



Travel Tips & Frequent Flier Hacks

Travel and Adventure Show
Atlanta
January 2025

Introduction

- Scott Mayerowitz, founder of [GlobeTrotScott Strategies](http://GlobeTrotScott.com)
- Longtime travel journalist and points junkie. (*ABC News, AP, The Points Guy*)
- scott@globetrotscott.com

Elite status with multiple airlines, hotels, car rental companies and Amtrak.

- Two dozen-plus credit cards.
- \$4,000+ in annual fees.
- Annually: ~\$15-20k in value.



Booking Flights

- Cheapest isn't always the best!
 - Start at [Google Flights](#).
 - Search for one ticket at a time.
 - Keep a kid with an adult on each ticket.
 - Avoid “Basic Economy.”
 - The restrictions aren't worth it.
 - No changes or cancellations.
 - United doesn't allow carry-on bags.
 - Board last.
 - No advance seat assignments.
- Look and see if the flight is daily or not.
- Understand the cancellation policies and vouchers.
- Consider loyalty programs and any elite status.

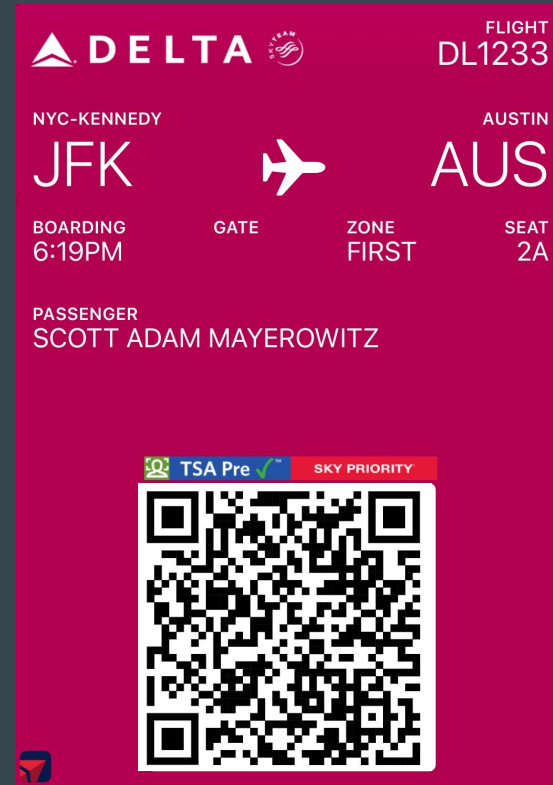


Award Flight Booking Tools

- [Points Path](#)
 - Browser extension that lets you search itineraries on Google Flights. It compares cash tickets to mileage ones and suggests which is the better value.
- [Point.me](#)
 - Does real-time award-ticket inventory searches on 30+ airlines and offers suggestions on how to transfer points to those programs.
- [Expert Flyer](#)
 - Great for advanced users. Shows seat availability for both cash and award tickets. A bit wonky and doesn't support all airlines. Also has "seat alerts" allowing you to get out of the dreaded middle seat.
- [Seats.aero](#)
 - Another subscription tool for advanced users.

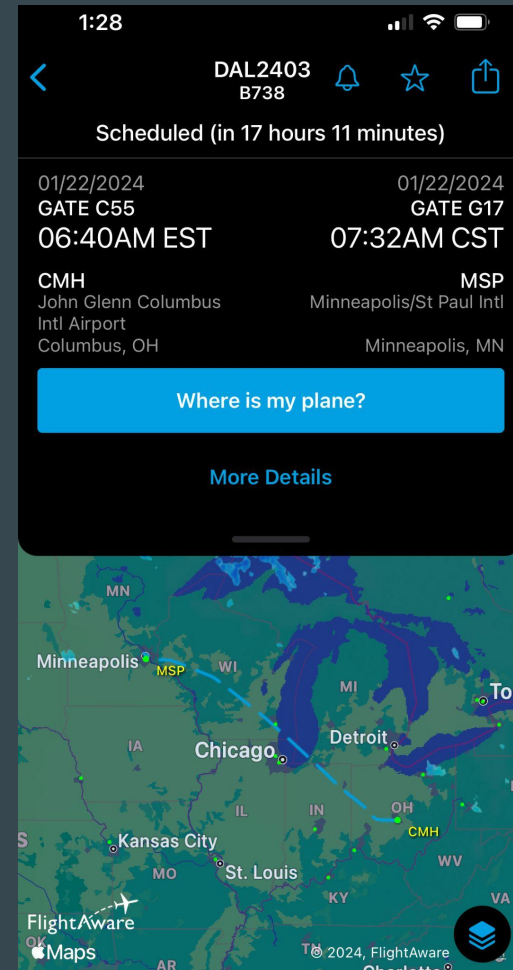
Travel Tips & Hacks

- Book with the right credit card for trip delay protection.
- Register your phone and email with the airline. Save their 1-800 numbers in your phone.
- If booking via Expedia, Orbitz etc., get your airline confirmation number, log in to the airline's site and make sure all your contact information is entered correctly.
- Check in 24 hours in advance.
- PreCheck, CLEAR and Global Entry
 - Delta's Digital ID
 - United's Touchless ID



Travel Tips & Hacks

- Set flight alerts (FlightAware, FlightRadar24, Flighty).
- Also track your inbound plane. If it is delayed, depending on the route, most likely you will be too.
- Research your own alternatives. Make a specific ask of the airline.
- Lounges are packed these days but have the best agents – especially during delays.
- If your flight is cancelled, you get a full **CASH** refund for the remaining parts of the trip.
- Know your EU 261 rights.



Checking luggage

- How to protect your bag from the airlines
 - Know the minimum cutoff times for check-in.
 - Tight connections lead to lost/delayed bags.
 - Check the bag tags and the three-letter code.
 - Remove all prior tags.
 - Print out a copy of your itinerary and put it inside.
 - Invest in Apple AirTags.



When the “Window Seat” lacks a window

- [areoLOPA](#)
- [Seat Guru](#)
- Seat alerts at [Expert Flyer](#)

DELTA COMFORT +

15	A	B	C	D	E	F
16	A	B	C	D	E	F
17	A	B	C	男女		
EXIT			18	D	E	EXIT
19	A	B	C	D	E	F
20	A	B	C	D	E	F
21	A	B	C	D	E	F



Booking Hotels

- Save your points for hotel bookings. You don't pay those expensive lodging taxes.
- With Hilton and Hyatt, you also avoid resort fees when using points!
- Transferable credit card points are usually a better value transferred directly to the chain vs. booked via the portal.
- Use Google Maps satellite and street views to see what's around the hotel.
- Visa Signature, Visa Infinite, American Express or a travel advisor. You get free breakfast and often a \$100+ resort credit.



Connecting rooms

- Hilton is the only major brand to guarantee connecting rooms at the time of booking.
- Other chains just lack the technology to do so.
- Why? Most hotels in a chain are actually independently owned, with their own reservation system.

Room 1 of 2

Select a Room

Room 1 Room 2 Payment

Your stay with Hilton Hotels & Resorts includes
✓ Non-smoking rooms ✓ On-site restaurant ✓ Outdoor pool ✓ Fitness center ✓ Business center


Special Rates Use Points & Money Accessible Rooms

Filter By: Connecting Rooms 1 bed 2 beds Suite

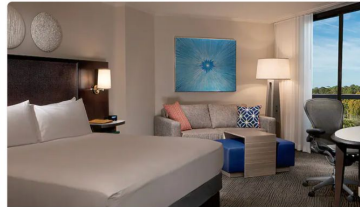
Daily Resort Charge includes: Internet access; Disney Parks shuttle; daily sun-care product; float lagoon access including inner tubes; DVDNow rentals; notary services; 10% off food & beverage (excludes room service); 10% off cabana rentals.

[We're showing Confirmed Connecting Rooms prices and availability.](#)


15 rooms found. We're showing the average price per night. Prices include fees [Select Currency](#) USD - US Dollar



1 King Mobility / Hearing Accessible W/ Tub [Room details >](#)



1 King Mobility/ Hearing Accessible W/ Ri Shw [Room details >](#)



Hilton Orlando Buena Vista Palace Disney Springs Area
1900 E. Buena Vista Drive Lake Buena Vista, Florida 32830 USA [Hotel details >](#)

Reservation summary	
Room 1 2 adults	\$0.00
Room 2 1 adult and 2 kids	\$0.00
Total for stay:	\$0.00

Leverage discounts

- Anybody can join AARP.
- Check corporate discounts, AAA, packages or other promo codes.
- This is especially true with car rentals.

IHG
HOTELS & RESORTS

Explore Offers Meetings & Events Brands

Destination* San Francisco, CA, United States

Check In 07/10/2024

Check Out 07/17/2024

Rooms & Guests 1 room, 1 guest

Rate Preference

- Best Available **
- AAA/CAA Rate *
- AARP Rate *
- Government/Military Rate *
- Reward Nights *
- Senior Discount *
- Corporate Special Rate *
- Group Rate *

* Requires affiliation in the respective organization.
** Best available rate search does not include affiliation rates.

AARP Join Renew Membership & Benefits What We Do ★ AARP

Health Money Work & Jobs Social Security Medicare Caregiving Games Travel More...

Discover Benefits

All Benefits By Category

My Saved Benefits

Health & Wellness

Travel

FLIGHTS & VACATION PACKAGES

AARP Travel Center
Powered by Expedia

BRITISH AIRWAYS

AARP Travel Center Powered by Expedia: Vacation Packages
\$50 gift card of your choice when booking any flight package

British Airways
\$65-\$200 off round-trip tickets purchased online

Sleeping Well & Blocking Light

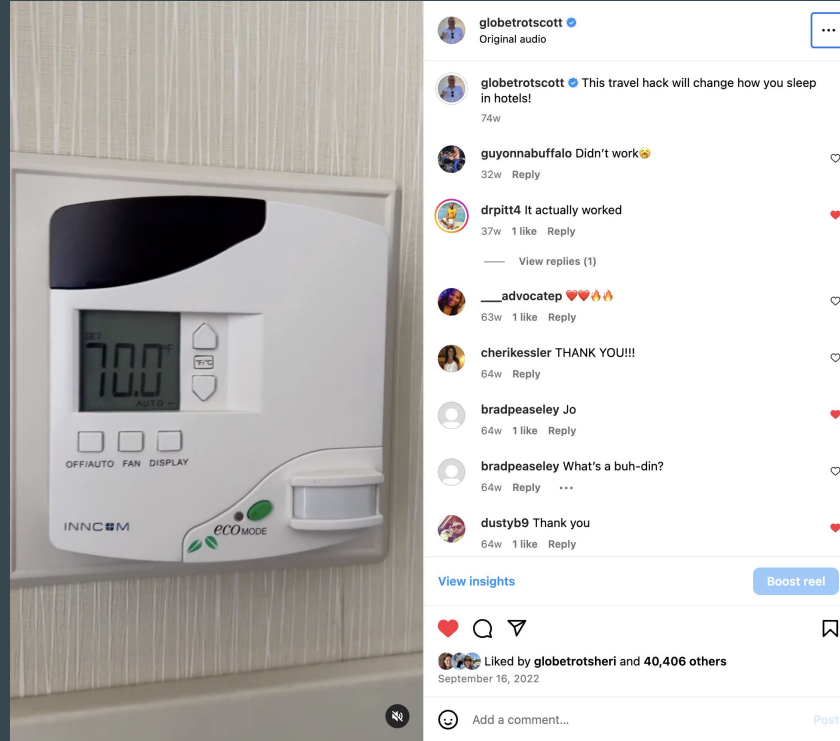
- Clothing over alarm clocks (are they off?)
- Bathroom night light: press “test”
- Hanger blind trick



Always Pack a Bathing Suit



Staying Cool... or Warm



<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CikXCyNgJz5/>

Delta Elite “Medallion” Status

- It’s all about the spend!!!
 - Flight base fare, excluding taxes and fees.
 - Award tickets too!!
 - Not Basic Economy
 - Partner flights, but beware of the fare class.
 - Delta Vacations.
 - [Delta American Express credit cards.](#)



Earn \$1 MQD When You Spend \$20

Delta SkyMiles® Platinum and Platinum Business American Express Cards
Terms Apply



Earn \$1 MQD When You Spend \$10

Delta SkyMiles® Reserve and Reserve Business American Express Cards
Terms Apply

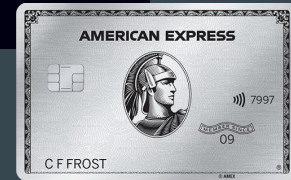
SILVER	GOLD	PLATINUM	DIAMOND
			
\$5,000 MQDs	\$10,000 MQDs	\$15,000 MQDs	\$28,000 MQDs

What Does Status Get Me?

- First class upgrades (much harder to get these days.)
- Free upgrades to Comfort+.
- Free checked bags.
- Earlier boarding.
- Shorter waits for the call center, with better agents.
- Priority in being re-booked during cancellations.
- Higher tiers get choices of upgrade certificates, extra miles, lounge membership, gifting status to a friend and other perks.

What is the best credit card?

It depends ...



Cash, check,
debit card

Simple,
fixed-value
credit cards

Travel credit
cards

Flexible,
transferable
cards

Questions to ask ...

- *Where do you live?*
- *What kind of rewards do you want?*
- *How deep do you want to go in the world of points & miles?*



Cash, check,
debit card

Simple,
fixed-value
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Why I still pay \$695 for this credit card

- \$200 in annual Uber credits.
- \$200 annual airline credit.
- \$200 annual hotel credit for upscale properties booked via Amex.
- \$240 digital entertainment credit (New York Times, WSJ, Peacock, Hulu, Disney+ and ESPN.)
- Up to \$100 in annual Saks Fifth Avenue credits.
- Access to Centurion Lounges and Delta SkyClubs.
- \$300 annual Equinox gym membership.
- Walmart+ membership.
- CLEAR membership.
- Amex Offers.
- 5X earnings on airfare.



\$1,240+ in savings

**#1 RULE:
ALWAYS PAY YOUR CREDIT CARD
BALANCE(S) IN FULL AND ON TIME**

STAGE ONE: Awareness

- Joining loyalty programs
 - Typically 1-2 airlines and/or 1-2 hotel programs.
 - Earn points/miles solely through “usual activity.”
- Switching from cash/debit card to credit card
 - Typically one, simple card.
 - Fixed-value returns.



STAGE TWO: Expansion

- Exploring loyalty programs
 - New ways to earn points and miles.
 - Adding additional airlines/hotels.
- Adding new credit cards to wallet
 - Continued focus on fixed-value returns.
 - Additional cobranded cards (affiliated with specific program/merchant.)
 - Willingness to pay an annual fee.



CREDIT SCORE



- **Ranges from 300 to 850**
 - 740+ considered “very good” or “excellent.”
- **Applying for a new card**
 - Short-term, small drop to score.
 - Long-term, positive impact.
- **One card, \$10k limit, \$3k balance**
 - Amount of debt: 30%
- **Add a second card with a \$20k limit**
 - Amount of debt: 10%

STAGE THREE: Maximization

- How do I get the most value out of this activity?
 - Swiping the optimal credit card.
 - Crediting flights to a partner program.
 - Double/triple-dipping.
([My favorite site: Rakuten](#))
- Adding more credit cards
 - Transferable points.
 - Cards for perks vs. cards for spending.



TRANSFER EXAMPLE

- Round-trip flight on AA to Vail, CO
 - \$685.21
 - To use points directly:
 - Chase points: 45,680 (with CSR)
 - Amex points: 65,240 (with Platinum)
- Transfer points (1:1) to BA Avios
 - 22,000 points

Main Cabin
Round trip (Non-refundable)
\$686 per person
Total \$685.21 (all passengers)
Price and tax information ⓘ

Make my trip refundable
No change fees; cancel any time
Round trip
+\$140 per person
Make it refundable

Includes taxes and carrier imposed fees.
Bag and optional fees ⓘ

Depart Miami, FL to Vail/ Eagle, CO
Friday, January 28, 2022
8:26 AM → 11:16 AM 4h 50m Nonstop Main Cabin
AA 2870 + 319-Airbus A319
Details | Change

Return Vail/ Eagle, CO to Miami, FL
Friday, February 4, 2022
11:59 AM → 5:59 PM 4h 0m Nonstop Main Cabin
AA 2870 + 319-Airbus A319
Details | Change

Journey summary


Outbound			Inbound		
08:26	✈	11:16	11:59	✈	17:59
28 Jan		28 Jan	4 Feb		4 Feb
MIA		EGE	EGE		MIA

Total Price (Including all taxes, fees, and carrier charges)
22000 Avios + \$ 11.20
(You will see exact cost after you click 'Continue')

Start again Continue


TRANSFER EXAMPLE


- **Two-night stay at Park Hyatt NYC in December**
 - \$3,438.02
 - To use points directly:
 - Chase points: 229,201 (with CSR), 275,042 (with CSP)
- **Transfer points (1:1) to World of Hyatt**
 - 90,000 points



Park Hyatt New York

Fri, Dec 9 - Sun, Dec 11 | 1 King Bed | 1 Room, 1 Guest | Standard Rate

 Your information is secure.

 Visa
•••• 1415 Expires 09/24

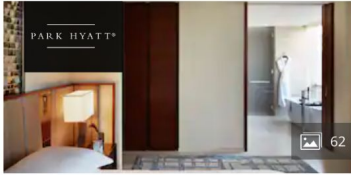
[CHANGE CARD](#)

Phone Number: 9145846814

I agree to receive automated text messages with updates and information about my reservations, as well as texts with offers and promotions, from and on behalf of Hyatt at the phone number I provided above. Consent to receive texts is not a condition of purchase. Standard message and data rates apply. Subject to the [Terms](#).

Total Cash Per Room*	\$3,438.02 USD
Fri, Dec 9	\$1,495.00 USD
Sat, Dec 10	\$1,495.00 USD
Subtotal	\$2,990.00 USD
CITY TAX	\$265.36 USD
OCCUPANCY TAX	\$7.00 USD
STATE TAX	\$175.66 USD
Taxes & Fees	\$448.02 USD

*Changes in taxes or fees will affect the total price.
[Hide stay breakdown](#)



Park Hyatt New York

1 King Bed

Fri, Dec 9, 2022 - Sun, Dec 11, 2022
1 Room, 1 Guest
Standard Room Free Night

Price Summary

2 Night Stay 90,000 Points
[Show Price Details](#)

Total Points† 90,000 Points

†Points will be deducted from your account when the reservation is confirmed.

STAGE FOUR: Expert Level

- Leverage arbitrage opportunities
 - Buy miles.
 - Gift cards.



Gift cards


- Use bonus categories to buy gift cards, then shop online
 - Ink Cash: 5x points at office supply stores.
 - I needed to spend \$1,000 at Home Depot.
 - Could've earned 2x points per dollar on my Amex Blue Business Plus Card (2,000 points, worth \$40.)
 - Went online to Staples, bought 2 x \$500 Home Depot gift cards (5,000 points, worth \$100.)
 - Amex Gold: 4x at supermarkets.






Simple steps you can take today




- **Online shopping offers**

- Amex Offers
- Chase Offers
- Citi Merchant Offers

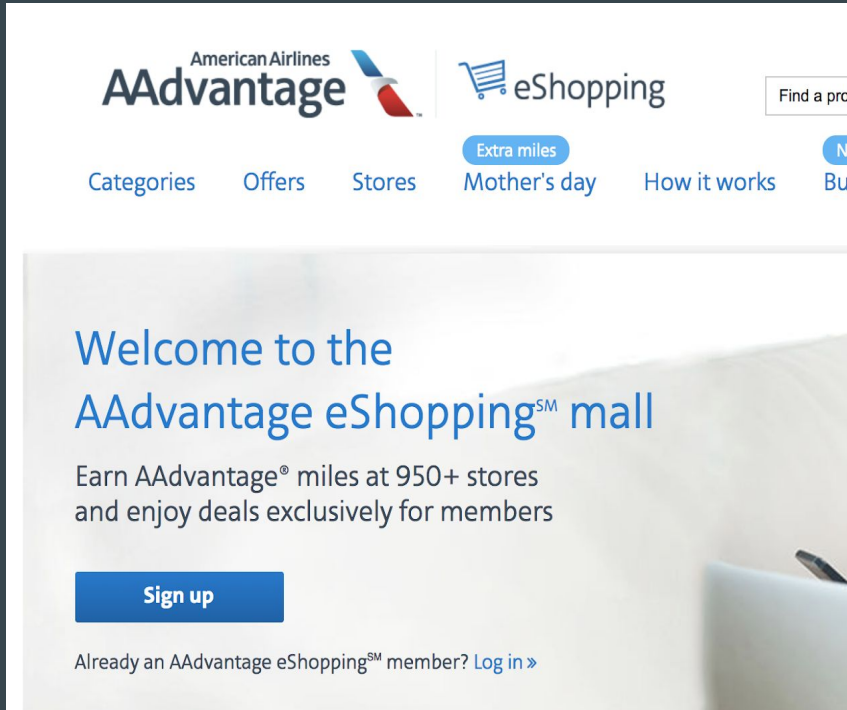
>  **Get +5 Membership Rewards® points per eligible dollar spent. Up to 1,500 points** EXPIRES 08/19/2022 [Added to Card -02008](#)
Amazon.com

>  **Get 20% back on purchases, up to a total of \$50** Expires 10/13/2022 [Added to Card -62002](#)
Marriott Bonvoy®

 Uber \$5 back 42 days left Enrolled ✓ Details	 Uber Eats \$10 back 42 days left Enrolled ✓ Details
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 PAY AT PUMP ONLY 5% back 29 days left	 20% back 26 days left	 \$5 back 30 days left
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SHOPPING



American Airlines
AAdvantage

eShopping

Categories Offers Stores **Extra miles** Mother's day How it works

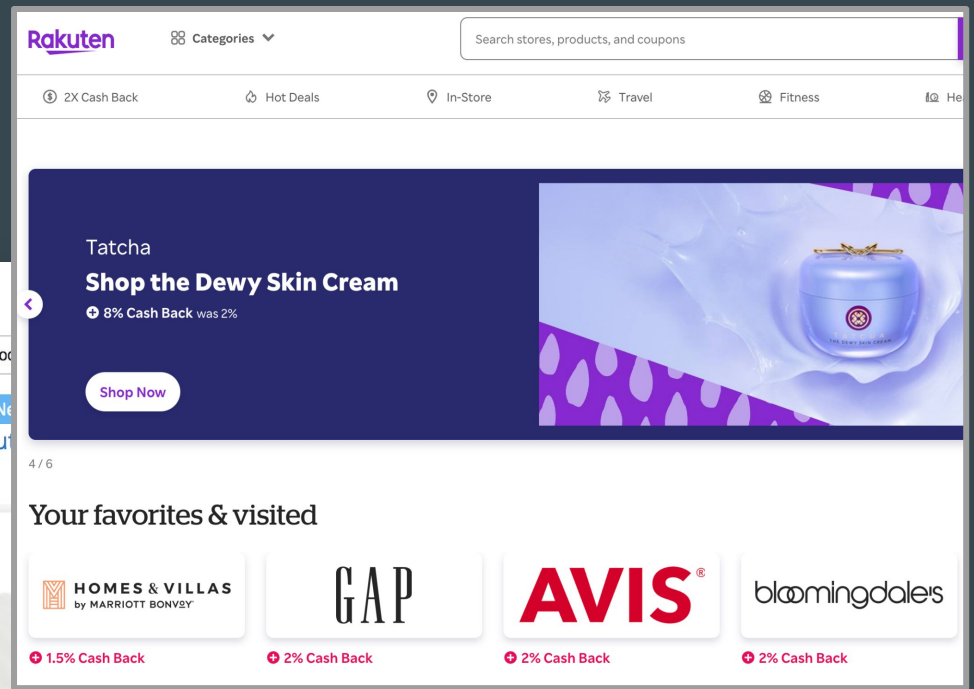
Find a product

Welcome to the AAdvantage eShoppingSM mall

Earn AAdvantage[®] miles at 950+ stores and enjoy deals exclusively for members

[Sign up](#)

Already an AAdvantage eShoppingSM member? [Log in](#) »



Rakuten Categories Search stores, products, and coupons

2X Cash Back Hot Deals In-Store Travel Fitness





Tatcha Shop the Dewy Skin Cream

8% Cash Back was 2%

[Shop Now](#)

4 / 6

Your favorites & visited

 HOMES & VILLAS by MARRIOTT BONVAY	 GAP	 AVIS [®]	 bloomingdale's
1.5% Cash Back	2% Cash Back	2% Cash Back	2% Cash Back

[Enroll in Rakuten here](#)

[Enroll in the shopping program here](#)

DINING REWARDS NETWORK

American Airlines
AAAdvantage Dining

Already an AAAdvantage DiningSM member? [Log in](#)

HOW IT WORKS HELP CENTER BONUSES SIGN UP

ZIP (or) City, State Restaurant, bar, or club name [Search](#)

[Advanced search](#)

Earn up to
3,000
AAAdvantage® bonus miles
in your first 30 days

[Get started](#)

Distance	Name
	1. Libretto's Pizzeria & Ita... (Italian)
3.27 mi	15205 John J Delaney Dr Ste A Charlotte, NC (704) 714-1442 ✍ 📄 📍 🍴
	2. Cantina 1511 Stonecrest New! (Mexican)
4.24 mi	7708 Rea Rd Charlotte, NC (704) 752-9797 ✍ 📄 📍 🍴
	3. True Crafted Pizza (Pizza)
4.24 mi	7828 Rea Rd Charlotte, NC (704) 543-8783 ✍ 📄 📍 🍴
	4. Grabbagreen (American (New))
4.25 mi	3429 Toringdon Way Ste 104 Charlotte, NC (704) 208-3636 ✍ 📄 📍 🍴
	5. Cherry Sushi Grill (Sushi)
4.84 mi	526 Mercantile Pl Ste 101 Fort Mill, SC (803) 396-8888 ✍ 📄 📍 🍴

The Pudding Guy

- Earned 1,253,000 frequent flyer miles from a Healthy Choice promotion.
 - You could earn up to 1,000 miles for every 10 product barcodes mailed to the company.
 - David Phillips found 25-cent individual cups on pudding.
 - For \$2.50, he could get 1,000 miles (worth at least \$10-\$15) plus some pudding.
- Purchased 12,150 cups of pudding — a total cost of \$3,150. He negotiated with store managers to get bulk discounts.
- But he and his wife couldn't cut out all the barcodes in time for the promotion deadline.
- Enter the Salvation Army. He got a local food bank to help cut them out in exchange for the donation of the pudding. And he got a \$815 tax deduction.



Favorite credit cards

[American Express Platinum Card](#)

[Chase Sapphire Preferred or Reserve Cards](#)

[Capital One Venture X](#)

[Bilt Card \(rent\)](#)

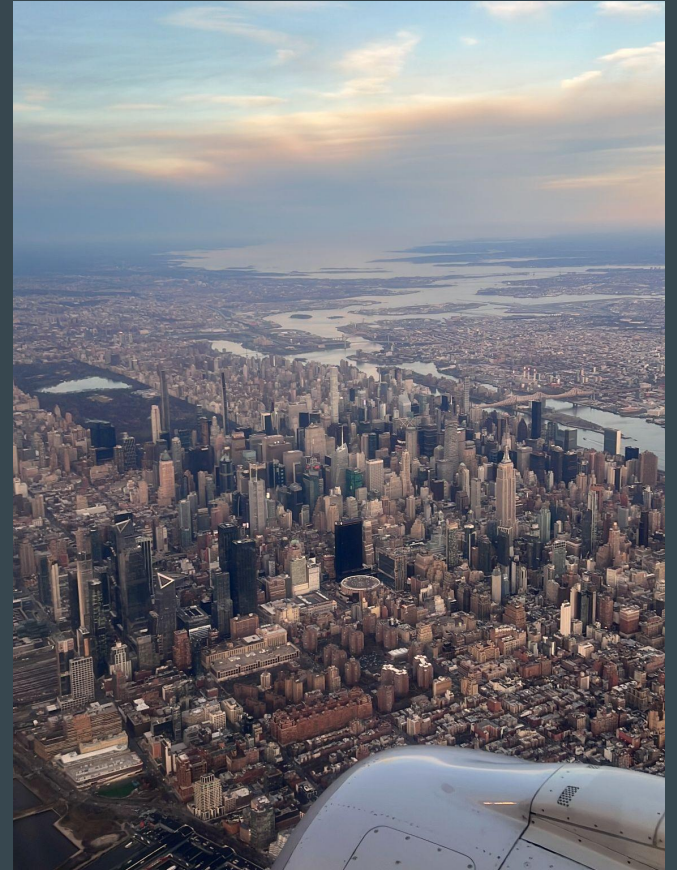
[Delta Reserve Card \(good for Delta status\)](#)

[Amex Blue Cash Preferred Card \(groceries\)](#)

[Citi Double Cash Card](#)

[Chase Ink \(small business\)](#)

Note: Scott might receive bonus points for referring you to a card. Please check to see if better offers are out there at any given moment.



QUESTIONS?



globetrotscott.com

scott@globetrotscott.com

[@GlobeTrotScott](#) on social media

