

TripAdvisor Reveals the Results of Its Second Annual Air Travel Survey Traveler Opinions and Preferences on Extra Legroom, Airline Fees, Carry-on Bags and In-Flight Wi-Fi Explored

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TripAdvisor®, the world's most popular and largest travel community, today announced the results of its second annual air travel survey. TripAdvisor asked more than 3,200 U.S. respondents dozens of questions about their air travel preferences, on a range of topics from airline fees to in-flight Wi-Fi. The results revealed the hottest gripes, quips and opinions of U.S. fliers.

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"The airline industry has changed drastically over the past year, from broader airline fees and tighter airport security to the introduction of new amenities like in-flight Wi-Fi," said Bryan Saltzburg, general manager of new initiatives at TripAdvisor. "While a lot has changed, the biggest gripes for fliers in 2010 are still airline fees and limited legroom on flights. This makes it all the more important that travelers plan ahead when they fly, using tools like the Fees Estimator from TripAdvisor Flights and seat maps from SeatGuru.com to get the most information up front before they book."

Lobbying for Legroom

Twenty-five percent of travelers said that limited legroom was one of their biggest gripes about air travel. When asked what airlines should offer to make the in-flight experience better, 30 percent lobbied for more legroom and 38 percent requested roomier seats.

No More Fees Please

In the past year, nearly every major airline has either added or raised fees for amenities including checked baggage and in-flight services. It's no surprise then that 25 percent of respondents consider airline fees to be their biggest complaint about air travel. Fifty-six percent of travelers said that checked baggage fees were the most annoying current airline fee, and 56 percent of respondents expect the overall cost of airline fees to rise in 2010.

Travelers' Airline Fee Forecast

When asked which fee travelers thought was most likely to be added or expanded by airlines in 2010, 31 percent responded with seat selection fees. Thirty-one percent also believed airlines would add peak date surcharges for additional top travel dates, such as holidays.

Weighing in on the Size Issue

Seventy-four percent of respondents think passengers of size should be required to purchase tickets for two seats on their flights. Twenty-one percent of travelers think that airlines will add passenger of size fees in 2010.

Wi-Fi in the Sky

Thirty percent of travelers said they would be more likely to book a flight on an aircraft with in-flight Wi-Fi than one without. Sixty-one percent of respondents said they would not be willing to pay for in-flight Wi-Fi access, and 27 percent said they would be willing to pay \$5 or less for the service.

Inappropriate in the Air

Forty-five percent of travelers said they would do nothing if the person sitting next to them on their flight were accessing inappropriate content on their computer using in-flight Wi-Fi. Twenty-seven percent said they would alert a flight attendant, 22

percent would ask their seatmate to close the inappropriate content, and six percent would file a complaint with the airline.

Carry-On Commotion

With the rise of checked baggage fees, 58 percent of respondents said they always or often carry on their bag to avoid extra charges, possibly adding to cramped overhead bins. This is perhaps why 62 percent of travelers said they would put their carry-on bag above someone else's row if their own overhead space were already filled. Fifty-seven percent of respondents said that each seat on a plane should have assigned space in the overhead compartment, even if it meant carry-on bags had to be smaller.

Full Body Scanners at Security Okay by Travelers

When it comes to the newest addition to airport security, 79 percent of travelers said they are comfortable with U.S. airports using full body scanners that can see through clothes.

Fliers Don't Mind Small Talk and Prefer Female Seatmates

When it comes to socializing with strangers on a plane, 73 percent of travelers said a little small talk with seatmates is fine, but that they prefer to keep to themselves for most of the flight. Twelve percent of travelers would rather not socialize at all during their flights. While 65 percent of respondents have no preference in terms of the gender of their seatmate, for those that do, 87 percent prefer to sit next to a woman.

Aisle Trumps Window for Preferred Seat

When asked to choose their favorite seat on a plane, 52 percent of fliers prefer the aisle, while 44 percent favor the window. Thirty-three percent of respondents request seats in the exit row on their flights and 13 percent ask for bulkhead seats.

Airport Annoyances

Thirty-nine percent of travelers cite long security lines as the most annoying part of being at an airport. Closely following were high prices for food at 19 percent and not enough seating in the boarding area at 14 percent. Ninety-five percent of respondents think there should be a price limit on bottled water post-security at the airport, since security checkpoints require passengers to leave larger bottles behind.

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