

Insider Secrets to Backstage Pass Treatment on Every Vacation



- The Simple First Step to Every Free Upgrade
- How to Upgrade your Flight, Ride, and Room
- How to Protect Yourself From Theft

First things first. The process to achieving every free upgrade starts with your appearance and behavior. Polite, well dressed, and on time patrons are more likely to be upgraded than others. Being polite to employees you have contact with is a must! Simple, right? Preparing before you leave the house is also essential to scoring yourself a free upgrade.

Upgrading Your Flight. As the use of the Internet increases and airline competition decreases, scoring a free upgrade has gotten more difficult. However, there are still ways to improve your chances of scoring perks and upgrades. Here are a few:

- If the flight is overbooked, volunteer to be bumped for an upgraded seat on the next flight.
- If the airline has inconvenienced you or has made a mistake, let them know an upgrade would be a suitable way to make it right.
- Ask – nicely, politely, and directly. They may say no, but sometimes the easiest fastest way to an upgrade is asking directly for one.
- Work with a travel expert. Travel pros often have the ability to score you a preferred seat on a plane. And may be able to influence the chances being selected for an upgrade.

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Upgrading Your Ride. Looking to upgrade your car at no charge? Remember the same starting principles apply: being nice to service providers is a must if you are looking for free upgrades. Being demanding or impatient will end up with you driving exactly what you've paid for, or worse. So how can you improve your chances of improving your car?

- Build loyalty. Most car rental businesses have loyalty programs. Belong to one, pulling out that piece of plastic can frequently buy you a lot of ground. If you work for a larger company make sure you ask, there is often a shared account that will allow you to upgrade to a platinum or premium member right out of the gate.

- Reserve a popular vehicle. If your vehicle is unavailable you may be asked if you would like to make a paid upgrade. Nicely tell them if your vehicle isn't available you would happily take a free upgrade. Keep in mind if your vehicle is available, you may have to be prepared to pay for your upgrade, or drive your choice of vehicle.

- Ask. If you would like a free upgrade ask nicely. It won't work every time, but it is always worth the effort.



Upgrading your Room. When checking into your hotel, let the desk know you would be willing to move rooms, for a free upgrade. It may sound silly, and chances may be slim, but they just may need your room to reunite a block of rooms, or for another reason. Here are a few more tips:

- Find out what they accept. Some hotels will trade in frequent flyer miles for room upgrades. No cash out of pocket – in the same way joining hotel loyalty programs may earn you fast benefits.

- If there is a mistake, always let the hotel know if you would accept a room upgrade to make it right.

- Ask, ask, ask! See the reoccurring theme? Asking if a room upgrade would be possible may be all it takes to earn yourself an upgrade. It is always possible they may need your room and will be happy to accommodate.



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Special Report: Keeping Your Valuables Safe

When traveling, there is always a risk of having your valuable stolen. In order to reduce this risk, follow these tips:

On Your Person

- Stay aware of your surroundings. This does not have to be a source of stress or anxiety; simply maintaining a calm awareness of what's going on around you – appearing confident, looking around from time to time, paying attention – can be all that's needed to tell potential thieves that you're not an easy target.

- When out walking around, carry your personal belongings in front of you in a small bag, or in your front pockets.

- Don't wear your most expensive jewelry out and about on vacation. This can make you a target. In fact, some people choose to leave things like expensive wedding rings at home in favor of a simple gold or silver band.

- Don't carry ALL of your cash with you. Leave what you don't need in the safe.

In Your Room

- Always use your safe. If your room does not have a safe keep valuables in the safe at the front desk.

- Record all the serial numbers of your valuable equipment, just in case.

- Invest in travel insurance. It is worth the extra cost when something goes wrong.

- Request a room away from the stairs and elevators to limit foot traffic.



Your Secret Weapon for Getting the Backstage Pass Treatment: A Travel Professional

When you travel, you want to feel pampered and cared for and like your vacation experience is a priority. Working with a travel expert is the best way to get the backstage treatment you are looking for.

Working with someone vested in your trip experience means having an expert watching out for potential problems, and guiding you over them without a hitch. From prepaid cell phones to lounge passes for long layovers, travel experts go the extra mile to create a backstage experience for their clients. No frustrating waits trying to figure out your next move – an expert has it handled.

Looking to have your documents prepared and delivered electronically? Your online check-in handled for you? Travel pros put in the extra effort to make your vacation memorable – for all the right reasons.

In a Getting to Know You Session with your travel professional, they'll learn what is central to a great vacation for you, what extras would make your trip the best it can be, and how to tailor your experience to fit who you are and what matters to you.

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