

## **SeatGuru Shares Top Tips for Holiday Air Travel**

### **Air Travel Expert Matt Daimler Offers Ten Tips to Ensure a More Peaceful Holiday Travel Season**

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SeatGuru(R), the web's most comprehensive resource for airline information, today announced its top ten tips for air travel during the holidays. Air travel expert Matt Daimler is the founder of SeatGuru ([www.seatguru.com](http://www.seatguru.com)), and logs more than 100,000 miles in the air each year for business and leisure.

#### 1. Don't Confuse Your Airplane with Santa's Sleigh -- Pack Light

It's the time of year when you are most tempted to travel with a lot of stuff, but it's the worst time of year to do it because every other traveler is doing the same. We can't emphasize this enough -- bringing more items, whether it be carry-on or check-in, significantly increases your odds of losing luggage, or getting items damaged when storing them in overhead bins or below seats. Packing light also saves time. Mail gifts ahead of time if possible, or buy gifts when you arrive at your destination. Be extra careful if you are traveling to the Caribbean, Latin America, and Mexico as additional baggage restrictions are in effect from December 1, 2007 to January 10, 2008.

#### 2. Make Your List of Security Rules, and Check it Twice

With airport traffic at its peak during holiday season, it's that much more important for travelers to be familiar with the rules before they check in. If you have questions about security rules or prohibited items, check the Transportation Security Administration's website or SeatGuru's Traveler Resources ([http://www.seatguru.com/articles/tsa\\_prohibited\\_items.php](http://www.seatguru.com/articles/tsa_prohibited_items.php)) for the most up-to-date information. Give a second thought to all gifts being carried onto the plane, even items like jelly or jam are considered liquids and will not be allowed on the flight if the jar is greater than three ounces.

#### 3. Spread Holiday Cheer -- Not Germs

Red noses are cute on reindeer, not people. Do everyone a favor -- yourself, the loved ones you are visiting, and your fellow travelers -- by staying off a flight if you are sick. If you are feeling the signs of something coming on and must travel, be liberal in your use of hand sanitizer, bring a face mask, and keep plenty of tissues on hand.

#### 4. Online Tidings of Airline Reservation Comfort and Joy

Don't wait until the day of your flight to read your reservations online. Check with your airline every few weeks to see if there have been any scheduling or plane type changes. If the plane type has changed, you may have lost your selected seat, but you can always use SeatGuru again to get a great seat on the new plane. Occasionally, airlines will partner, resulting in your flight being operated by a different carrier than the airline you booked through, so again, read your reservations carefully.

#### 5. You Can get Away with Last Minute Shopping for Holiday Gifts, but Not Flights

Some risk-taking travelers believe in getting better deals shopping for flights at the last minute. Good luck with that during the holidays. If you are planning to fly in late December, you should try to book at least two months in advance. Since that is no longer an option for this year, you can find deals by flying on the holidays themselves, such as Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

#### 6. Know When to Bring a Book (or Extra Batteries)

Check with SeatGuru to see what type of in-flight entertainment will be available on your airplane. If your flight has video offerings, SeatGuru also provides a link to this month's movie listings for most airlines. SeatGuru can also help you identify airplanes and seats with power ports and even offers a Laptop Power Guide for help with plug types and adapters in the site's Travel Resources section.

#### 7. It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year -- to Have More Time

Check-in online before you get to the airport, plan to arrive at the airport an hour earlier than you normally would, and avoid

connections when possible -- if your flights are delayed, you may miss your connection and find yourself left out in the cold. If your travel plans are flexible, consider asking to join the "volunteer" list when you check-in just in case your flight is oversold. By giving up your seat, you'll often be confirmed on another flight and you'll receive compensation of either a free ticket or travel credit.

#### 8. Do Unto Other Travelers as You Would Have Them Do Unto You

There is no more important time to respect airline etiquette than the holidays. Don't request a ride on the courtesy cart unless you have health conditions, or are legitimately in jeopardy of missing your flight. Don't get in line to board until they have called your section. Don't eat particularly odorous food in close proximity to other travelers. Recline your seat back only as necessary, and refrain from talking on your cell phone when the plane is taxiing unless it is urgent, and if it is, keep the volume down and the conversation quick.

#### 9. Don't Be Too Naughty or Too Nice to Airline Employees

Like you, airline staffs are stressed during the holidays. While conventional wisdom may be that you get more bees with honey, this isn't always the case -- especially when the loud, squeaky wheel standing next to you in line at the gate gets greased first. Being friendly and patient, but firm and persistent, (not pesky), is the best way to get the answers you want, faster. Sometimes calling customer service on airlines will get you further than negotiating with harried airline desk personnel. We recommend storing the airline's customer service phone number in your cell phone's speed-dial. SeatGuru lists phone numbers for all the major airlines.

#### 10. Good Things Come to Those Who are Prepared to Wait at the Airport

When flying this holiday season, plan for delays, and prepare accordingly. While there were many reports about improved on-time arrivals and departures during the busy Thanksgiving weekend, you should still prepare for delays for the holidays. If you are traveling with children, be sure to bring snacks and games, even for short flights. If you have plans to be at an event at a certain time, don't risk flying the same day. If you are flying or connecting on the last flight of the night to your destination, consider bringing a few toiletries and fresh underwear to get you through an unplanned overnight stop-over. If a big storm is approaching your departure, destination, or one of your connection cities, ask your airline if they have space to allow you to fly out before the storm. The airlines want you to get to your destination and may make schedule changes for free if unfriendly weather is approaching.

"When it comes to air travel during the holiday, it's all about time, preparation and flexibility," said Matt Daimler. "It is absolutely the most stressful travel time of the year, but by managing expectations, and planning for some inevitable bumps in the road, you can have a more relaxing travel experience."

#### About seatguru.com

SeatGuru ([www.seatguru.com](http://www.seatguru.com)) is the web's most comprehensive resource for airline information, featuring 20,000+ user comments on airline seats, services, and amenities, and helpful information and links about baggage and TSA regulations. SeatGuru also offers nearly 300 airline seat maps covering 40 airlines with color-coded seating charts to help quickly identify superior seats. SeatGuru is part of the TripAdvisor Media Network, which includes TripAdvisor.com, BookingBuddy.com, SeatGuru.com, TravelPod.com, Travel- Library.com, CruiseCritic.com, and IndependentTraveler.com. TripAdvisor, BookingBuddy.com, CruiseCritic.com, IndependentTraveler.com, seatguru.com, SmarterTravel.com, TravelLibrary.com and TravelPod.com are either trademarks or registered trademarks of TripAdvisor, LLC, in the U.S. and/or other countries. Other logos or product and company names mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

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