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Airlines Now Able To Fly Over The North Pole

December saw airlines handed the all clear to fly their twin-jet aircraft over the North Pole for the first time in history, allowing them to save millions on fuel, reduce the damage they are causing to the environment as well as having access to more destinations worldwide. Until this decision had been made, America's aviation regulators set up a rule stating no planes were suitable to land no more than three and a half hours away, which has now been extended to five and a half hours, as long as they match up to a stringent set of criteria including special training and are using the appropriate equipment. As a result of this ruling Boeing 777 and 787 "Dreamliner" twin jets will be able to fly almost anywhere in the world apart from a patch of territory in the Antarctic.

Heading out on an [African safari](#) but live in Hawaii? That flight may only now take you a day instead of three. Flights from London, Heathrow are now able to fly direct to Fiji, in the South Pacific, via the North Pole, instead of stopping over in South Korea or Los Angeles. Sir Richard Branson, President of Virgin Atlantic said "This new development really does open up a whole new world and will allow us to take our Dreamliner's to more exciting and exotic places."

Could this mean that travelling out to Africa on a [Botswana safari](#) will be cheaper in the future? Well yes, obviously fuel costs will be significantly reduced and you would expect in turn for the airlines to knock this off the price of their tickets. We may even see the day when you could travel from Los Angeles to Dar es Salaam for a [Tanzania safari](#) cost as little as \$500/\$600.

Not everyone in the aviation industry is totally impressed with this decision however, as they are worried what might happen in the case of the aircraft needing to be diverted whilst flying over the North Pole. "It's all very well being able to make a safe landing, but passengers are likely to be distraught and extremely cold after a five-hour diversion to an airstrip in the Arctic." said an anonymous safety advisor for an airline.

Sir Richard Branson dismissed these problems and focused more on the spectacular views of the Arctic that would be viewable from the cabin windows, saying this is a once in lifetime that you will get to see the North Pole from the comfort of your own seat.

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