

Free Online Travel Tools

SETH MILLER – THE WANDERING ARAMEAN



Tools I use

- ▶ [ITA Matrix](#)
- ▶ [Hipmunk](#)
- ▶ [FlightStats.com](#) (Inventory)
- ▶ [W.A.T.T.](#)
- ▶ [OpenFlights](#) (Route Maps)
- ▶ [Gcmap.com](#)
- ▶ [RouteHappy.com](#)

ITA Matrix

- ▶ Powers some of the largest OTAs and airlines
- ▶ Incredibly flexible/powerful
- ▶ Time-limited
- ▶ Known bugs

ITA is the technology behind Orbitz, Priceline, United and many others.

Queries will timeout after 45-60 seconds and will only return what they've found at that point. This can limit the results you see if you are too broad in your query.

Known issues with cached data in some cases. TK is my worst experience but I've seen it with several others, too.

ITA Matrix

Round trip | One-way | Multi-city

Recent [New York - Honolulu](#), [New York - Los Angeles](#), [Washington - San Francisco](#), [Clear All](#)

Departing from [Nearby](#)

Destination [Nearby](#)

[Reverse route](#) [Remove advanced routing codes](#)

Dates Search exact dates See calendar of

Outbound date [Preferred times](#)

Return date [Preferred times](#)

Round trip: New York to Honolulu, Mar 6-10 [Complete trips](#) [Individual flights](#)

PRICE	AIRLINE	DEPART	ARRIVE	DURATION	FROM/TO	STOPS	ADVISORY
\$725 \$0.066 per mile		6:30am	7:42pm	18h 12m	EWJ to HNL	CLE, IAH, SFO	
		8:55pm	7:09pm Mar 11	16h 14m	HNL to EWJ	SFO, IAH, DCA	
\$725 \$0.066 per mile		6:30am	7:42pm	18h 12m	EWJ to HNL	CLE, IAH, SFO	
		8:55pm	7:09pm Mar 11	16h 14m	HNL to EWJ	SFO, IAH, DCA	
\$725 \$0.066 per mile		6:30am	7:42pm	18h 12m	EWJ to HNL	CLE, IAH, SFO	
		10:20pm	8:34pm Mar 11	16h 14m	HNL to EWJ	LAX, IAH, CLE	

Showing off a search result of a complicated itinerary, one which wouldn't appear with a normal query.

Hipmunk

- ▶ Powered by ITA
- ▶ Only flight search tool which supports ITA syntax
- ▶ Multiple OTAs linked (some airlines, too!) for actually booking the flights
- ▶ Searches – including selected flights – can be saved/emailed to others; useful when trying to coordinate with a group
- ▶ Google Flights & Kayak also use the ITA engine, but no route syntax support
- ▶ Far from perfect
- ▶ A couple examples of how I use it via blog posts: [1](#) & [2](#)

Hipmunk

- ▶ [Search Link](#) – Tab 1 shows plain results. Tab 2 shows same as prior ITA query:

The screenshot displays the Hipmunk website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for FLIGHTS, HOTELS, EXPLORE, MOBILE, and DEALS. Below this is a search bar with two tabs: 'NYC-HNL, Mar 6 - Mar 10' and 'NYC-HNL, Mar 6 - Mar 10'. The search criteria are: From: NYC:UA UA UA UA, To: HNL:UA UA UA UA, 1 person, Coach class, Depart: Mar 6, Return: Mar 10. A 'Search' button is visible. Below the search bar, the results are displayed in a table format. The table has columns for 'Roundtrip price / person' (including taxes & fees), 'From', 'To', 'Carrier', 'Class', 'Depart', 'Arrive', and 'Stops'. Three results are shown, all with a price of \$727. The first result is for NYC-HNL via LGA, operated by United Express, with a 14h 39m flight time and 3 stops. The second result is for NYC-HNL via EWR, operated by United, with a 15h 19m flight time and 3 stops. The third result is for NYC-HNL via EWR, operated by United, with a 15h 22m flight time and 3 stops.

Take a query from ITA and use the same routing syntax to build a search result that you otherwise would never get. And then click right through to purchase.

Also, multiple tabs at the top to save many different searches within a single Hipmunk session.

Also, also, the URL saves searches AND selected flights; copy/paste that to share flight options, including which you prefer, with others.

FlightStats.com

- ▶ Lots and lots of flight inventory information
- ▶ Award search options – limited carriers, mostly foreign
- ▶ AA isn't included

Lots of obscure award inventory can be had via FlightStats. Also, this is the basis of data for the KVS “FS” method.

[FLIGHTS](#) ▾ [AIRPORTS](#) ▾ [AIRLINES](#) ▾ [DELAYS](#) ▾ [MOBILE](#) ▾ [MY FLIGHTSTATS](#) ▾

(JFK) New York to (MVD) Montevideo Flight Availability

[Schedules](#) [Seat Availability](#)

Departure: (JFK) John F. Kennedy International Airport **Airline:** (CM) COPA
Arrival: (MVD) Carrasco Airport **Forced Connection:** Airport name or code (optional)
Departure Date: 2014-01-23 **Time:** 6am or later **Excluded Connections:** Comma separated list of airport codes (opt)
Cabin: Any **Seats:** **Query Type:** Departure **Fare:** Comma separated list (optional)

[Search Flight Availability](#) > [Check Fares](#) > Basic Advanced

Flight	Airline	Departure	Arrival	Equip	Seats	Punctuality
CM 803		8:55 AM JFK	2:06 PM PTY	738	12	★★★★★
CM 283		3:23 PM PTY	1:43 AM MVD	738	12	★★★★★

* = commuter flight.
 n/a = not applicable (flight does not have cabin).
 American Airlines has opted out; their flight options will not be shown.

Flight	Airline	Departure	Arrival	Equip	Seats	Punctuality
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CM 283		3:23 PM PTY	1:43 AM MVD	738	12	★★★★★

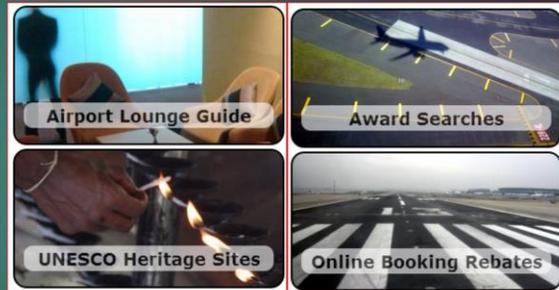
JFK to PTY		(CM) COPA 803			
		Departs: 8:55 AM	JFK John F. Kennedy International Airport	★★★★★ 4.65 out of 5	
		Arrives: 2:06 PM	PTY Tocumen International Airport		
		Equip: 738			
Available Seats:					
First:	4 (at least)	Business:	4 (at least)	Coach:	4 (at least)
Fare Classes: P/4		C/4 D/0 Z/0 I/4		Y/4 B/4 M/4 H/4 Q/4 K/4 G/4 V/4 U/4 S/4 W/4 E/4 L/4 T/4 N/4 X/4	

Click the arrow to the right to expand the details and show the individual fare buckets.

Specifically for Copa, where Z is the upgrade bucket, it won't always show. Try adding on a connection via PTY versus just the non-stop if the P and Z buckets aren't showing.

WATT Tools

- ▶ Alerts/awardsearches
- ▶ Timetables
- ▶ Revenue inventory
- ▶ Other stuff I think is fun
 - ▶ Lounges
 - ▶ UNESCO World Heritage Sites



I've got some fun tools; not all are for flying but a bunch are.

WATT Tools

► [Award Search](#)

Click for easy access to award inventory searches for the following airlines:

- [Star Alliance Awards & Alerts](#)
- [Star Alliance Anywhere Awards](#)
- [Star Alliance Alerts \(ANA\)](#)
- [Oneworld Awards & Alerts](#)
- [Aegean Airlines \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Aeroflot \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Aerolineas Argentinas \(Economy Class\)](#)
- [Air China \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Aeromexico \(Business Class; travel after 1 Oct 2013\)](#)
- [Azul \(Economy Class\)](#)
- [China Southern Airlines \(First, Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [China Eastern Airlines \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Czech Airlines \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [El Al \(First, Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [El Al Upgrades \(First & Business Class\)](#)
- [Finnair \(Economy Class\)](#)
- [Germanwings \(Economy & Business "SMART" Class\)](#)
- [Gulf Air \(First, Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Hawaiian Airlines \(First & Economy Class partner awards\)](#)
- [JetBlue \(Economy Class partner awards\)](#)
- [Korean Air \(First & Business Class\)](#)
- [Korean Air Upgrades \(First & Business Class\)](#)
- [Luxair \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Shanghai Airlines \(First, Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Tarom \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)
- [Vietnam Airlines \(Business & Economy Class\)](#)

Lots of award searches and alerts are still available, even without the previously published Star Alliance option.

WATT SPG Alerts

List SPG Award Alerts

[Search Now](#) | [My Alerts](#) | [Create Alert](#) | [Search History](#)

Near	Arr. Date	Dep. Date	Active?	C&P Only?	Aloft?	Element?
SAN	7/23/2014	7/28/2014				

W.A.T.T. SPG Award Alert!

alerts@wandr.me
to me -

Dear setbro99,

Your SPG award search alert for a room near SAN from 7/23/2014 to 7/28/2014 has triggered.

Hotel Name	Points	Cash & Points
Four Points by Sheraton San Di	True	False
Sheraton La Jolla Hotel	True	False
Sheraton Cardinal Resort & Spa	True	False
Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Spa	False	False
W San Diego	False	False
Four Points by Sheraton San Di	False	False
The Westin San Diego Gaslamp Q	False	False
THE US (SM), San Diego	False	False
Sheraton Suites San Diego an	False	False
Sheraton Mission Valley San Di	False	False
The Westin San Diego	False	False

Results as of 9/27/2013 11:10 AM Central Time

For more details please check <http://is.wandr.me/16Fzthj>

Have a great trip!

Hotel search/alerts are fun, too! Set up alerts for SPG awards on a points-only or cash & points basis.

WATT IHG Rate Comparison

Where? :

 Check-in Date:
 Check-out Date:
 Rate Codes:

Hotel	Base Rate	000016467	000065196	000029370	Award Stay
 Tijuana Zona Rio Holiday Inn	71	89	89	80	10,000 PTS 0.71 cpp
 San Diego-La Mesa (Sdsu Area) Holiday Inn Express	86	119	119	101	20,000 PTS 0.43 cpp
 San Diego, Clai Mesa Holiday Inn Express & Suites	89	159	159	104	20,000 PTS 0.445 cpp
 San Diego South-National City Holiday Inn Express	98	84	84	120	20,000 PTS 0.49 cpp

Compare rates for cash and award bookings at a few hotel chains. Even compare a corporate rate if you've got one you like. 😊

WATT Tools

▶ [Airport Lounge Guide](#)

- ▶ 800+ lounges
- ▶ 150+ with photos
- ▶ Reviews/videos from users & external sources

Lounge Guide - Brussels Brussels Natl (BRU)
British Airways The Galleries Club lounge at Brussels Natl - Brussels (BRU) <small>Upstairs in Terminal B</small>
Brussels Airlines Brussels Airlines Lounge at Brussels Natl - Brussels (BRU) <small>Terminal A, across from gate 34.2</small>
Brussels Airlines Sunrise Lounge at Brussels Natl - Brussels (BRU) <small>Terminal A, T zone at the far end of the terminal.</small>
Brussels Airlines Brussels Airlines Lounge at Brussels Natl - Brussels (BRU) <small>Terminal B, above gate 901</small>
Iberia VIP Lounge at Brussels Natl - Brussels (BRU) <small>Terminal A, through security.</small>

Lots of details about airport lounges, including photos and in-person reviews. FourSquare check-in at many locations, too.

WATT Tools

- ▶ UNESCO Sites
 - ▶ Find sites to visit
 - ▶ Log where you've been
 - ▶ Reviews from users



How many UNESCO World Heritage Sites have you been to?

What sites are near your next destination?

Award Searches

- ▶ Star Alliance
 - ▶ ANA – use the GreaseMonkey script or search “local”
 - ▶ LifeMiles
 - ▶ Aeroplan
 - ▶ United
- ▶ Oneworld
 - ▶ Qantas
 - ▶ British Airways
 - ▶ JAL
 - ▶ American Airlines
- ▶ SkyTeam
 - ▶ Air France/KLM FlyingBlue

Searching for award seats? These are the sites I use split up by alliance.

All have limits, either in terms of airlines they include or flexibility, but all are useful. There is no single perfect solution.

ANA has cool week-long and multi-destination options but is bad at building connections.

Qantas is annoying to pick cities – check the box to permit Classic awards – but good coverage. Some false positives on AA metal.

Tools I don't use (but which are still good)

- ▶ AwardWallet – Track accounts
- ▶ FlightMemory/FlightDiary – Similar to OpenFlights but slightly different UI/data views
- ▶ ExpertFlyer – Paid for everything but seat alerts
- ▶ KVS – Paid; all data is public but KVS makes for a slick viewer
 - ▶ [Award classes list](#) is free and useful
- ▶ AwardNexus – Award searches; mostly paid but some free

Worth looking at, depending on what your needs are, but I don't actually use these. They do offer up some useful resources. Some are free and some are paid.