



united-demonetize-flight-credit

4/20/2024

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Cruising Review

United Airlines. The story behind demonetizing tickets.

Structured Data

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This webpage QR code

The post-pandemic United is rearing its greedy head by demonetizing tickets, making refund requests impossible, and destroying the wonderful pre-pandemic customer experience.

PDF Version of the webpage (first pages)

<https://cruisingreview.com/jets/united-demonetize-flight-credit.html>

What Happened United Airlines Demonetizing flight credits and impossible to get refunds

I recently booked a trip to Paris in July 2021 with unused flight credits from last year during the pandemic. Remember when United canceled their change fees ? Well they have something better up their sleeve.

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Regular Search vs. Flight Refund or Flight Credit Search

If I did a search for a standard economy fare (basic or standard) my fare was \$1,300. But when I tried to use my \$2,800 (Business Class fare) unused ticket to Europe from last year when the flight was canceled, the fare that pops up is \$2,600. So basically United has decided to use a pricing model that demonetizes your paid fare by half. That's 100 percent profit.

Can't Rebook in Same Class

Even worse, last year the original fare was for Business Class. Now I can barely get Economy. So they did not honor the class booked. Now Business Class is \$5,000-\$10,000.

Clever.

Upgrade on the Website Charges you Double the Stated Upgrade Miles. Try the Refunds Site. Good Luck.

To make matters worse, United offers a cabin upgrade offer, for 20,000 miles and \$421 from Chicago to Paris. When I took the offer, United deducted 40,000 miles and \$421, and did not even declare the miles deducted on the receipt.

Go to the website (after waiting 1.5 hours on hold with United customer service) and the agent suggested to go to United/Refunds on the website.

Unfortunately, you can't even file a complaint or refund request until the flight has already passed. I tried calling again today and after another hour on hold, I gave up.

New United Airlines Puts Profits and Greed Ahead of Customers

Feeling screwed yet ? Yup.

I love United (pre-pandemic). The new United puts profits ahead of customer experience and has now gone down the rabbit hole of deceit.

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Refund Update - Work Around Slow System - Posted on July 14th 2021

In a odd twist of fate, I found a way around the system.

Since my outbound flight (the one where I was charged double miles to be put on a upgrade list) from Chicago to Paris was full, and the possibility of getting any upgrade looked slim, I changed my flight to IAD Dulles.

To my surprise, the refund was automatic and quick. I got back my 40,000 miles and the upgrade fee and ticket difference was put into a flight credit (which is fine with me).

Now I have my upgrades on the domestic legs automatic (I'm a Platinum level), and will request a upgrade once at IAD for Business Class to Paris.

So my advice to fellow travelers is to just change the flight, and you can avoid hours of waiting for phone support, or until after the flight to request a refund.

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It's not just United Airlines. Lots of the travel industry is jumping on the bandwagon.

The pandemic has spawned a littany of trumped up fees, and other expenses which they pass on to the customer, but which is pure profit to the company.

Remember that fuel surcharge ? How about employee wellness programs ? How about add on fees after you have shipped something ? Or better yet, how about that nice tip you charged on your bill for the fantastic spa massage or other experience (like drink tips). Yep, you guessed it, it goes directly to the owner or company. It's all profit mongering and greed. Next time ask where the tip goes, and you'll be surprised.

United, time to step up to the plate and treat your customers better. We love travel, let us spend money and travel, without the hassle of trying to figure out how you're demonetizing our hard earned money. We want you to thrive, but now at the expense of greed and deceit.

How To Book On United Airlines

1. Become a frequent flyer member to access the smartphone app.
2. Install the app on your smartphone. It has always given me better rates, easier booking, and better experience than the website.
3. Prior to a trip, try multiple combinations of one-way, versus round-trip, versus, multiple segments.
4. On your last leg, look at using Miles for one way back, instead of buying upgrades for cash at the airport prior to the flight.

For example: On my last trip from Tahiti (PPT) to San Francisco (SFO) my Economy ticket could have been upgraded for about \$800 to Business Class at the airport, versus 73,000 miles for full Business Class upgrades all the way back home to Madison, Wisconsin (MSN).

5. Miles vs. Cash: While this may change, it's almost always better to book one-way using miles for each segment than using cash. You can always upgrade to the next higher class at the airport for huge savings.
6. Double Miles Purchase Incentive: Every now and then, United offers a two-for-one miles purchase incentive. Take it.
7. Get the airline (in this case) United miles card. Book through the United app or website to their travel partners, and get even more miles. I book through Hotels.com via the United portal, to get points for every dollar spent for resorts. The United program has shown to be a better deal (so far) than the hotel chain reward programs.
8. Use the United Lounge: The lounges provide a night refuge in most large airports, with qualified and helpful service booking agents. They are always helpful and cheery.
9. It's easier to get a refund on a flight booked with miles than with cash.
10. Compare rates with travel sites like Expedia and others. Booking through them and changing flights or getting refunds will be more hassle than booking with the airline directly.

Upgrades.

If you want an upgrade, do it at the airport at a service center or at the United Lounge for a better experience. That way you can get things resolved in real-time instead of having to wait until after the flight.

United is banking on the war of attrition and time (i.e. the more hassle something is, the less likely you are to pursue a refund, etc.).

Use Your Status on United for Resolving Issues

If you're a United Frequent Flyer or have a United Miles credit card, use those numbers first, since customer service may be able to help you faster.

When calling in, instead of being on actual hold for hours, try the call-back option and always opt-in for feedback surveys and tell them about the experience.

Document Everything.

If you are booking on your iPhone or smartphone, take screen shots of all offers, transactions, and receipts.

Same with bookings done on your computer. Take screen shots.

Without evidence, you won't have much chance of backing up the experience and issues.
