



Booking a Connecting Flight

What is a connecting flight? A connecting flight is a flight from your original destination to the gateway city of our international flight. (A gateway city is the term we use for the city your tour will be departing from – usually New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta or Miami). For example, most of our tours to Europe are departing from the New York area. If you require a flight to get to New York, that flight is considered a connecting flight.

When booking a connecting flight to meet up with your team in the airport be sure to consider the following information. It is important that you schedule your flight accordingly so that you do not risk the chance of missing the international flight. **AIST will not be responsible for anyone that misses a connecting flight.**

1. On your arrival into the gateway city it's best to arrive a minimum of 4 hours prior to departure of the international flight. You may be required to collect your luggage, then check-in again with the international airline. This means exiting the secure area in some cases and that you will need to go back through security lines.
2. If possible you should book your connecting flight on the same airline as the international flight to help with the transfer. This way, if your flight is delayed the airline will be responsible for making sure you get to your final destination. You may also be able to check your bags all the way to the final destination. Always confirm with airlines where your luggage will end up to avoid lost luggage. You may be required to put the luggage on a transfer belt or check it in again.
3. We recommend waiting until 3-4 months prior to departure before purchasing your connecting airline as we may have to change our flight plans for the group.
4. On your return, airlines require a minimum of 2 hours to make your connection from your scheduled arrival time. We would recommend 3 hours in case of any delays or long lines at passport control. In some cases, you may need to book a hotel near the airport and catch a flight out the next morning. We try to schedule most flights to return to the USA by midday so you have time to make a connection.
5. When you check in for your connecting flight, ask if you can check you and your bags to your final destination. Even if you are on a separate airline, some carriers are partners and will transfer your luggage to the next flight. If they do not, you may have to pick up your luggage and check in again at the gateway city for the international flight. This is another good reason to give yourself 4 hours.
6. You will need the international flight details to book your connecting flight. Please contact AIST for those details if they have not been sent to you. For more information on preparing for your trip please visit your update link page or contact us at info@aist.us.