

UNDERSTANDING

MARRIOTT BONVOY

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE WORLD'S
LARGEST HOTEL LOYALTY PROGRAM



— 100%

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WELCOME MESSAGE

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WELCOME TO YOUR MARRIOTT BONVOY GUIDE

Welcome to your Marriott Bonvoy Guide, curated by Le Travelogist!

Marriott Bonvoy is the world's largest hotel loyalty program — connecting over 9,000 properties across 30 distinct brands in 140+ countries. Whether you're staying at a budget Courtyard or a St. Regis penthouse, every eligible stay brings you closer to free nights, suite upgrades, and elite recognition worldwide.

This guide will help you:

- Understand how Bonvoy points work and which brands earn fastest
- Navigate the elite status ladder from Silver to Ambassador
- Discover how to transfer Bonvoy points to 40+ airline partners
- Identify the credit cards that deliver the most value
- Redeem smarter — free nights, suite upgrades, and airline miles

At **Le Travelogist**, we believe hotel loyalty is one of the most under-leveraged areas of travel rewards. This guide changes that.

Le Travelogist Team



INTRODUCTION

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WHAT IS MARRIOTT BONVOY?

Marriott Bonvoy is the unified loyalty program of Marriott International — the world's largest hotel company. It was formed in 2019 by merging Marriott Rewards, Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG), and Ritz-Carlton Rewards into a single ecosystem.

The result is the most expansive hotel loyalty program on the planet, covering everything from budget-friendly Four Points to ultra-luxury Ritz-Carlton and Edition properties.

Key Bonvoy fundamentals:

- Join free — earn from your very first night
- Earn on stays, dining, spa services, and co-branded credit card spending
- Transfer points to 40+ airline programs — one of travel's most valuable transfer ecosystems
- Six elite status tiers from Silver to Ambassador
- Points valid indefinitely with qualifying activity every 24 months

Standout advantage: Marriott Bonvoy transfers points to 40+ airline programs at a 3:1 ratio — and every 60,000 points transferred earns a 5,000-mile bonus. This makes Bonvoy a powerful airline mile top-up tool.



CHAPTER 1

THE BONVOY BRAND PORTFOLIO

With 30 brands spanning every price point and travel style, Marriott Bonvoy has a property suited to almost every trip. Understanding the brands helps you maximize points earning and redemption value.

TIER	KEY BRANDS	BEST FOR
Ultra Luxury	The Ritz-Carlton, St. Regis, Edition, Luxury Collection	Milestone awards, suite upgrades, peak redemptions
Premium	W Hotels, Marriott Hotels, Sheraton, Westin, Le Méridien	Business travel, consistent quality worldwide
Select	Courtyard, Fairfield, Four Points, SpringHill Suites	Everyday travel, high points-per-dollar value
Extended Stay	Residence Inn, TownePlace Suites, Element	Long stays, suite-style accommodation

Why the Brand Range Matters for Points

Award nights at **select service brands** (Courtyard, Fairfield) require far fewer points than luxury brands — but both earn at the same base rate per dollar spent. Staying at a mid-range Marriott property regularly while saving points for a Ritz-Carlton redemption is one of Bonvoy's best built-in advantages.

STRATEGY: EARN AT MID-RANGE PROPERTIES ON BUSINESS TRAVEL. REDEEM AT LUXURY RESORTS DURING LEISURE. THE SPREAD BETWEEN EARNING COST AND REDEMPTION VALUE IS WHERE BONVOY DELIVERS ITS BEST RETURNS.



Stays — The Foundation

Earn **10 points per \$1** spent on eligible room rates at most Marriott brands. Elite members earn bonus points on top of base earning. Always book direct — third-party bookings do not earn points.

Co-Branded Credit Cards — The Accelerator

Bonvoy co-branded cards earn 6x on Marriott stays and 2–3x on everyday spending. Welcome bonuses of 75,000–150,000+ points make these among the highest-value hotel card offers available.

Dining & On-Property Spending

Earn points at hotel restaurants, spas, and resort facilities. Some properties offer bonus point promotions for dining packages booked with your stay.

Marriott Bonvoy Moments

Redeem (or earn) points for unique experiences — concerts, sporting events, culinary events, and exclusive access through the Bonvoy Moments platform.

Shopping & Partner Transfers

- **Marriott Bonvoy Boutiques** — earn on merchandise purchases
- **Car rental partners** — Hertz, Avis, National, Budget
- **Dining partners** — participating restaurants in select markets

Bonus tip: Watch for Marriott's quarterly promotions — "More Rewarding" and "Bonus Bonvoy" offers regularly deliver 2x–3x earning on qualifying stays. Register before each stay to activate.



Marriott Bonvoy offers six elite status tiers, each unlocking progressively more valuable benefits. Status is earned through qualifying nights per calendar year.

STATUS	NIGHTS REQUIRED	KEY BENEFITS
Silver Elite	10 nights	10% bonus points, priority late check-out
Gold Elite	25 nights	25% bonus points, enhanced room upgrade, 2pm late check-out
Platinum Elite	50 nights	50% bonus points, lounge access, welcome gift, guaranteed room type
Titanium Elite	75 nights	75% bonus points, enhanced suite upgrades, premium lounge access
Ambassador Elite	100 nights + \$23,000 spend	All Titanium + personal Ambassador, guaranteed suite upgrades, 48-hr room guarantee

The Lounge Access Advantage

From Platinum Elite upward, executive lounge access is one of Bonvoy’s most valuable perks — complimentary breakfast, evening cocktails, and a quiet workspace. At premium urban properties, this benefit alone can save \$60–\$120 per day.

Accelerating Status

- Co-branded Bonvoy credit cards contribute qualifying nights through card spending
- Status matches and challenges available from competing programs
- Corporate rates often include accelerated night credits



Free Night Awards — The Core Redemption

Bonvoy uses a dynamic pricing model — award night costs vary by property, date, and demand. Standard redemption rates range from approximately 5,000 points per night at budget properties to 100,000+ at flagship luxury resorts.

Points + Cash Awards

Combine points and cash for stays when your balance is low. Useful for high-demand periods when full award nights are expensive or unavailable.

Suite Night Awards (Nightly Upgrade Awards)

Platinum Elite and above receive Suite Night Awards annually — confirmed suite upgrades for specific nights, bookable from 5 days before arrival. One of Bonvoy's most valuable elite benefits.

Milestone Rewards

Elite members earn Choice Benefits at status milestones — including free night certificates, bonus points selections, or gift status for a companion. These milestone rewards can deliver 50,000–85,000+ point value.

REDEMPTION TYPE	TYPICAL VALUE	BEST USE
Off-peak free night	0.7–1.0c/pt	Luxury properties in shoulder season
Peak luxury resort	0.5–0.8c/pt	Use free night certs instead
Airline transfer	0.9–1.5c/pt	Transfer during bonus periods
Free night cert	1.0–3.0c/pt	Premium properties = best value

BEST REDEMPTION: ANNUAL FREE NIGHT CERTIFICATES (FROM CO-BRANDED CARDS) USED AT CATEGORY 5–7 PROPERTIES DELIVER FAR MORE VALUE THAN REDEEMING POINTS DIRECTLY AT THE SAME PROPERTY.



Marriott Bonvoy's airline transfer program is one of the most valuable features in hotel loyalty — and one of the most overlooked. With 40+ airline partners, Bonvoy can top up almost any airline balance.

How the Transfer Works

Transfer at a **3:1 ratio** — 3 Bonvoy points become 1 airline mile. Every 60,000 Bonvoy points transferred earns a **5,000-mile bonus**, making the effective rate 60,000 → 25,000 miles.

AIRLINE	ALLIANCE	TRANSFER RATIO
Air Canada Aeroplan	Star Alliance	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
British Airways Avios	oneworld	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
Air France / Flying Blue	SkyTeam	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
American Airlines AAdvantage	oneworld	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
United MileagePlus	Star Alliance	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
Singapore KrisFlyer	Star Alliance	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
Cathay Pacific Asia Miles	oneworld	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k
WestJet Rewards	Standalone	3:1 + 5k bonus at 60k

Key insight: Always transfer in 60,000-point increments to trigger the 5,000-mile bonus. At 60k points = 25,000 miles, the effective rate improves from 3:1 to approximately 2.4:1 — a meaningful difference on large transfers.



CHAPTER 6

MARRIOTT BONVOY CREDIT CARDS

Marriott Bonvoy co-branded cards are among the most rewarding hotel cards available — particularly for the annual free night certificates they provide.

CARD	ANNUAL FEE	FREE NIGHT CERT	STATUS	BEST FOR
Bonvoy Bold	\$0	None	None	No-fee starter
Bonvoy Boundless	~\$95	1 cert (35k pts)	Silver Elite	Most travelers
Bonvoy Business Amex	~\$125	1 cert (35k pts)	Gold Elite	Business owners
Bonvoy Brilliant Amex	~\$650	1 cert (85k pts)	Platinum Elite	Premium travelers

The Free Night Certificate Math

A **Bonvoy Brilliant** free night certificate valid at properties up to 85,000 points can unlock a night at a Ritz-Carlton or W Hotel worth \$400–\$800+. Against a \$650 annual fee (partially offset by a \$300 dining credit), the math works clearly in the cardholder's favor for regular travelers.

Even the **Bonvoy Boundless** at ~\$95 annual fee delivers a free night certificate worth \$150–\$250 at select-service brands — more than covering the fee for most cardholders.

RULE OF THUMB: IF YOU CAN USE THE ANNUAL FREE NIGHT CERTIFICATE AT A PROPERTY WORTH MORE THAN THE ANNUAL FEE, THE CARD PAYS FOR ITSELF BEFORE YOU EARN A SINGLE POINT.



- Always book direct — third-party bookings earn zero points and deliver zero status benefits
- Register for bonus promotions before each stay — Marriott runs quarterly campaigns that can deliver 2x–3x points
- Transfer points to airlines in 60,000–point blocks to capture the 5,000–mile bonus
- Use Suite Night Awards at premium properties — the upgrade value far exceeds the award cost
- Target off-peak periods for luxury redemptions — peak pricing can require 2–3x more points
- Stack a co-branded card with your stay earning for 16x+ points on Marriott purchases
- Use Milestone Reward free night certificates at the highest-category properties possible

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **Booking via Expedia or Booking.com** — you forfeit all points, status, and upgrade eligibility
- **Transferring points speculatively** — only transfer when you have a confirmed airline booking
- **Redeeming at peak rates** — the same room can cost 2–3x more points in high season
- **Ignoring Moments redemptions** — unique experiences often deliver exceptional per-point value
- **Letting Nightly Upgrade Awards expire unused** — Suite Night Awards expire annually; always attempt to use them

Ready to Build Your Bonvoy Strategy?

Book a free discovery call with Le Travelogist for a personalized Marriott Bonvoy roadmap.

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