logo Image not found or type unknown

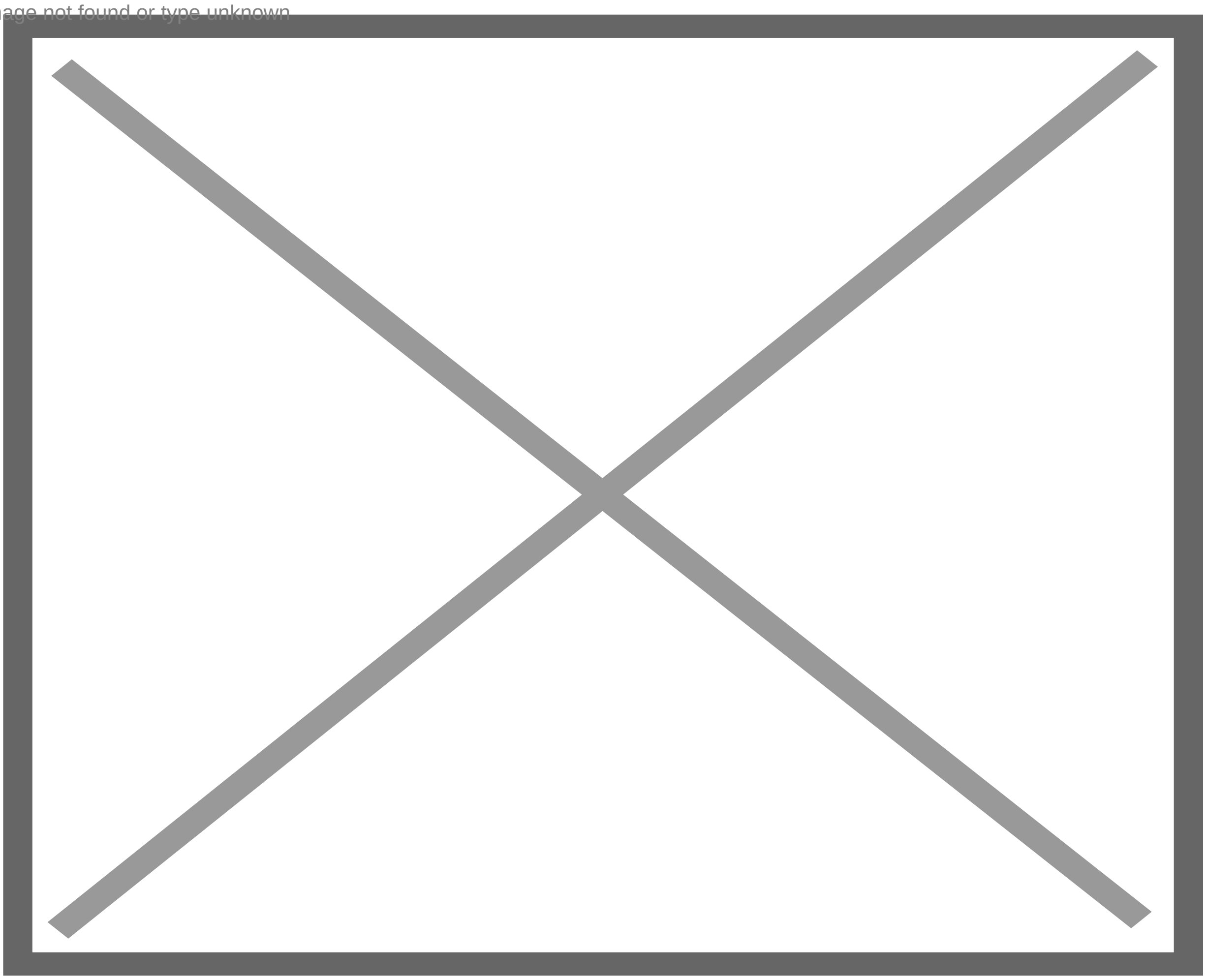
JetBlue Fare Changes Reach USVI Travelers as Airline Reports 81% Jump in Fuel Costs

JetBlue’s average fare rose nearly 9 percent as the airline worked to recover an 81 percent jump in quarterly fuel costs, adding $407 million to its bill, while a new booking system will change how USVI travelers select seats, refunds and flexibility.

Federal / **Published On July 29, 2026 05:52 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert July 29, 2026

Image not found or type unknown



Major carriers, including Jetblue, at the Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas in 2023. By. ERNICE GILBERT, V.I. CONSORTIUM.

JetBlue is changing how customers select and purchase tickets, introducing a two-step system that separates the experience aboard the aircraft from the conditions attached to the fare.

Under the new structure, which JetBlue said will begin appearing in the coming days, customers will first choose among four onboard experiences: Main, EvenMore, BlueFirst or Mint. They will then select from as many as three fare options—Base, Standard or Flex—based on their preferences for seat selection, changes, cancellations and refunds.

The changes will apply across JetBlue's network, including flights serving St. Thomas and St. Croix. The airline currently markets service between both islands and San Juan, along with several mainland routes involving St. Thomas, including Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, Tampa and Boston.

JetBlue's existing Core cabin will be renamed Main. The airline said Main will continue to include its standard onboard service, free high-speed Fly-Fi, seatback entertainment with live television, complimentary snacks and drinks.

EvenMore will remain JetBlue's premium-economy product, offering additional legroom, priority security where available, earlier boarding, dedicated overhead-bin space and other onboard benefits.

BlueFirst will become the airline's domestic first-class product. JetBlue plans to begin introducing it later this year on aircraft and routes that do not offer Mint. Mint, which is available on selected routes, will remain the airline's highest-level premium experience, with lie-flat seating, dining and enhanced service.

After choosing an onboard experience, travelers will select the conditions attached to their ticket.

Base will be the lowest-priced option and will be marketed as Main Base, EvenMore Base or BlueFirst Base. Advance seat selection will not be included. A customer who cancels an eligible Base ticket will receive a JetBlue travel credit after any applicable cancellation fee is deducted. Base fares will not be available in Mint.

Standard fares will be marketed simply as Main, EvenMore, BlueFirst or Mint. They will include seat selection, no change fees and a JetBlue travel credit for eligible cancellations.

Flex will be the most flexible option. Main Flex, EvenMore Flex, BlueFirst Flex and Mint Flex will include seat selection and no change fees. Eligible cancellations will be refunded to the customer's original form of payment rather than being issued only as airline credit.

"With the introduction of BlueFirst and our recently improved EvenMore experience, we want to make sure customers can easily find the JetBlue experiences they are looking for," said Marty St. George, president of JetBlue. "In two simple clicks, customers will be able to book what's right for them. First, the onboard experience, and then the fare option depending on their preferences around seat selection and refundability."

JetBlue said members of its TrueBlue Mosaic loyalty program and JetBlue credit cardholders will continue receiving their existing benefits. Customers who purchased tickets before the new system takes effect will also retain the terms and benefits connected to the fares they originally bought.

The airline said additional information about BlueFirst and the fares available within that cabin will be released later this year. The initial announcement focused on seat selection, changes, cancellations and refunds and did not announce a separate change to JetBlue's checked-baggage rules.

The fare overhaul comes as JetBlue and other U.S. airlines use higher ticket prices and increasingly segmented fare products to recover rising operating expenses, particularly fuel costs.

JetBlue reported Tuesday that stronger demand and higher fares allowed it to recover approximately half of its additional fuel expenses during the second quarter, exceeding its earlier expectation that it would recover between 30 percent and 40 percent.

The airline’s average fare increased nearly 9 percent during the quarter. At the same time, its fuel bill rose by approximately $407 million, or nearly 81 percent, compared with the same period one year earlier. JetBlue paid an average of $4.23 per gallon for fuel during the quarter.

JetBlue recorded a second-quarter net loss of $247 million, compared with a $74 million loss during the corresponding quarter in 2025. Total revenue increased 14.5 percent to $2.69 billion.

The carrier reinstated its annual financial outlook and projected a full-year operating margin of between negative 2 percent and negative 5 percent. JetBlue also set a goal of earning at least $1 per share in 2028 and said it remained on course to generate between $850 million and $950 million in additional annual earnings before interest and taxes by the end of 2027.

For Virgin Islands travelers, the immediate change will be the need to examine both parts of a JetBlue booking. Selecting Main, EvenMore, BlueFirst or Mint will determine the seat and onboard experience, while choosing Base, Standard or Flex will determine whether advance seat selection is included and what happens when a ticket is changed or canceled.