

Close Window

Send To Printer

Flight from Ontario to LAX lifts travel burdens

By Jason Newell Staff Writer
Whittier Daily News

For what it costs to spend a night at San Francisco's Four Seasons Hotel or take a family of eight to Disneyland for a day, a person can catch a flight from Ontario to Los Angeles.

Five times a day, a small United Express twin-prop plane takes off from LA/Ontario International Airport and lands at Los Angeles International Airport - a mere 52 miles away.

The price of a one-way ticket: \$448.

Would anyone do it?

Possibly, but most of the travelers who take the Ontario-to- Los Angeles flight have a more distant final destination, said Jeff Kovick, spokesman for United Airlines.

The flights are useful "particularly for people who are connecting beyond Los Angeles," Kovick said. "This offers them a flight to Los Angeles, where they're going to connect to our global network."

When done that way, the \$450 price tag plummets dramatically.

Booked early enough, a midweek one-way flight from LAX to Boston on United runs about \$119. Adding a flight from LA/Ontario International with a half-hour layover pushes that price up by only \$29.

A \$1,100 United flight from LAX to Sydney, Australia, jumps up by about \$55 when Ontario is added to the mix.

For that kind of cash, many travelers said they're willing to shell out the extra money to avoid the traffic, parking and security hassles associated with LAX - even if it does seem a little unusual to fly such a short distance.

For Miguel Espinoza, who flies from his home in Fort Worth, Texas, to visit family in San Bernardino each month, adding a connector flight from LAX to LA/Ontario International is a no-brainer, he said.

Were he to stop at LAX, one of his family members would have to go through the trouble of driving out to fetch him. Then they'd both have to contend with traffic on the way back inland, he said.

"Driving between L.A. to here, it would take us at least two hours, three hours," he said.

Whatever the extra cost of tacking on the flight to Ontario is, it can't be much, he said; his round-trip ticket usually amounts to about \$255.

Shaun Moe, who flew from Boston to LAX to LA/Ontario International on Friday, said he wondered at first whether it was worth it to fly the short distance between Los Angeles and Ontario.

"For a hot second, I was just kind of like: `Really? 52 miles?'" Moe said.

In the end, he was glad his boss paid a bit more for the ticket, he said.

He spent a combined hour waiting at LAX and traveling in the air - a much shorter chunk of time than he would have spent on the freeways driving to Ontario, he said.

"But if you had to fly in \ and wait another hour for a 20-minute flight - or two hours for a 20-minute flight - I can see where it wouldn't be too much of an economical idea," Moe said.

Lois Michaud paid \$332 for a round-trip ticket from Colorado Springs. Visiting the area for the weekend's Pacific Life Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, she said she booked the quick flight from LAX to Ontario in part because there's no way she wanted to end up in Los Angeles.

"Being from Colorado, we had no interest in driving in L.A.," Michaud said. "No offense - and I'm a New Yorker at heart - but we had no desire to do that."

jason.newell@dailybulletin.com

(909) 483-9338