



TIPS FOR PURCHASING INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS



THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- 1. Departure and arrival dates and times** – Pay attention to the departure and arrival dates and times when booking travel. International flights from the U.S. often arrive 1 - 2 days after the date of departure due to time changes. Also, note that many visas require you to have round trip airfare (rather than only one way).
- 2. Connections and layover time** – International flights can already take days even with the fastest itineraries. Consider how many flights you will need to get to your destination and how long the layovers may be. You will need to stay alert with your personal belongings and sleeping in airports is very difficult. Conversely, when considering layover time, make sure your connections are not too short. Reserve at least two hours for an international connection.
- 3. First-time international travelers** – If you are going abroad for the first time and need to do a layover, you might consider doing so in the U.S. where you have a familiar language and culture. You should also talk to other program participants about flying together so you can help each other to navigate new airports.
- 4. Flight search engines** (i.e., JustFly, Orbitz, Kayak) – While some offer excellent deals, others fall woefully short, particularly if you need customer service. Be sure to do research on the website legitimacy. It can be best to purchase tickets directly from the chosen airline to receive better customer service in the event of a delay, missed connection, or change in travel plans.
- 5. Ticket purchases from multiple airlines** – While splitting tickets can reduce the cost, remember it is possible that you will have to pick up and re-check your luggage as you change airlines. Some discount airlines fly from regional airports, which means you may have to find transportation between airports during layovers. Plan for extra layover time. You may also have additional baggage fees, especially for domestic travel.
- 6. Luggage weight and costs** – Most international flights allow one, free checked bag that weighs less than 50 pounds, but some discount airlines do not. Be sure to consult the baggage policy of the airline before booking your flight so there are no surprises. Do not forget to ask about the fees for extra bags, odd-shaped, or overweight bags.

SUGGESTED WEBSITES FOR FLIGHT SEARCHES

- **Google Flights** – An excellent starting point to compare itineraries and prices across multiple airlines. You can search their calendar for the most affordable days to fly. A price alert can help you monitor trends in costs.
- **StudentUniverse** – This is another good website for economical, student fares.

