



Airport is prepared for holiday travelers

Fewer passengers expected despite deep discounts in fares

INDIANAPOLIS—In Indiana and across the nation, airport and airline personnel are gearing up for the busy Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s travel season.

At Indianapolis International Airport (IND), travelers can be thankful for a comfortable, convenient terminal with plenty of parking, holiday entertainment, and other amenities.

In general, what should the nation’s travelers expect this year? The Air Transport Association of America (ATA) reports the nation’s legacy carriers have slashed capacity with the deepest cuts since 1942 in response to the current economic climate.

Despite less-than-robust demand, planes will be full and passenger terminals in cities like Atlanta, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago will be congested.

ATA also reports a four percent year-over-year decrease in passenger traffic, despite deep discounting on domestic fares, especially for travelers who booked their flights early.

September is historically the best month to shop for domestic holiday flights, say most industry experts.

- According to Bing Travel (www.bing.com/travel), Thanksgiving and Christmas air fares for 2009 are down between 15 and 20 percent from 2008, putting them on par with 2007 rates. The most popular Thanksgiving itinerary is a Wednesday departure and a Sunday return. The average ticket will cost \$375, down more than \$120 from 2008. Returning on Monday can yield a savings of about \$35 per ticket for those who have more flexible schedules.
- The most popular Christmas itinerary is also a Wednesday departure with a Sunday return. At an average fare of \$353, Christmas air travel is down about \$50 from 2008. Those who can be flexible can find less expensive flights.
- Non-stop flights, however, are the most popular and thus most expensive. Budget-conscious travelers should be prepared to take connecting flights, advises Rick Seaney, CEO of www.FareCompare.com.

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TIPS FOR LESS STRESS

- Use your airport's online check-in system up to 24 hours before departure. Be sure to check the status of your flight before leaving for the airport to determine if your flight is on schedule. The airport's Web site at www.indianapolisairport.com offers real-time arrival and departure data that is refreshed every 60 seconds.
- Arrive at the airport early at least 60-90 minutes in advance of scheduled flights. Take advantage of valet parking. At \$20/day, valet parking at the new airport is less expensive than the \$22/day rate for self-parking at the old High School Road terminal. The cost of valet parking includes free snow and ice removal.
- Know your airline's policies for carry-on and checked bags and customer service plans in the event of delays or cancellations. Sign-up for automatic flight alerts and notifications.
- Pack properly. Remember TSA requires travelers follow the 3-1-1 rule for liquids, gels, and aerosols in all bags going through security checkpoints. This includes holiday food and gifts. For information on how to get through security quickly, acceptable forms of identification, special needs travel, traveling with batteries and electronic devices, baggage locks, and more, visit www.tsa.gov/travelers.
- TSA's Secure Flight Program requires passengers to present government-issued identification with their full name as it matches that given when tickets were purchased. Passengers should make their reservations using their name as it appears on their driver's license, passport, military ID, and other identification.

PASSENGER PROJECTIONS

Projections for Thanksgiving 2009 travel won't be available until the afternoon of Tuesday, Nov. 24.

In 2008, local TSA data indicated the following DEPARTURES from Indianapolis:

— Wednesday, November 26	12,495
— THANKSGIVING	7,004
— Friday, November 28	8,577
— Saturday, November 29	11,328
— Sunday, November 30	13,125
— Monday, December 1	11,369

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