



IS IT POSSIBLE TO FLY AROUND THE WORLD ON LOW-COST CARRIERS?

News / Airlines



Around-the-world fares can be expensive, though the right package from a specialty broker or an airline alliance can save you money versus buying individual legs of a round-the-globe trip separately.

With the rise of long-haul low-cost carriers, it seems like it would theoretically be possible to travel around the world quite cheaply. In the past, trans-ocean flights would be exponentially more expensive than country-to-country hops on regional or low-cost carriers. That is no longer the case today. For example, the likes of Norwegian Air or WOW Air can take you across the Atlantic for the same price as a domestic flight in the United States.

Of course, the additional fees on low-cost carriers can really add up quickly, but, again in theory, it would be possible to travel light, forego snacks and meals (or smuggle your own food onboard) and fly around the world cheaply.

CNNMoney editor Richard Quest is actually making the effort to put the idea of circling the globe only on low-cost carriers to the test. He was able to book flights on 10 different low-cost carriers that will take him from London, around the world, and back to London. The trip will take him to nine different countries over an eight-day period. He will end up back in London on March 20.

Quest booked the cheapest possible fare on each airline. The total price tag for his trip came to to \$2,345. Though you may occasionally come across promotions for round-the-world packages that might approach that price tag in their most basic form, most ticket packages offered by airline alliances are roughly double the amount of what Quest paid.

According to CNNMoney, the different legs of Quest's trip are as follows: London to Belgium to the Czech Republic to the UAE to Sri Lanka to Malaysia to Singapore to Australia to Hawaii. From the Fiftieth State, Quest will go to Los Angeles, New York and finally back to London. He will fly on airlines like easyJet, Ryanair and JetBlue.

Quest's trip could have been even cheaper if he had waited until he came across special promotional fares. JetBlue, for example, often offers sales on certain routes, so Quest could probably have gotten a deal on the LA to Big Apple leg, which will turn out to be the most expensive of the whole trip at \$482.

Could it be possible to replicate this feat and travel around the globe for under \$2,500? Probably, although a real round-the-world trip would probably come with extra expenses. Most travelers would be willing to put up with middle seats and forego airline food if it meant saving several thousand dollars. However, it would be hard to spend a significant amount of time on the road with little or no luggage.

Checking a bag would add at least several hundred dollars onto the price tag of a journey. That said, Quest's journey does highlight the fact that low-cost carriers have made frugal international travel a reality. Even if they don't travel around the world, more fliers will find it financially feasible to travel to far-off destinations thanks to these budget airlines.

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