

## Farecast Summer Forecast Reveals Fares to Europe Soar

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Fly shoulder seasons in May and September to save \$350 per ticket on average to Europe

The Fareologists at Farecast.com, the smart travel search site, issued their 2008 summer forecast today, uncovering effective summer travel planning strategies for domestic and international travelers. Farecast data reveals that peak summer fares to Europe are 10 percent higher than 2007 and that traveling to Europe during peak season, costs on average 250 percent of the off-season averages. Savvy travelers who travel to Europe during the shoulder seasons -- May and September -- can save \$350 or more per ticket.

### **Farecast's Summer Travel Strategy #1: Know When to Fly**

The first component to any good travel planning strategy is knowing when to fly. For flights to Europe, travelers should first look to travel during Europe's shoulder seasons. Choosing the right day of the week to fly can also significantly impact fares. The most expensive day to depart is Saturday, while the least expensive days are Tuesday and Wednesday.

For domestic flights, travelers who are willing to wait until late August or early September can find values. Domestically, Sunday is the most expensive day to fly, while Tuesday and Wednesday remain the least expensive. Flying Tuesday to Tuesday can save a family of four \$220, or \$55 per ticket, on average.

### **Farecast's Summer Travel Strategy #2: Know When to Buy**

For peak summer travel (early June through late July), buying early or late is the best strategy to get the lowest price on airfare. Booking travel in February, March or earlier will provide travelers the most options and significant savings. While now may be too late for some of the best deals, some sales can still pop up in early spring and staying flexible is the key to finding good deals.

For travel to Europe in July or August, consumers could wait as little as one or two months before departure and hold out for mid-summer sales. In 2007, this strategy worked well for travel to London (LHR), but was riskier for popular destinations such as Paris (CDG) or Rome (FCO). For domestic and European trips in late-August or September, consumers can wait for end-of-summer sales which happened throughout July last year for domestic travel, and at the end of July for European travel.

### **Farecast's Summer Travel Strategy #3: Know Where to Fly**

For consumers who must travel during peak times, choosing the right destination is a good strategy. During peak periods, consumers can still save more than \$200 per ticket by choosing the right destination. For example, as of March 20, 2008, summer airfares from Boston (BOS) to Rome (FCO) were averaging nearly \$1,350, while fares from Boston (BOS) to Madrid (MAD) were more reasonable at \$1,150. San Francisco (SFO) to Paris (CDG) averaged over \$1,550, while San Francisco (SFO) to London (LHR) came in at \$1,200.

"With the weakening dollar abroad, climbing oil prices, and peak summer fares to Europe soaring 10 percent higher over summer 2007 fares, consumers need to be more strategic this year about their summer travel plans," said John Rauser, a Farecast Fareologist. "Consumers can make small adjustments, such as changing the day of week they depart or selecting alternative destinations to save money and stay on budget for their summer trips."

Farecast Fareologists offer these additional summer travel strategy tips:

**Buy Summer Airfares To Europe Early or Late:** Based on fare sales in 2007, the best summer travel planning strategies involve either buying early -- three months or more before departure -- or for less popular destinations, waiting to capitalize on sales that pop up one to two months before departure.

**Consider Alternate European Airports for Multi-Country Tours:** When planning a multi-country tour, shop less popular airports as your starting point. For example, fares to London (LHR) are typically \$200 less than tickets to Paris or Rome, while Madrid (MAD) can be an affordable alternative.

**Track End-of-Summer Sales:** Domestic and international fares start to dip lower for travel after mid-August. For travelers who are beholden to a school schedule but don't need to be back home until early September, this two-three week sweet spot can be a great time to squeeze in a summer vacation and stay on budget. Consumers planning to book a late summer trip should keep in mind that airlines traditionally launch big end-of-summer sales in early to mid-July. Be sure to use Farecast.com flexible planning tools and predictions to

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