

TRAVERSING THE GLOBE

Volume 6, Issue 8

by Debbie Gulliver, University Travel Manager

October 2009

Cost Savings:

As travel arrangers, please assist your travelers in making cost conscious decisions beginning with departure. This edition of Traversing the Globe will look at airport parking alternatives as well as ground transportation options.

Lansing Region International Airport: Did you know that Michigan State University employees are eligible for a 50% discount on long term parking at our local airport? Simply visit flylansing.com and become a member under MSU's Travel Trust membership. Instructions for joining and printing coupons are available on the Travel Office website at:

<http://ctrl.msu.edu/COTravel/CapitalCityAirport.aspx>. Or...next time you book your airline ticket through Michigan State's Preferred Travel Agencies, ask your travel consultant to reserve a discount parking coupon for you.

Long term parking at Lansing Region International Airport is \$8.50 per day. For travelers flying out of Lansing on overnight trips, using long term parking makes sense. The maximum rate for short term parking is \$12 per 24 hour period. Utilizing the 50% discount coupon, travelers can save \$7.75 per day in airport parking expense.

Detroit Metropolitan Airport: What's the least expensive mode of transportation when flying out of DTW: Michigan Flyer, Limousine, National Car Rental, or Personal Car? If you guessed Michigan Flyer, you are correct. Round trip door to door service costs travelers \$50.00. Michigan Flyer provides luxury bus service from the East Lansing Marriott to Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Buses are equipped with wireless internet and extra legroom. For schedules, pricing, and to make your reservation, please visit their website at: <http://www.michiganflyer.com/>.

Current limousine service between Michigan State University and Detroit Metropolitan Airport costs over \$150 each way plus tips. Michigan State University's contract with National Car Rental provides university travelers with a rate of \$44.00 plus taxes and National Car Rental or gasoline for one way rentals between Lansing Region International Airport and Detroit Metropolitan Airport. So far, by utilizing the three options, travelers avoid parking fees.

Have you experienced parking fees at Detroit Metro? They are very pricey! Let's look at how much travelers spend when they choose to drive their personal cars to DTW. First there is mileage: 85 miles each way from Michigan State University or \$93.50. Okay, back to parking fees at Detroit Metro: Off terminal charges start at \$9.50 per day with a coupon (there are many websites such as (http://www.travelbrokersinc.com/Detroit_Metro_Parking.htm) offer coupons.

Cost Savings Con't

Ground Transportation to...Detroit Metropolitan Airport: On terminal charges at Detroit Metro Airport start at \$11/day in the Yellow Lot to \$33/day for valet parking. Typically, MSU travelers are spending \$20/day to park on terminal at Detroit Metro. FYI...the airport does not charge partial days. If you are parked in their lot for 24.5 hours, you will be charged for 2 days of parking.

If your University department and/or college are looking for ways to trim travel costs, think about how your travelers are getting to the airport and how much savings you can find by changing travel habits.

Airfare: Looking for ways to save money on airfare? Book flights 14 to 120 days in advance. University policy strongly recommends that you follow this guideline. Booking at the last minute typically means you will be paying top dollar for your airline ticket. Why? Airlines have dramatically decreased the number of seats available on their flights. Those seats still available less than 7 days prior to departure, if there are any, are pricing as full coach fares, business class, and first class. Keep in mind, there is a University policy prohibiting first class travel and limiting business class travel to special circumstances such as international flights over the water greater than 6 hours.

Conversely, purchasing airline tickets 5 to 11 months in advance locks travelers into a price that likely is higher than what best pricing will be 14 to 120 days in advance. Also, airline schedules and flight cancellations are more likely. Further, you may change your schedule; the demands on your time now compared to 6 months from now may be different. Each time you change your airline ticket, the additional cost is a minimum of \$150.00. Who will absorb the cost of your airline ticket if you cancel your trip? Do you know what you will be doing 11 months from now? Are you confident that your plans will not change?

Lowest Prices: How can you guarantee lowest airfare besides purchasing airline tickets 14 to 120 days in advance? Preferred Travel Agencies, Tower Travel and Passageways Travel are under contract to find our travelers the lower airfare. Tower accomplishes this through their Multi Channel Distribution System in which agents search their three Global Distribution Systems, on-line booking tools, airline and airfare websites, consolidators, and an international rate desk. Passageways Travel utilizes their global distribution system, on-line booking tool, consolidators, and an international rate desk to ensure lowest airfare.

Utilizing these agencies also gives travelers access to Michigan State University's airline contracts. This is another way in which travelers can see cost savings on airfare. Travelers save out of pocket costs by having airline tickets billed to MSU account numbers when purchasing airfare through Tower and Passageways Travel. FYI...airlines change their pricing on Tuesdays.

More Travel News on Page 2...

Please direct any suggestions or comments to the University Travel Manager, Debbie Gulliver, at telephone (517) 355-0343, or email gulliver5@ctrl.msu.edu or fax (517) 432-4656. 1

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Evaluations:

The Preferred Travel Agency...

Evaluation is now available electronically on the Travel Office website. Please visit:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB229DRZBNXLS>.

Delta Air Lines:

Integration Update...

As part of the Northwest and Delta merger, on Oct 1, 2009, WorldPerks members are now a part of the SkyMiles program. WorldPerks members will receive their new SkyMiles numbers and credentials via email and direct mail. Notification will be staggered throughout the month of October, and upon receipt, members may begin using their new SkyMiles numbers immediately.

Members are encouraged to notify their dedicated travel agency as soon as they receive their new account information. This allows travel agents to begin entering the new 10-digit SkyMiles number when booking new reservations, as well as when updating customer profiles.

Tower Travel and Passageways Travel, Michigan State University's Preferred Travel Agencies, ask that you update your profile on their on-line booking tools: Get There and ResX. If you are uncomfortable with this method, please email onlinesolutions@towertravel.com and eservices@pways.com and advise both agencies of your new SkyMiles number.

Additional Reminders from Delta Air Lines:

- All Elite qualification miles, redeemable miles, elite and Million Air status have transitioned to the new SkyMiles account
- Customers may begin using their new SkyMiles numbers for all new bookings and provide their new SkyMiles number to travel agents, hotel, car rental and all other partners
- No action is needed from the customer or a travel agency on existing bookings that include previously entered WorldPerks account numbers. Customers will still receive mileage credit.
- The customer's WorldPerks PIN can be used to access their new SkyMiles account.
- If, a customer already had a SkyMiles number, the two SkyMiles accounts may be combined at www.delta.com/mergeaccounts
- Miles will not expire as long as the customer has qualifying flight or partner earning or redemption activity in their account at least once every 24 months.

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Authorizations:

Clarification on Who Needs Pre-Trip Approval...

Michigan State University Travel Accident program is designed to provide insurance while traveling on official University business or an approved activity. The purpose of the travel authorization is to document that the travel is official MSU business or an approved activity.

Each traveler must have a separate authorization, which must be approved in advance of departure by someone administratively senior to the traveler. For the purposes of this policy, "administratively senior" includes the unit administrator (for example, the unit administrator may authorize travel for faculty) or higher level position. Unit administrators may not designate another person to authorize travel. Travelers may not authorize or approve their own travel.

Travel Vouchers:

Helpful Hints...

1. Please send only one copy of the travel voucher. Copies of invoices are unnecessary.
2. Be sure receipts are originals and not copies.
3. Be sure the department's name is reported in Section A of the travel voucher.

Starwood Properties:

New discount program...

Starwood Properties is offering Michigan State University a 15% savings opportunity on hotel stays. In order to take advantage of this program, travelers need to book their reservation through Tower Travel or Passageways Travel, or on-line via the MSU Travel Office website at:

<http://ctr.msu.edu/COTravel/HotelChainContacts.aspx>. Click on Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide and follow the instructions directing you to establish a Starwood Preferred Guest account and linking that with our contract or SET #334964. Starwood Properties include Sheraton, Four Points by Sheraton, W Hotels, aloft, The Luxury Collection, Le Meridien, element, Westin, and St. Regis.

The Starwood discount is available for business or personal travel and is another way in which travelers and Michigan State University can decrease travel costs.

Stay tuned...for updates on future airline discounts currently being negotiated, and an update on the long-awaited MSU Travel Portal.