

START THE  
ADVENTURE.

# Deciphering Airfare

SIN → SYD

FLYING ON  
26 OCTOBER 2016

PASSENGER(S):  
MR. TREV ELLER

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STA Travel's Guide to Understanding Airline Pricing

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## MSU & STA Travel

- We are MSU's preferred travel agency partner for *education abroad & study away* programs.
- We are the largest student/teacher travel company in the world.
- On campus Account Manager:
  - David Sanderson – [david.sanderson@statravel.com](mailto:david.sanderson@statravel.com) – 877-207-4492
- We're happy to assist MSU travel arrangers in any way that we can. If you're just looking for advice, or are confused by anything related to the travel industry, let Dave know.



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## Deciphering Airfare

- Airlines use letter codes, or “fare brackets” to determine prices on their tickets.
- An airline may offer 10 to 15 different fares per aircraft, but only about 10 seats per fare.
- Once a fare bracket sells out, the price for a ticket will get bumped up to the next level.
- It’s not uncommon for each individual fare bracket to have a different set of fare rules.

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# AIRLINES SELL THEIR SEATS IN PRICE BRACKETS

£€\$  
360



£€\$  
440



£€\$  
560



£€\$  
680



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# AND THE CHEAPEST WILL ALWAYS SELL OUT FIRST

€€\$  
360



€€\$  
440



€€\$  
560



€€\$  
680



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**DEPART** ✕ Thu, Jun 1 – Lansing, MI to Detroit, MI

Thu, Jun 1 05:55a LAN → 06:39a DTW 44m Delta 3713 [View seats](#)  
Canadair Regional Jet 900 / 38 lbs

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Fare Details	Free Checked Bags	Refundable
Economy (T) <a href="#">Rules / Fare Details</a>	Visit Delta	No

1	*DL3713	F9 P9 A9 G9 W9 Y9 B9 /LAN	DTWEM	555A	639A
		M9 S9 H9 Q9 K9 L9 U9 T9 X9 V9 E9			
2	*DL4692	Y9 B9 M9 S9 H9 Q9 K9 /LAN	DTWEM	1030A	1114A
		L9 U9 T9 X9 V1 E8			
3	*DL4469	Y9 B9 M9 S9 H9 Q9 K9 /LAN	DTWEM	159P	247P
		L9 U9 T9 X9 V0 E3			
4	*DL4778	Y9 B9 M9 S9 H9 Q9 K9 /LAN	DTWEM	515P	601P
		L9 U9 T9 X9 V9 E9			
5	*DL3529	Y9 B9 M9 S9 H9 Q9 K9 /LAN	DTWEM	730P	823P
		L9 U9 T9 X9 V9 E9			

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## Other Things to Consider

- Advance purchase – the airlines may only offer their cheapest fares if the tickets are purchased within a specific time frame.
- Weekend surcharges – Expect Friday, Saturday and Sundays to be a little bit more expensive.
  - Typical weekend surcharges are \$15.00 to \$50.00. Some airlines consider Sunday to be a weekday, and Thursday to be part of the weekend.
  - A weekend day could actually be cheaper, but only if there is a lower fare bucket open that isn't available during the week.

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## Other Things to Consider (continued)

- Fares will vary depending on the travel “season”.
- Minimum/maximum stay – Some fares require that you stay in a certain destination for a set period of time. Most tickets are only valid for one year from the date of purchase, but there are instances where the maximum stay may only be 3 to 6 months.
- Changes/refunds – Most ticket changes involve paying a fee to the airline, plus any fare difference. Not all tickets are changeable or refundable. If booking online make sure you fully understand the rules of your ticket. If booking by phone/email, your travel agent should be advising on the terms and conditions prior to purchase.



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THE AIRLINE WILL OFTEN ALLOW YOU TO

**PAY THE FARE DIFFERENCE**

TO GET ONTO YOUR CHOSEN FLIGHT

€€\$  
360



€€\$  
560



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## Group vs. Published Pricing

### Group

- Must have a minimum of 10 travelers on the same itinerary.
- Not always cheaper than what you will find online for an individual ticket, but everyone will pay the same price. It usually ends up being cheaper overall for the entire group.
- Great if most of the group is leaving from and returning to the same destination, although deviations from that are sometimes permitted.

### Published

- Pricing that you will find through most online travel vendors, including directly through the airlines.
- Published pricing is sometimes cheaper than group space, but not everyone will pay the same price.
- Published pricing can change on a daily basis.



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## General Tips

- Book as early as possible. Fares are usually released 10 to 11 months in advance.
- Consider an open jaw - get creative with routing! Know your airport codes and major hubs for carriers.
- Decide if price or flexibility is more important.
- Consider change and cancellation penalties.
- Get the most bang for your buck with free stopovers!
- Avoid mixed carrier tickets - Cheaper  $\neq$  Better
- Look closely at TOTAL travel times and the itinerary.
- Consider the cost of baggage & seat selections.
- Only book your flight AFTER final plans have been determined.

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Thanks for listening!

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Any questions?