

Tips for Planning Holiday Travel This Year

(Courtesy of Laurie Baratti, Travel Pulse)

In the wake of a pretty crazy summer travel season, it's now time to start seriously planning your end-of-year travels because this holiday season is expected to be both busy and expensive.

Travel booking app Hopper just released its [2022 Holiday Travel Outlook](#) report, which indicates that this year's holiday airfare prices will be the steepest seen in five years. Nevertheless, more than half of Americans are planning trips for one or both of the November or December holidays, 70 percent of whom are going to visit family and friends.

Factors influencing the cost of airfare this year include high fuel prices, fewer available flights and pent-up travel demand triggered by two years of potentially missed holidays. At least 30 percent of travelers are planning on flying this holiday season, but two-thirds of them point to pricing as a primary consideration as they plan their trips.

Based on its analysis, Hopper put together some tips on how to find the best deals on flights for the holidays this year:

Book by Mid-October – Hopper advises travelers to book both their Thanksgiving and Christmas flights no later than the week of October 10. If you see a good deal on airfare, grab it, because prices are expected to rise and the limited number of available flights may sell out quickly this year.

Start Planning Now – Hopper said it's wisest to get a jump on things now and be sure to book no later than mid-October. Historically, Hopper users who got an early start on planning their holiday trips using app have saved as much as 18 percent off domestic and 15 percent off international airfare.

Use a Price-Tracking Tool – Prices, especially for travel during the Christmas period, are predicted to fluctuate somewhat unpredictably over the coming weeks. Good deals on fares may spring up and be gone just as quickly, so Hopper recommends using a price-tracking tool (like Hopper) to get notified as soon as prices drop.

Keep Your Dates Flexible – Travelers can save as much as \$300 by flying at non-peak times (i.e., before or after the actual holiday week). For Thanksgiving travel, look to depart on the Monday of Thanksgiving week and return any weekday of week after the holiday to get the best airfare pricing. Likewise, for the Christmas weekend, try to depart the Monday or Tuesday prior to the holiday and return on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday of the week after Christmas to find the best deals on flights.