



Frequent Flyer news released on October 15, 2009

One of the eldest Frequent Flyer Programs, Northwest Airlines' **WorldPerks** program, is definitely history after the merger with Delta's **SkyMiles** was completed on October 01, slightly ahead of the initial schedule. The SkyMiles program has taken over the majority of relevant airline partners from WorldPerks, which were not yet represented at SkyMiles. Notably, this concerns *Midwest Airlines*, *Malaysia Airlines*, *China Eastern*, *Jet Airways* and *Kingfisher*. It is also interesting to note that some partners, which offer exclusively award flights, have joined the program: *Thai Air Asia*, *Jetstar Asia* und *Air Tahiti Nui*. SkyMiles is now the largest FFP in the world with some 74 million members. The brand Northwest as an airline will completely disappear from the scene in early 2010.

Executive Club members on the European continent earn massively bonus miles for long haul flights on *British Airways* in Business and First Class from October 01 to December 31. One roundtrip qualifies for a number of bonus miles equivalent to two Economy Class free flights to Great Britain, two flights for one Economy Class award flight to North America and three roundtrips for a Business Class award flight to North America or an Economy Class flight to Australia. The exact amounts of bonus miles vary in function of residency in order to attain the above described award flights by bonus miles only. Moreover, base members are granted Silver status after just one long haul roundtrip in Business Class, which entitles, unlike in many other programs, already to lounge access. And why not take advantage of this offer on the brand new all Business Class flights from London City to New York in a 32-seat Airbus 318?

There has hardly ever been a better time for elite customers to have their status matched in a different alliance. There is currently a whole range of such official offers, always limited to specific regional markets, where the operator enjoys a comparably weak position. Usually, a flight with the operator is required to qualify. As example, customers in Hong Kong can have matched their **oneworld** or **SkyTeam** status in a Star Alliance program of their choice until December 15. In France, Finnair has such an offer in place for existing or new **Finnair Plus** customers until December 31. Next to these published offers, airlines are currently also more open to negotiate such offers on an individual basis - at least asking doesn't cost anything!

airBaltic has launched its own Frequent Flyer Program, **BalticMiles**, which looks in many regards like the program of its former partner SAS, just everything at a smaller scale. Worth noting are the triple points you earn for flights in Business Class. airBaltic is one of the fastest growing airlines and has transformed its basis in Riga into a real hub towards the CIS in the meantime, where also many secondary destinations - such as the Russian city of Pskov - appear in the timetable. In parallel, airBaltic remains a partner in the program of SAS, **EuroBonus**, for flights to Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo, but won't be any longer integrated to the elite program as of November.

Easily attainable awards are always interesting for customers, but are only offered rarely by programs. Binter Canarias is now offering one of these in its **BinterMás** program, as limited-time offer: For a mere 250 points - which correspond to roughly 750 miles -, members can claim an entrance ticket to the *Yelmo Cines*, a cinema chain on the Canary Islands. These award entrances can only be used on Mondays through Thursdays.