

How Much Is A Southwest Airlines Flight To New York?

Direct answer: on short competitive routes, Southwest Basic one-ways into the New York area can start around **\$70 to \$150**. Longer and transcontinental routes booked in advance commonly run **\$150 to \$350** one-way. Booked inside a week, those figures rise sharply.

Two things shape a Southwest fare to New York more than the headline number.

First, **which airport**. Southwest serves **LaGuardia (LGA)** and **Long Island MacArthur in Islip (ISP)** — it does **not** fly to JFK or Newark. If your search is returning nothing, that is why.

Second, **what the fare no longer includes**. Since **28 May 2025** checked bags cost money, and since **27 January 2026** seat selection is not free on the Basic fare. A cheap Southwest fare in 2026 is not the same product it was in 2024, and the total trip cost is what matters now.

1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA) can price your route into both Southwest airports and compare the total against other carriers flying into JFK or Newark.

Which New York airport

LaGuardia (LGA) — Terminal B. Southwest's only airport within New York City, with a relatively limited schedule connecting mainly to its larger cities across the country. Terminal B was rebuilt and is now a genuinely good airport building.

Long Island MacArthur (ISP) in Islip. A substantial Southwest presence, roughly 50 miles east of Manhattan. Small, quick to move through, easy to park at.

JFK and Newark — no Southwest service. Southwest has never had a meaningful JFK operation, and withdrew from Newark some years ago. Both JFK and LaGuardia are slot-controlled, which makes expansion difficult and expensive.

The pricing consequence: Southwest's limited New York presence means **fewer flights and fewer fare buckets** than in cities where it operates heavily. On some routes that makes it uncompetitive against JetBlue or Delta into JFK. On others its point-to-point pricing still wins. Always price both Southwest airports and at least one competitor into JFK or Newark.

What drives the price

How far ahead you book. The largest single factor. Domestic fares are generally best one to three months out. Inside two weeks prices climb; inside a week, steeply.

Day of week. Tuesday and Wednesday departures are typically cheapest. Thursday evening, Friday and Sunday afternoon are the peaks.

Time of day. Early morning and late evening cost less than mid-morning business timings.

Season. Late January and February are the cheapest period into New York. Summer and the Thanksgiving through New Year window are the most expensive.

Fare bundle. Southwest now sells four: Basic, Choice, Choice Preferred and Choice Extra. Basic is the headline price and the most restrictive.

Route frequency. Because Southwest's LaGuardia schedule is thin, a route with two daily flights offers far less pricing flexibility than one with eight.

The four fare bundles and what they cost you

This is where the real total emerges.

Fare	Seat selection	Boarding	Checked bags
Basic	None free	Last (Groups 6–8)	Paid
Choice	Standard seat at booking	Groups 6–8	Paid
Choice Preferred	Preferred seat or any standard	No later than Group 5	Paid
Choice Extra	Extra Legroom or any seat	Groups 1–2	2 free

Checked bags now cost \$45 for the first and \$55 for the second, following the April 2026 increase. A third bag is \$150.

So a \$99 Basic fare with one checked bag is \$144. With a seat assignment, more. **Choice Extra** bundles two free bags with an Extra Legroom seat — if you were paying for two bags anyway, that bundle frequently costs less than Basic plus extras. Price it rather than assuming the cheapest fare is cheapest.

One thing Southwest still gives away: the carry-on. A full-size carry-on plus a personal item are free on **every** fare including Basic, with no overhead bin restrictions by fare class. That is better than United's domestic Basic Economy and better than the ultra-low-cost carriers. If you can travel with a carry-on, a Southwest Basic fare remains genuinely cheap.

How to pay less

Search flexible dates. Shifting departure by a day or two is the highest-leverage move available.

Price LaGuardia against Islip. If you are heading to Long Island, Islip is usually cheaper to reach and faster to use.

Compare against JFK and Newark on other carriers. Southwest's thin New York schedule means it is not automatically the cheapest option into the region.

Book one to three months ahead for domestic travel, further for holiday periods.

Use points if you have them. Southwest award pricing tracks the cash fare, so points are worth roughly the same proportionally — around 1.2 to 1.5 cents each — and bookings can be cancelled with points redeposited.

Take advantage of no change fees. Southwest charges no change fee on any fare. Book a fare you are content with and rebook if the price falls, paying or recovering only the difference. That is a genuine advantage over carriers where a change means a penalty.

Compare against Amtrak from Washington, Philadelphia or Boston, where the train is often faster door to door.

Consider the Companion Pass if you fly Southwest regularly. A companion flying for taxes and fees only transforms the economics of any route.

Ground transport from each airport

The fare is only part of the cost.

From LaGuardia. No rail link — the airport's persistent weakness. Buses connect to Queens subway lines; taxis and ride-share take roughly 30 to 50 minutes to Manhattan outside rush hour, considerably longer in it. LaGuardia is closest to Manhattan in distance, so ground costs are usually lower than from JFK or Newark, but it is the least predictable in traffic.

From Islip. Roughly 50 miles east of Manhattan. Excellent if your destination is on Long Island — parking is easy and the airport is quick to move through. Less good for Midtown, though the Long Island Rail Road from nearby Ronkonkoma connects to Penn Station with a transfer.

Budget 30 to 60 minutes and \$15 to \$80 for ground transport, and be honest about where you are actually going. A cheap Islip fare is a poor deal if you then need an hour and a half to reach Manhattan.

What to expect on board

A single-type fleet. Southwest operates Boeing 737s, which makes the experience consistent across routes. Cabin retrofits adding Extra Legroom rows have been rolling out progressively, so configurations vary somewhat.

Assigned seats since January 2026. Three categories — Extra Legroom in the first five rows and exit rows with roughly five extra inches of pitch, Preferred nearer the front, and Standard behind the exit rows.

Eight boarding groups, ordered by seat location, fare and status. Basic boards last.

No premium cabin. Southwest has no first or business class. Extra Legroom is a paid seat category, not a separate cabin.

Priority Boarding can be purchased separately from 24 hours before departure on any fare.

Timing your booking

One to three months out is the sweet spot for domestic fares.

Holiday travel breaks the pattern. Thanksgiving and the Christmas–New Year window into New York should be booked considerably earlier — demand is exceptional and prices only move one way.

Southwest's no-change-fee policy is a real tool here. On most airlines a price drop after booking is irrelevant because changing costs a penalty. On Southwest you can rebook at the lower fare and take the difference as credit. It is worth re-checking fares periodically after booking, which is advice that genuinely does not apply elsewhere.

Watch for schedule changes. A significant change to your flight can open options that were not available when you booked.

Southwest's network quirks that affect New York trips

A few structural facts about how Southwest operates change the calculation on a New York trip.

It is point-to-point, not hub-and-spoke. Southwest does not funnel traffic through a small number of hubs the way legacy carriers do. That means direct routings exist between city pairs that United or Delta would route through Chicago or Atlanta — but it also means that if Southwest does not fly your city pair directly, the connecting options may be awkward or nonexistent.

Its LaGuardia schedule is thin. Southwest connects LaGuardia mainly to its larger cities across the country, serving relatively few destinations compared with its presence almost anywhere else. If you are flying from a smaller city, there may be no Southwest routing to New York worth taking.

Secondary airports are the norm elsewhere in the network. Midway rather than O'Hare in Chicago, Hobby rather than Bush in Houston, Love Field in Dallas. On a New York trip this matters at the other end of the journey — a Southwest fare into LaGuardia from Chicago means Midway, which may be more or less convenient than O'Hare depending on where you are starting.

Dallas Love Field has route restrictions arising from longstanding federal legislation governing the airport. If your itinerary touches Love Field, the available routings may be narrower than the map suggests.

No international network to speak of. Southwest flies domestically plus some Caribbean, Mexico and Central America service. For an international traveller connecting to New York, Southwest is not part of the itinerary — and points cannot be redeemed on its partner carriers.

Common mistakes

Searching for JFK or Newark. Southwest serves neither.

Assuming bags still fly free. They have not since May 2025.

Booking Basic and expecting to choose a seat. You cannot, unless you pay or hold a Southwest credit card.

Choosing Islip without checking the ground journey. Fifty miles is a long way in New York traffic.

Not comparing Choice Extra. With two bags, the bundle often beats Basic plus fees.

Forgetting you can rebook when fares drop. No change fee means a price drop is money back.

Where to get help

Contact	Number	Best for
Travel reservations and fare comparison	1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)	Pricing LaGuardia against Islip, comparing Southwest against carriers serving JFK and Newark, working out whether Choice Extra beats Basic plus bag fees
Southwest Airlines Reservations	Published on southwest.com	Booking and changing Southwest tickets
Rapid Rewards service	Published on southwest.com	Points redemptions and Companion Pass

Frequently asked questions

How much is a Southwest flight to New York? Short competitive routes can start around \$70 to \$150 one-way on a Basic fare. Longer routes booked ahead commonly run \$150 to \$350 one-way, more at short notice.

Does Southwest fly to JFK? No. Southwest serves LaGuardia and Long Island MacArthur in Islip. It does not fly to JFK or Newark.

Which terminal is Southwest at LaGuardia? Terminal B, for both arrivals and departures.

Is Islip cheaper than LaGuardia? Often, and it is quicker to move through. But it is 50 miles east of Manhattan, so factor in the ground journey.

When is the cheapest time to fly to New York? Late January and February are typically cheapest. Tuesday and Wednesday departures, and early morning or late evening flights, price lowest.

Are checked bags free on Southwest? No, not since 28 May 2025. The first bag is \$45 and the second \$55. The carry-on and personal item remain free on every fare.

Is the Basic fare worth it? For a traveller with a carry-on and fixed plans, yes — Southwest's free carry-on makes Basic genuinely cheap. With checked bags or a seating preference, compare Choice Extra.

Can I change a Southwest flight for free? There is no change fee on any fare; you pay or recover the fare difference. Basic is more restricted in other respects.

Can I use Rapid Rewards points to New York? Yes. Award pricing tracks the cash fare, and points bookings can be cancelled with points redeposited.

The takeaway

A Southwest flight to New York means **LaGuardia or Islip** — never JFK or Newark — and the airline's thin New York schedule means it is not automatically the cheapest way into the region. Price it against JetBlue or Delta into JFK before assuming otherwise.

The bigger change is what the fare includes. Southwest in 2026 charges for checked bags and does not give away seat selection on its Basic fare. **Price the trip, not the ticket.** With two bags, the Choice Extra bundle frequently beats a Basic fare plus fees.

Two advantages remain genuinely Southwest's own. The **free full-size carry-on on every fare** is better than what United's Basic Economy allows, so a carry-on-only traveller still gets a real bargain. And **no change fees on any fare** means a price drop after booking is money you can actually recover — a reason to keep watching fares that simply does not apply on other airlines.

To compare LaGuardia against Islip, or Southwest against the carriers serving JFK and Newark, **1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)** can price the whole thing in one call.