



Life in the FAST LANE

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TO: Our Fast Lane Travel Family in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Dubai, Ecuador, all of Europe, Iceland, Iceland, Japan, Kuwait, New Zealand, South Africa, and the USA!



Travelers Pay More in Fees, Fares, as Price of Jet Fuel Skyrockets

Airlines seek more revenue, trim routes as war with Iran batters industry

Source: by DEAN SEAL, WSJ

Air travelers are paying the price for airlines' surging fuel costs.

Airlines are raising fares, adding baggage fees and dialing back routes as they try to cover the skyrocketing cost of jet fuel, which is among the biggest expenses that airlines face.

Starting in Europe and Asia and now moving to the U.S., airlines have been slapping new fuel-related fees on tickets. Air France-KLM hiked its fuel surcharge on certain routes, while Cathay Pacific said it would boost its fuel fee by even more this week. Starting April 1, a new add-on fee of \$200 will be charged, up from the \$149 customers paid in March, according to Cathay's website.

JetBlue said earlier this week that it was starting to charge more for bags, with many routes during peak periods costing \$49, up from \$40. And some requests to check bags within 24-hours of travel will now cost \$59.

United Airlines Holdings' Chief Executive Scott Kirby has warned that fares could shoot up as much as 20% because of war-related shortages of fuel.

"The reality is, jet fuel prices have more than doubled in the last three weeks," Kirby said in a letter to employees last month. He even said the airline has gamed out the possibility that oil prices rise to \$175 a barrel. The moves are a side effect of the war with Iran, which has spread across more of the Middle East, resulting in tighter supplies of oil and petroleum products such as jet fuel.

"If prices stayed at this level, it would mean an extra \$11 billion in annual expense just for jet fuel. For perspective, in United's best year ever, we made less than \$5 billion," Kirby said.

Meanwhile, United said it trimmed the number of flights it has for the summer months. Other airline executives have also said they are willing to pull flights that don't make enough revenue to offset the fuel burn. Andrew Kirkegaard had been planning a trip with his wife to Madrid in early June and was close to buying \$700 flight tickets from his home in Detroit to Europe when the Iran war broke out.

The price of tickets nearly tripled, he said. Now he is considering a flight or four-hour drive up to Toronto to snag a cheaper fare across the Atlantic.

"It's obviously a pain because I have to go through customs twice each way," he said. "But I mean, we're saving \$1,500 bucks, so it's worth it." Syd Arnedo, in Toronto, is considering postponing a trip to Alberta planned in the fall because of the rising airfares.

Arnedo said he booked a round trip to Manila this summer for about 2,000 Canadian dollars in late January. When he checked a couple of days ago, the same trip on the same plane cost 3,000 Canadian dollars. Fares for last-minute domestic flights from most U.S. airlines last Friday were higher than they were a week earlier, according to Deutsche Bank. At JetBlue, the lowest price for a one-way domestic flight was 16% higher than the previous week. Trans-Atlantic flight fares were up 6% and flights to Florida were up more than 17%.

"We've seen pricing increase twice in the industry, just in the last two weeks," Delta Chief Executive Ed Bastian told analysts in mid-March.

Federal regulations bar airlines from retroactively charging customers a new or increased fuel surcharge once they have already paid for their flight.

U.S. carriers, and usually foreign ones too, are bound to the terms of the deal they strike with customers at the time of booking, said Clint Henderson, managing editor of travel site The Points Guy.

The one big exception: if changes are made to the ticket after booking, like shifting the date or the time of departure.

Booking with a foreign airline using U.S. airline miles can also become a problem if the ticket wasn't issued at booking, Henderson said. Prices could be higher if fuel surcharges increase by the time the ticket gets issued, though this is rare, he said. Jet fuel, which is refined from crude oil, is among Palma de Mallorca airport Spain. CLARA MARGAIS/ DPA/ ZUMA PRESS the biggest operating costs that airlines face. Jet fuel is among the biggest operating costs that airlines face. Above, a plane refuels at Prices hit \$4.62 a gallon on Monday, its highest price so far this year, according to Argus Media. Before the conflict broke out, jet fuel cost about \$2.50 a gallon.

The increase has hit airlines' bottom lines quickly. Delta can offset some of its fuel costs because it owns a refinery. Yet Delta's Bastian said the airlines' fuel costs still jumped \$400 million in the month of March alone. Most airlines don't hedge their fuel purchases any more, exposing them to large price increases.

Alaska Airlines warned that refining margins for its fuel rose fivefold since early February, and it now expected a deeper loss for the first quarter. American Airlines and United have each said higher jet fuel prices have driven up first quarter costs by \$400 million. There's absolutely an impact to the first quarter in terms of profitability and likely an impact in the second quarter as well," American Airlines Chief Executive Robert Isom told analysts two weeks ago.

Low-cost carriers such as Spirit and Frontier Airlines are especially vulnerable, which means the least-expensive fares that many travelers count on may be going up. The low-cost airlines were already flying with smaller margins before jet fuel prices surged. They may need to raise prices to offset their higher costs, even though that could chip away at their main competitive advantage.

Carpal Tunnel

I have to keep this Newsletter relatively short today because of the carpal tunnel surgery I had on Mach 12th. I have lost all feeling in my right index and middle fingers, making typing virtually impossible. Based on Dr. Mary Powers' recommendation, I am scheduled for a nerve conduction study on April 15th – I'll report on my progress. It's quite painful right now . . . but then, I'm used to pain since I'm in the travel business – for example, we had a group going to beautiful and luxurious Dubai. However, the current events in that part of the world compelled us to cancel Dubai and offer everyone Tuscany in October.

Fabulous Tuscany: Tue. Oct. 6th through Sun. Oct 18th

Our 16th year of "coming home" to Tuscany.

This trip, like every year, will fill up fast. Please register now:

<https://fastlanetravel.com/all-tours-2026/>

Comments from a Fast Lane Customer Couple (16 trips to date), Dr, Peter and Gail Byeffer, after their first time with us in Tuscany:

“Hi Peter,

Gail and I are practically back to reality in Connecticut. I don't think that before the tour, I appreciated how wonderful it would be. We had a great time on the tour last year and I think that I had a better expectation of what that tour would provide. But, I was not ready for how wonderful Tuscany would be.

One of my older colleagues tells me that I secretly want to be Italian. I don't think that is true, but my stepmother was Italian so it may have some basis in fact. I will send you some pictures that I took on the tour and please feel free to use them in any advertising or publication that you chose. The weather was wonderful and the company was excellent. Gail and I will never forget some of the scenery we saw.

Gail and I would very much like to return on another Porsche Fest with you. Last year's Porsche Fest was much more about urban areas, and this year's Porsche Fest included smaller cities and towns, and unbelievable road trips and scenery. If you have another Tour to Italy, I would suggest a bus trip, or train trip to Rome with a 2 day stay in Rome. I would still like to consider a Tour to Southern France. If you would like me to send you any other pictures, please let me know as I have plenty more that I haven't sent you. With best regards,

The other Peter, 16 trips since 2012.



Final Thoughts: Dog Rules

My younger daughter, Julie, is the Executive at the ASPCA in charge of organizing all volunteers nationwide. She inspired me to publish these rules:

1. Dogs are never permitted in the house. The dog stays outside in a specially built wooden compartment named, for very good reason, the doghouse.
2. Okay, the dog can enter the house, but only for short visits or if his own house is under renovation.
3. Okay, the dog can stay in the house on a permanent basis, provided his dog house can be sold in a yard sale to a rookie dog owner.
4. Inside the house, the dog is not allowed to run free and is confined to a comfortable but secure metal cage.
5. Okay, the cage becomes part of a two-for-one deal along with the dog house in the yard sale, and the dog can go wherever the hell he pleases.
6. The dog is never allowed on the furniture.
7. Okay, the dog can get on the old furniture but not the new furniture.
8. Okay, the dog can get up on the new furniture until it looks like the old furniture and then we'll sell the whole damn works and buy new furniture...upon which the dog will most definitely not be allowed.
9. The dog never sleeps on the bed. Period.
10. Okay, the dog can sleep at the foot of the bed.
11. Okay, the dog can sleep alongside you, but he's not allowed under the covers.
12. Okay, the dog can sleep under the covers but not with his head on the pillow.
13. Okay, the dog can sleep alongside you under the covers with his head on the pillow, but if he snores, he's got to leave the room.
14. Okay, the dog can sleep and snore and have nightmares in bed, but he's not to come in and sleep on the couch in the TV room, where I'm now sleeping. That's just not fair.
15. The dog never gets listed on the census questionnaire as "primary resident," even if it's true.

"Ever consider what dogs must think of us? I mean, here we come back from a grocery store with the most amazing haul -- chicken, pork, half a cow. They must think we're the greatest hunters on earth!" - *Anne Tyler*

"My dog is worried about the economy because Alpo is up to \$3.00 a can. That's almost \$21.00 in dog money." - *Joe Weinstein*

"I wonder what goes through his mind when he sees us peeing in his water bowl." - *Penny Ward Moser*

"I wonder if other dogs think poodles are members of a weird religious cult." - *Rita Rudner*



"Dogs need to sniff the ground; it's how they keep abreast of current events The ground is a giant dog newspaper, containing all kinds of late-breaking dog news items, which, if they are especially urgent, are often continued in the next yard." - *Dave Barry*

The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue." - *Anonymous*

Don't accept your dog's admiration as conclusive evidence that you are wonderful." - *Ann Landers*





Please stay healthy and happy. I'm looking forward to the great times we will have together again with my Team on one of the fabulous tours we are planning for 2026. All the best to you, **Peter**