

## **BEST FREQUENT FLYER AND FREQUENT GUEST PROGRAMS CHOSEN IN THE 19TH ANNUAL FREDDIE AWARDS**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.** - Frontier Airlines EarlyReturns was named frequent flyer Program of the Year and InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards took top honors among hotel programs at the 19th Annual Freddie Awards on Thursday, April 26th.

Internationally, Qatar Airways Privilege Club frequent flyer program was voted Program of the Year in the Europe/Middle East/Africa region, and India's Jet Airways Jet Privilege earned Program of the Year in the Asia/Pacific region.

Nearly 450,000 frequent travelers worldwide cast online ballots to determine the winners. The awards represent excellence in frequent travel programs and rate the best frequent flyer and frequent guest programs in eight different categories: Program of the Year, Best Award, Best Bonus Promotion, Best Web Site, Best Elite-Level Program, Best Member Communications, Best Award Redemption and Best Customer Service. The Best Affinity Credit Card was also chosen. Voters were permitted to vote for programs in one of three global regions: Americas, Europe/Middle East/Africa and Asia/Pacific.

Starwood Preferred Guest won Hotel Program of the Year in the Asia/Pacific region as well as in the Europe/Middle East/Africa region. InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards placed first in the Americas region for the second year in a row.

This is Frontier Airlines EarlyReturns first year to win a Program of the Year award. The Denver-based program also won in the Best Award category.

Starwood Preferred Guest American Express was named top credit card in the Americas region, ending a nine-year reign at the top for Club Rewards from Diners Club. Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan took home the award for Best Member Communications, Best Web Site and Best Elite-Level Program, all in the Americas region.

Starwood Preferred Guest took home the most Freddie awards overall with 11, while Qatar Airways Privilege Club earned the most honors for an airline program with eight.

The awards were announced today by InsideFlyer Editor Randy Petersen during a ceremony at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. Over 300 airline, hotel and credit card representatives attended the ceremony, along with several members of the voting public.

"We are delighted to once again let frequent flyers throughout the world vote for those programs that truly rise up in excellence," Petersen said. "This is not an elitist view of what works with these programs - we find the 'best' by asking those who spend a great deal of their life on the road."

Petersen also presented an "Industry Impact" award to United Mileage Plus and Etihad Guest. Introduced in 1992, the Industry Impact awards, are determined by editorial decision rather than by ballot. These awards honor the programs or individuals that have had, or will have, the biggest impact on the industry in coming years. This year, Mileage Plus was lauded for its innovative "Mileage Plus Choices" program available to United Mileage Plus Visa cardholders, which offered extended flexibility for members to redeem awards with no blackout dates. The Etihad Guest program also received an Industry Impact award for its Web site "slider" that allows members to create their own cash plus miles award with as little as one mile.

The Freddie Awards honor quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the overall merits of each program as reflected in a "Value Vote." Value Voting asks the voter to assign a number between one and 10 to the program for which he or she votes. To be eligible to win a Freddie Award, however, a program must receive at least one percent of the popular vote.

The 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.

This year, InsideFlyer magazine partnered with Points.com, Awards For Mortgage And Real Estate, Priority Pass, Executive Travel/SkyGuide, American Express Incentive Services, ICLP and Loylogic to present the event.

## **THIS YEAR'S WINNERS ARE:**

### **Program of the Year**

Americas Airline: Frontier Airlines EarlyReturns

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Asia/Pacific Airline: Jet Airways Jet Privilege

Americas Hotel: InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

### **Best Award**

Americas Airline: Frontier Airlines EarlyReturns

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: TAP Portugal Victoria

Asia/Pacific Airline: Emirates/SriLankan Skywards

Americas Hotel: Choice Privileges

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Marriott Rewards

### **Best Bonus Promotion**

Americas Airline: US Airways Dividend Miles

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Emirates/SriLankan Skywards

Asia/Pacific Airline: Emirates/SriLankan Skywards

Americas Hotel: InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

### **Best Web Site**

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Etihad Airways Etihad Guest

Asia/Pacific Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Americas Hotel: InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Marriott Rewards

**Best Elite-Level**

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Asia/Pacific Airline: Thai Airways Royal Orchid Plus

Americas Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

**Best Member Communications**

Americas Airline: Alaska Airlines Mileage Plan

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Asia/Pacific Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Americas Hotel: InterContinental Hotels Group Priority Club Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Radisson SAS goldpoints plus

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Marriott Rewards

**Best Award Redemption**

Americas Airline: Southwest Rapid Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Asia/Pacific Airline: Virgin Blue Velocity

Americas Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

**Best Customer Service**

Americas Airline: Midwest Airlines Midwest Miles

Europe/Middle East/Africa Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Asia/Pacific Airline: Qatar Airways Privilege Club

Americas Hotel: Marriott Rewards

Europe/Middle East/Africa Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

Asia/Pacific Hotel: Starwood Preferred Guest

**Best Affinity Credit Card**

Americas: Starwood Preferred Guest American Express

Europe/Middle East/Africa: Lufthansa (and Partners) Miles & More Visa

Asia/Pacific: Thai Royal Orchid Plus American Express

**Industry Impact Award**

United Mileage Plus

Etihad Airways Etihad Guest