travelers can pre-book on the [website](#) for two and five hours lounge use packages.
- The transit zone of **Frankfurt/FRA** Airport's Terminal 1 has added a **roof terrace**. Besides fresh air, it boasts a spectacular view of the activity at Germany's largest aviation hub including what's going on down on the apron. A German Weather Service monitor showcases the weather report for the next few days. Comfortable seating and potted greenery enhance the terrace.

HOTEL UPDATES

- **The Los Angeles Airport Marriott** has redecorated all 900 rooms, added Smart TV access and soundproof windows, among other improvements. It also added a 4,000 square foot M Club Lounge with floor to ceiling windows offering panoramic runway views. The lobby has been converted into a social gathering space, and new and renovated restaurants include JW's Steakhouse, the Social Market & Eatery, and Hangar 18 (formerly Champion's Bar & Gril).
- **Tampa/TPA** gets another airport hotel. A 175-room **AC by Marriott** has opened about three miles from the terminals. There is free shuttle service to the airport.
- Business columnist Robert McGarvey says that business travelers have a **bigger worry** than Facebook privacy: the **safety of personal data we put in the hands of our hotels**. Read about it [here](#).
- Hyatt has opened **Grand Hyatt-branded properties** in **Xi'an, China** and **Kochi, India**. The 264-room Kochi property is Hyatt's first in the south Indian state of Kerala. The 396-room Xi'an property in the city's high-tech zone is the second Hyatt in the capital of Shaanxi Province.
- **Marriott Rewards members take note**: A 207-room Renaissance has opened on **Bali**. It is a Category 6 redemption. Closer to home, a 150-room Renaissance Inn has opened near the boardwalk and beaches of **Ocean City, Maryland**. It's a Category 9 redemption.
- Speculation continues on what the combined **Marriott and Starwood loyalty programs** might look like. Here's recent information and best-guesses from [Business Insider](#). Marriott officials claim they're nearing an unveiling for a wholly unified loyalty platform. See that interview [here](#).
- Three **college towns** and **two airports** are the sites of five new **Tru by Hilton** hotels. Complimentary "Build Your Own" breakfast bars and 24-hour markets are featured at the properties near Auburn University in Alabama, Florida State University, the University of Wisconsin in Madison and the airports in Salt Lake City and Buffalo, N.Y.
- **This is sweet**: The Houstonian Hotel in Houston released to the public the late **Barbara Bush's chocolate chip cookie recipe**, which once won a cooking contest. The former first lady shared the recipe with the Houstonian's pastry chef years ago and it has now become the signature cookie at the hotel. Look for it [here](#).
- Most hotels already offer quick checkout. Now, a growing number are **selling briefer stays**, too. Through an app called [Recharge](#), some 50 hotels in **San Francisco** and **New York** offer rooms by the minute - at 40 cents to \$2.00 per minute, depending on demand and time of day.

TOOLS, TIPS AND TECHNOLOGY

- **Travel and Leisure Magazine** did a deep dive into the topic of **cool new luggage options**. Look for details [here](#). **Side note:** Make sure the **lithium batteries** in any of these that you buy are **removable**. Many airlines now require it.
- If you happen to be picking up stuff at a **Staples store** in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York or Seattle (or as many as 50 locations in coming months) and if you also happen NOT to be a TSA PreCheck member but you want to be---you're in luck! PreCheck enrollment centers will be popping up at Staples all over the country. Details are [here](#).
- Back in the day, crummy airlines forced many of us to **travel with our own pillows**. Now those hard-as-a-plank "slim-line" seats are driving some of us to get **seat cushions**, too. **Vive Health** has a selection and they rate and review the cushions, too. Read about them [here](#).
- **JetBlue Airways** announced the launch of **new service between Boston and Minneapolis**. The route is the carrier's first to the Twin Cities, as well as to the state of Minnesota. The airline is set to operate the service three times a day using Airbus A320 aircraft.
- **Hertz Europe** announced it will include its **Go Anywhere Hertz Connect mobile Wi-Fi** to members of its Hertz Gold Plus Rewards loyalty program at no charge at over 200 locations in Europe. The move comes as part of the company's 100-year anniversary celebration. Customers will also receive free international calls at up to 30 minutes.
- Global business traveler and longtime blogger **Will Allen III** recounts his experiences flying---this time on a family trip---from Raleigh/RDU to and within China on Delta and various SkyTeam member airlines. He includes interesting observations on the **tricks and quirks for gaining (or not) entrance into various airline lounges** and other aspects of travel within China. Read it [here](#).
- **British Airways** explains "**Britishness**" to Americans in this **YouTube video**. Watch it [here](#).
- The **European Court of Justice** in Luxembourg has ruled that **airlines must compensate their passengers for flight delays and cancellations**, even though the reason was a strike by airline staff. Until now, airlines strikes of all kinds have been considered extraordinary circumstances that exempt airlines from their duty to pay compensation. From now on, airlines must compensate their passengers with **up to \$700 per person** if they were affected by flight delays or cancellations due to strikes by airline staff IF the airline carrier is based in the EU or the departure airport is within the EU. Extraordinary circumstances such as storms or medical emergencies exempt the operating airline from the obligation to compensate air passengers.
- **Travel+Leisure Magazine** explores a sometimes **weird list** of what you can and cannot bring onboard an aircraft. Read it [here](#).

BURKHALTER TOURS

LAST CHANCE! We're alerting you to a couple of terrific Autumn 2018 tours that you will miss out on if you don't act quickly! These Tours are classics....very popular, and they might not be available much longer. Both are wonderful getaways that will dazzle you with breathtaking scenery and a stunning pallet of fall colors that epitomize New England. Click on brochure details below, then contact Burkhalter Tours or any of our offices for details and to sign up....before it's too late!

CAPE COD AND THE ISLANDS - September 23 - 29, 2018

Explore U.S. history and the phenomenal natural beauty in New England destinations including Hyannis, Plymouth, Nantucket Island, Martha's Vineyard, Newport and Boston. You'll spend six nights in one Hyannis hotel, see the Kennedy compound and Kennedy Memorial. Visit Plymouth Rock and the recreated Pilgrim village of Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Cruise by ferry to Nantucket Island, where the cobblestone Main Street, sea captains' houses and art galleries will charm you. Enjoy the colorful cottages and stately homes on Martha's Vineyard. Tour historic Boston, and discover the extravagant estates in Newport. Feast on your included lobster dinner!

\$2,375 including air from Chicago, six nights in a Hyannis hotel, extensive sightseeing including admission fees, several meals, a professional guide and driver, deluxe motorcoach throughout, and lots more! See brochure details [here](#), call any Burkhalter office TODAY or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#). Ask about discounts!

NEW ENGLAND AUTUMN SPENDOR - October 6 - 14, 2018

An autumn leaf peeping tour in New England featuring Boston, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut and Rhode Island! The pallet of colorful mountain slopes in Vermont and New Hampshire, the crunch of leaves underfoot, the scent of clean, crisp air mingled with a touch of sea salt, the swoosh of ocean waves on Maine's rugged coast.....and, of course, the taste of freshly-caught lobster. Classic New England! This itinerary features Kennebunkport, Portland and a tour of Acadia National Park---and so much more. Travel along the spectacular Kancamagus Scenic Byway in New Hampshire and view Vermont's stunning Quechee Gorge. You'll enjoy scenic boat and train rides for the best views of Connecticut's splendid scenery. All this and time in historic Boston and picturesque Rhode Island too!

\$3,339 including air from Chicago (coach from Madison with 10 travelers), eight nights hotels, extensive sightseeing and splendid photo ops, several meals, a professional guide and driver, deluxe motorcoach, and lots more! See brochure details [here](#), call any Burkhalter office TODAY or e-mail [Burkhalter Tours](#). Ask about discounts!

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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