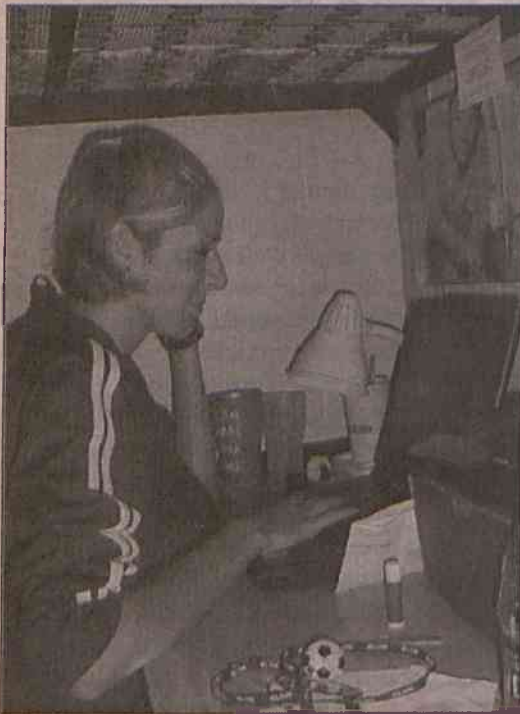


Online airfare: Total steal or bad deal?



Claudia Martin/Photographer

Finding the cheapest airfare can be a daunting task. Buyers should be sure to comparison shop to find the best prices and values and get the most for their money.

Susan O'Brien
Reporter

As fall break nears, travelers across America will be logging on and calling in to search for the cheapest plane ticket to their destination. Many Web sites claim they can do the job; Orbitz.com, Expedia.com, priceline.com and Travelocity.com are just a few. Who really has the lowest prices? Are these Web sites guaranteeing low prices, or the actual airlines making them possible?

For The Pendulum to solve this debate, four major cities were picked from four states most represented at Elon: Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, Va., and Orlando, Fla. Travel Web sites such as those mentioned above were contacted for pricing and then compared to the prices offered from the airlines over the phone. All tickets described are roundtrip.

Destination: Richmond, Va. (RIA)

Airline: US Airways

Departs: Oct. 11, 6:10 p.m.

/Oct. 15, 4:05 p.m.

Arrives: Oct. 11, 8:47 p.m. /Oct. 15, 6:27 p.m.

Best deal: cheaptickets.com and US Airways both priced the fare at \$205.

Destination: Philadelphia, Pa. (PHI)

Airline: US Airways

Departs: Oct. 11, 5:20 p.m. /Oct. 15, 5:50 p.m.

Arrives: Oct. 11, 6:51 p.m. /Oct. 15, 7 p.m.

Best deal: Cheaptickets.com offered a ticket for \$177.50. US Airways quoted the same flight over the phone for \$213.

Destination: Baltimore, Md. (BWI)

Airline: Air Tran

Departs: Oct. 11, 6:59 p.m. /Oct. 15, 6 p.m.

Arrives: Oct. 11, 10:48 p.m. /Oct. 15, 10:13 p.m.

Best Deal: Calling Air Tran revealed the flight was \$198. Cheaptickets.com's price jumped to \$205.50.

Destination: Orlando, Fla. (OIA)

Airline: Delta

Departs: Oct. 11, 7:25 p.m. /Oct. 15, 9:45 p.m.

Arrives: Oct. 11, 12:56 a.m. /Oct. 15, 11:22 p.m.

Best deal: Calling Delta gave the best deal yet: \$153. Cheaptickets.com was more than \$100 more, at \$271.

The **U.S. Veterans Affairs Office** is offering several paid co-op opportunities to students who would like to work with them during the summer, fall breaks, etc. for a total of 640 hours during the school year. This is a paid work experience (\$11 PH), which involves training on several levels. Upon completion of the program, your opportunity to become employed full time with the U.S. Veterans Affairs is optimum.

Job Location: Winston-Salem, N.C.

You may be able to car pool with other students who want to do this.

You can also receive college credit if you need credit hours toward graduation.

Requirements: 2.8 GPA or higher to apply

All majors are encouraged to apply

Beat the rush and have a job when you graduate in 2004!

Just come and listen, eat and have fun!

Tuesday, October 1

5 p.m., Duke 101J

Pizza & drinks provided

RSVP by Friday, Sept 21, to ext. 6538



"I have been very pleased with my career with the VA Regional Office in Winston-Salem. It has given me the opportunity to participate in the functioning of the U.S. government, effectively utilize written and oral communication skills, and develop professional networking skills. I have also developed a great respect for our country's veterans and I take pleasure in assisting them to obtain the benefits to which they are entitled. My position has enabled me to apply the skills and information I obtained in the classroom at Elon and to generate a product congruent to the mission of my workplace."

- Nina Tann '01