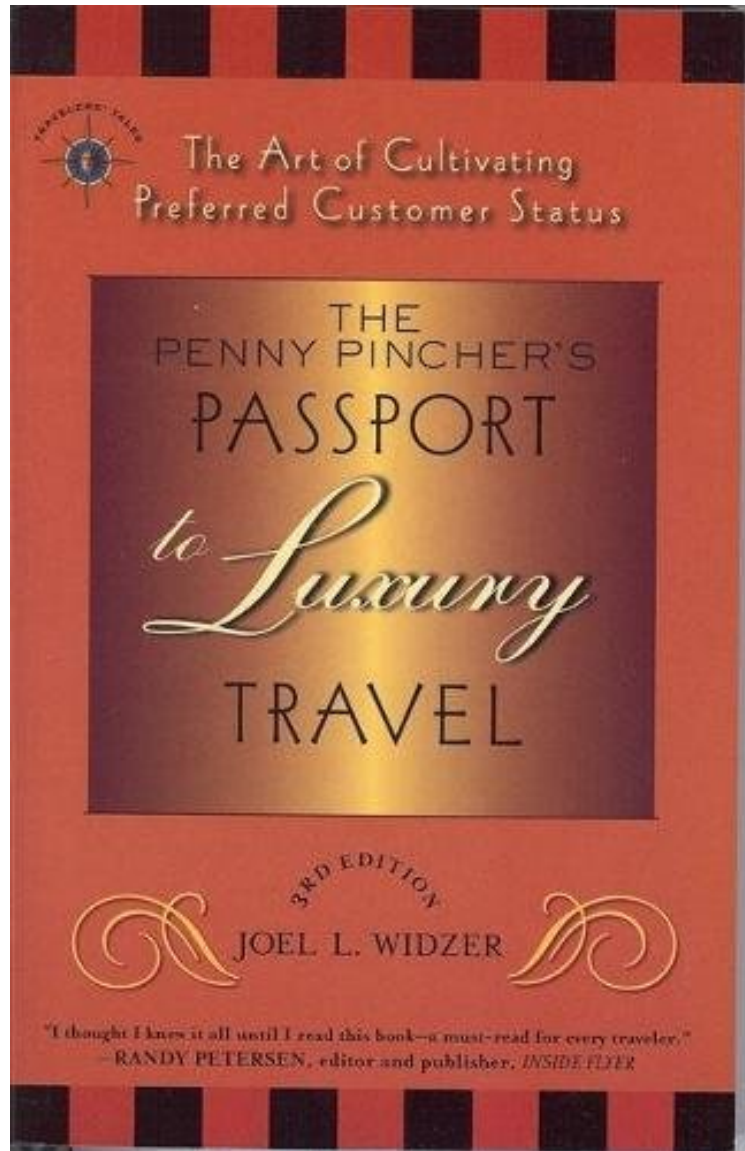


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The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel: The Art of Cultivating Preferred Customer Status

Joel L. Widzer

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Joel L. Widzer : The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel: The Art of Cultivating Preferred Customer Status before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel: The Art of Cultivating Preferred Customer Status:

21 of 24 people found the following review helpful. Common Sense in bloated form By Don B. Instead of any "secrets" to luxury travel the author simply repeats the same common sense "if you just spend enormous amounts of money with travel providers and are nice to them, they'll be nice back" Well Duh. Of course they're nice to someone who's flown 3 Million miles with them. What about the rest of us? Further, the author shamelessly shills for all the major airlines and outright bashes Southwest and other discounters. His plugs for Delta should win him free tickets for life. Save your money. This is a page of common sense jammed into 300 page plus tome that's not worth your time. 2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Reap the Rewards of Customer Loyalty By Babu I have been a frequent flyer with a major airline for many years and found Joel's advice and strategies to be uncommonly simple and effective. With his advice and recommended websites, I accelerated my airline elite status qualification this year and feel confident that I am paying the right fare to increase my chances of being upgraded to first class while saving time and money. In addition, I feel empowered by understanding how the travel industry operates, what their true business needs are and how to meet those needs through sincere and loyal business relationships. In addition, I wrote to Joel regarding advice for best holiday travel bargains and he replied the same day with a detailed response. I find that amazing given his demanding travel and work schedule. This book is perfect for individuals who find the travel industry frustrating and are looking to forge a new and sincere business relationship with their travel partners to reap the just rewards of high customer loyalty. The bedrock of this relationship is discipline and a long-term approach. I gave this book as a gift to friends, business executives and entrepreneurs, who travel extensively and they were delighted to receive it. 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. So-so By Reader PJ This book would be great if you are a business traveler and are allowed to keep frequent flyer miles. However, if you work for a company or public service agency that books your trips and keeps any perks for the company, this was not a helpful book. If you don't travel for business you are out of luck because the book does nothing for the average vacation traveler. It was a disappointment

This new edition of *The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel* provides readers with the secrets and wisdom necessary to travel first class on a tight budget. Engaging and entertaining true-life travel anecdotes demonstrate how the luxury travel experience is not impossible for most travelers, while, in down-to-earth, accessible language, the author tells travelers exactly what to do and not to do to travel in style. "Quick Tips" reinforce the most important information in each chapter, and "Key Points" provide a step-by-step summary at the end of each chapter. Over 30 pages of appendices provide listings of toll-free numbers, comparison charts of airline, hotel, and car rental frequent-user programs, as well as relevant Internet sites and software programs.

.com Who says loyalty isn't appreciated? Follow the advice laid out in *The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel* and you may find yourself wallowing in the pleasures of luxury without breaking the bank--especially if you travel often and stick like glue to one company. Grateful airlines and hotels often respond to such brand loyalty with free seat or room upgrades, the first steps towards living the life of Riley at the same cost as those Joes cramped behind in coach. Widzer--with a business degree from Pepperdine, a career in marketing, and a million-mile award from his chosen airline--knows all the ropes when it comes to the business side of traveling in comfort, and explains how to ask the appropriate questions to get the desired results. If you're paying full price because you booked last minute, for example, asking for perks often gets you luxury extras. Widzer shares strategies for saving money depending on if the dollar is strong or weak; regularly obtaining airline seat, hotel room, and car rental upgrades; effectively voicing (and being compensated for) complaints, as well as knowing whom to tip when. With an appendix of travel resources, this is the book for those willing to do their homework to win the prize. --Stephanie Gold From Library Journal Widzer believes in traveling in style but without paying luxury rates. He manages to achieve this using his travel experience (he flies at least 100,000 air miles each year) and his knowledge of the travel industry. By carefully maintaining customer loyalty and by knowing exactly who, how, and when to ask, Widzer manages to get much more than he pays for. Here he explains how. Arranged topically in ten chapters, clear explanations with examples detail how to leverage customer loyalty and travel mishaps. Examples and strategies attempt to cover all types of travelers, from very frequent to infrequent, but are more effective for frequent travelers. Customer service providers may find this interesting as an analysis of what quality really means to a customer. Purchase for larger public libraries. A Alison Hopkins, Queens Borough P.L., Briarwood, NY Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. It's rare we feel compelled to recommend a travel book, but we can't resist telling you about "The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel: The Art of Cultivating Preferred Customer Status," by Joel Widzer The Washington Post Widzer is the foremost authority on traveling in style, notes travel columnist. With an emphasis on getting a good deal, this no-nonsense guide steers people firmly away from no-frills travel and points them toward the wonders of first-class accommodations and preferential treatment. Christopher Elliot--Syndicated Columnist. It's nice to see advice on how to travel inexpensively in style that doesn't make you feel cheap. Randall Curwen-- Chicago Tribune. Top-of-the-line travel at bottom-dollar prices is an unbeatable combination--and this book [*The Penny Pincher's Passport to Luxury Travel*] tells you how to do it. Ed Perkins--Travel Columnist How to Have a Luxury Vacation for Less By SHIVANI VORA OCT. 4, 2016 Who doesn't like the idea of a luxury vacation? Ponying up the money for an upscale getaway, on

the other hand, isn't nearly as appealing as going on one. Fortunately, says Joel Widzer, an expert on saving money on travel and the author of the book "The Penny Pincher's Guide to Luxury Travel," there are ways to cut the cost of a fancy trip. Here, he shares tips for a lavish getaway on a limited budget.

BE A HOTEL LOYALIST. Favoring one hotel brand, such as Marriott, Starwood, Hilton or Hyatt, has major saving benefits, according to Mr. Widzer. "Hotel brands reward frequent guests who sign up for their loyalty programs with room upgrades, free hotel nights and free breakfast, and they even waive annoying fees such as the cost of valet parking," he said. Loyalty payoff at independently owned properties, too. If you're a traveler who returns to the same destination often, say Paris or Lake Tahoe, it's a good idea to keep staying at the same hotel there. Mr. Widzer, for example, used to stay at the same luxury boutique property on his frequent trips to Santiago, Chile, and by his third visit, he was treated to freebies such as a mini-fridge stocked with his favorite snacks, free airport transfers and upgrades to a one-bedroom suite-- perks worth several thousand dollars over time.

USE CREDIT CARD POINTS ON HIGH-END CHAIN HOTELS. Those points you accumulate every time you put a charge on your card aren't just good for buying airline tickets, Mr. Widzer said. With certain credit cards, travelers can redeem the points they earn for accommodations at luxury hotels, like using points earned on a Chase Ultimate Rewards card toward stays at Ritz-Carlton properties around the world.

TRAVEL WHEN OTHERS AREN'T. When destinations have fewer travelers, prices are lower. Head to Sardinia in August, for example, and sky-high hotel rates and inflated prices are in store. But a trip in October means mild weather and prices at hotels and on services such as boat rental that are up to 50 percent lower than during peak season.

FOR AN EXOTIC DESTINATION OR A MULTICITY TRIP, CONSIDER A PACKAGE TOUR. Planning an upscale vacation without using a luxury tour provider for a major city or a popular destination such as Maui isn't difficult, but it is logistically harder to pull off an affordable yet lavish getaway to less common destinations such as Ethiopia or on themed multicity trips, such as the capital cities of the Eastern Bloc. In instances like these, Mr. Widzer said, it's cheaper to rely on a company that specializes in upscale tours (Abercrombie Kent and Tauck are two). "These trips can be either group or private, and since these companies can negotiate favorable prices through their local contacts, their tours have a lot of value-added inclusions such as meals, tickets to cultural performances and behind-the-scenes access to tourist attractions," he said.

A version of this article appears in print on October 9, 2016, on page TR2 of the New York edition with the headline: How to Have a Luxury Vacation for Less. nytimes.com/2016/10/09/travel/how-to-have-a-luxury-vacation-for-less.html?_r=2