

Best Frequent Flyer Programs Chosen by 4.2 million Road Warriors

A record breaking number of 4.2 million frequent flyers from around the globe voted in this year's Freddie Awards.

“This is not an elitist view of these programs nor a popular vote, but rather the ‘best’ are determined by the votes of those who spend a great deal of their life on the road and in turn are appreciative of the value they bring to their members.”

Jersey City, NJ April 28, 2017 -- Recognizing the best of travel loyalty programs, Southwest Airlines Rapid Rewards has been named frequent flyer Program of the Year. Marriott Rewards held the top spot, for the tenth consecutive year, taking the highest honor among hotel programs in the Americas region at the 2017 Freddie Awards. The Freddie Awards were on Thursday, April 27th, hosted this year at the Hyatt Regency Jersey City on the Hudson Jersey City, New Jersey. A record number of 4.2 million frequent travelers from around the globe voted in this year's campaign.

Internationally, Norwegian Reward is Program of the Year for the Europe/Africa region and EL AL Matmid received the Program of the Year Freddie Award in the Middle East/Asia/Oceania region. Among hotel programs, Le Club AccorHotels is Program of the Year for the Europe/Africa region and Starwood Preferred Guest takes top honors as Program of the Year for hotels in the Middle East/Asia/Oceania region.

In the popular credit card category, Chase Bank was a big winner by issuing the Southwest Airlines Rapid Rewards Premier credit card. American Express Membership Rewards took top honors in the Middle East/Asia/Oceania region while upstart Norwegian Reward won in the Europe/Africa region with their credit card issued by Bank Norwegian.

Also announced were the 210 Award for programs whose value vote rating was trending higher (up-and- comers). Winners in this category included Choice Privileges, Avianca Lifemiles, Le Club AccorHotels, TAP Victoria, ANA Mileage Clubs and Trident Hotels Trident Privilege.

The Freddie Awards represent excellence among travel loyalty programs around the globe and rate the best programs in six categories: Program of the Year, Best Promotion, Best Redemption Ability, Best Customer Service, Best Elite Program and Best Loyalty Credit

Card. Voters had six weeks to vote and were permitted to vote for programs in one of three global regions: Americas, Europe/Africa and Middle East/Asia/Oceania. Voting also was available in nine different languages.

The awards were announced this evening during a gala event at the Hyatt Regency Jersey City on the Hudson in Jersey City, New Jersey. More than 440 airline, hotel and credit card representatives attended the ceremony, along with frequent flyers who voted in this year's awards. "We are delighted to once again allow frequent flyers throughout the world the opportunity to select the travel loyalty programs that they believe have achieved excellence," said Randy Petersen, founder of the Freddie Awards. "This is not an elitist view of these programs nor a popular vote, but rather the 'best' are determined by the votes of those who spend a great deal of their life on the road and in turn are appreciative of the value they bring to their members."

The Freddie Awards are named after the late Sir Freddie Laker, who attracted fame (and a knighthood in the United Kingdom) for pioneering low-cost air travel across the Atlantic in the 1970s.

The presenting sponsor this year was Barclaycard. Other sponsors included Points, eBags, Connexions Loyalty, BoardingArea and Mileslife. The Freddie Awards were custom designed by Society Awards.

And the winners are:

Americas

Airline

Program of the Year — Southwest Airlines - Rapid Rewards
Best Elite Program — American Airlines - AAdvantage (6th consecutive year)
Best Promotion — Avianca - LifeMiles
Best Customer Service — Southwest Airlines - Rapid Rewards
Best Redemption Ability — Southwest Airlines - Rapid Rewards
210 AWARD — Avianca - LifeMiles

Hotel Category

Program of the Year — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards (10th consecutive year) Best Elite
Program — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards
Best Promotion — MGM - M life Rewards
Best Customer Service — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards
Best Redemption Ability — Marriott Hotels - Marriott Rewards
210 AWARD — Accor Hotels – Le Club AccorHotels

Credit Card

Best Loyalty Credit Card — Southwest Airlines - Rapid Rewards from Chase Bank

Europe & Africa

Airline Category

Program of the Year — Norwegian Air – Norwegian Reward
Best Elite Program — AIR FRANCE/KLM – Flying Blue
Best Promotion — AIR FRANCE/KLM – Flying Blue
Best Customer Service — Aeroflot – Aeroflot Bonus
Best Redemption Ability — Aeroflot – Aeroflot Bonus
210 AWARD — TAP Portugal – Victoria

Hotel Category

Program of the Year — Accor Hotels – Le Club AccorHotels
Best Elite Program — Starwood – Starwood Preferred Guest (6th consecutive year)
Best Promotion — Accor Hotels – Le Club AccorHotels
Best Customer Service — Accor Hotels – Le Club AccorHotels
Best Redemption Ability — Accor Hotels – Le Club AccorHotels
210 AWARD — Choice Hotels – Choice Privileges

Credit Card

Best Affinity Credit Card — Bank Norwegian Norwegian Card

Middle East & Asia/Oceania

Airline Category

Program of the Year — EL AL – Matmid Club
Best Elite Program — Virgin Australia – Velocity
Best Promotion — EL AL – Matmid Club
Best Customer Service — EL AL – Matmid Club
Best Redemption Ability — Virgin Australia – Velocity
210 AWARD — ANA – ANA Mileage Club

Hotel Category

Program of the Year — Starwood Preferred Guest
Best Elite Program — Starwood Preferred Guest
Best Promotion — Starwood Preferred Guest
Best Customer Service — Starwood Preferred Guest
Best Redemption Ability — Starwood Preferred Guest
210 AWARD — Trident Hotels – Trident Privilege

Credit Card

Best Affinity Credit Card — American Express Membership Rewards

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Freddie Awards

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