

TripAdvisor Air Travel Survey Reveals What Flyers in Southeast Asia Like and Dislike About Flying

Seat Squeeze Ruffles Feathers but Flyers Applaud Online Booking and New Flight Routes

TripAdvisor™, the world's largest travel site*, today announced the results of its annual air travel survey of more than 2,500 respondents in Southeast Asia. Regional travel remains popular amongst travellers in the Southeast Asia, as 95 per cent of travellers intend to fly on a short-haul flight at least once in 2015, up slightly from 94 per cent. More travellers are expecting to fly further afield this year, as 82 per cent intend to travel on a long-haul flight, compared to 74 per cent who did so in 2014.

“With the rise of low-cost carriers, we can expect to see more growth for short-haul flights in the next few years. While air travel continues to be popular, seat comfort remains the biggest concern for flyers in the region,” said Andrew Wong, regional director of TripAdvisor Flights, APAC. “To better serve the traveller, airlines would be wise to take note of these complaints and make some improvements, especially in the economy cabin for long-haul flights.”

“Ease of online bookings and the introduction of new flight routes are the most appreciated improvements in recent years for travellers in Southeast Asia.”

Air Travel Preferences and Pet Peeves

When asked what they enjoyed most about the air travel experience, travellers listed the excitement and adventure of jet-setting at the top of the list.

Top 5 things travellers like most about air travel:

1. Thrill of getting to a new destination – 68%
2. Sense of adventure – 51%
3. In-flight amenities – 38%
4. Looking out of the plane's window during take-off / landing – 36%
5. Chance to take a break from work (e.g. email) during the flight – 33%

When asked what they enjoyed least about the air travel experience, travellers identified the unpredictability of flights along with discomfort on board the flight as the top frustrations.

Top 5 things travellers like least about flying:

1. Unpredictable flight delays / cancellations – 73%
2. Uncomfortable seats / limited legroom – 70%
3. Added fees (e.g., baggage fees, seat selection fees, etc.) – 58%
4. Long security lines / customs wait times – 52%
5. Loud / crying children – 50%

Flyers unhappy over shrinking seats

- 65% of flyers are “strongly opposed” to airlines installing narrower seats in the economy class cabin
- 38% of flyers “always” or “often” pay extra for a better airplane seat assignment

- 54% of say they are more likely to pay for a better seat assignment now than they were five years ago

Given shrinking seats, it comes as no surprise that the biggest improvement travellers want is more comfortable seats and space. Here are the top three amenities travellers say would make the air travel experience better:

1. More comfortable seats – 28%
2. More legroom – 23%
3. More space between other passengers – 18 %

Most improved aspects of air travel over the past five years

When asked about the top air travel improvements over the past five years, travellers gave ease of online bookings and the opening of new flight routes to new destinations as their top choices.

Top five biggest improvements in air travel:

1. Ease of booking online – 74%
2. Routes to new destinations – 64%
3. Number of flight / itinerary options – 64%
4. Comparison shopping on flight search sites – 55%
5. Ability to find comprehensive fare, flight and price information on a single site – 29%

A closer look at how travellers in Southeast Asia shop for and book flights:

- The top three factors for choosing a flight are lowest price (69%), departure and arrival time / desired time of day to travel (60%) and direct versus non-direct (49%)
- While the vast majority of flyers say they typically book flights on their laptop or PC (80%), 37% say they have booked a flight on a mobile device
- 90% of travellers say it's important to use flight search sites for price comparison
- 64% of travellers check 2-3 sites when shopping for airfare
- 54% of flyers are loyal to a particular airline, with 49% of those noting that it's because of the airline's frequent flyer program

TripAdvisor Flights Provides First Class Booking Insights

To help travellers make the best booking decision, TripAdvisor Flights features comprehensive in-flight insights, amenities information and candid traveller photos along with the ability to scan for the lowest prices for airlines globally. Travellers can learn more at <http://www.tripadvisor.com.sg/CheapFlightsHome>.

¹The air travel survey was conducted with 2,566 travellers from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand, from 24 April to 7 May 2015.

-END-