

UOB relaunches the Visa Infinite Card, slashes income requirement to S\$150,000

 shanescape.com/2018/07/08/uob-relaunches-the-visa-infinite-card-slashes-income-requirement-to-s150000

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July 8, 2018

So this caught my attention today in the Straits Times:



All style, all substance

Experience a life that's anything but ordinary with the new UOB Visa Infinite Metal Card.

Travel further with 2 miles per S\$1 spent overseas and 1.4 miles per S\$1 spent locally, and stay connected with unlimited Singtel ReadyRoam plans*.

Access prestigious members-only clubs and airport lounges, and be pampered with hotel privileges. Indulge in 1-for-1 deals and exclusive dining offers at coveted restaurants.

Step into a world of style and substance, when you apply now at uob.com.sg/vimetal. Receive a free TUMI V3 Luggage and Packing Cube worth S\$1,010* when you sign up by 30 September 2018.

UOB 大華銀行

RIGHT BY YOU



Card design is for illustration purposes only. Terms and conditions apply to all featured benefits/privileges, please visit uob.com.sg/vimetal for details. *Each Singtel ReadyRoam 1GB plan is valid for up to 30 days upon activation. Plans can only be activated once every 30 days (i.e. up to 12 times a year). If you exceed the 1GB of data provided for each Singtel ReadyRoam plan during the 30-day validity period, you will be liable for additional data roaming charges incurred after the first 1GB of data under Singtel ReadyRoam plan as may be automatically provided by Singtel. Please visit uob.com.sg/vimetal for details. *Promotion is open to (a) applicants for the UOB Visa Infinite Metal Card ("Card") who are not holding any active or existing UOB Credit Cards. They must be among the first 1,000 applicants to be issued the Card between 5 July 2018 and 30 September 2018 and charge at least one transaction to their Card within the first two months of issuance; or (b) existing principal UOB Cardmembers who have applied for and been issued the Card between 5 July 2018 to 30 September 2018 and (i) register for the Promotion by sending SMS yesvictumi-space-last 4 digits of existing UOB Credit Card-space-NRIC number to 77862; (ii) charge eligible transactions amounting to at least S\$2,000 to the Card within first two months of issuance and (iii) are amongst the top 500 Cardmembers with the highest accumulated amount of eligible transactions. Applicant must have a minimum annual income of S\$50,000 to apply for the Card. The Card comes with an annual membership fee of S\$642 (inclusive of GST). Terms and conditions apply, please visit uob.com.sg/vimetal for details and Card application is subject to Bank's approval.

United Overseas Bank Limited Co. Reg. No. 1935000262.

It seems like UOB has relaunched the Visa Infinite Card as *ametal* card (this seems to be the new defining characteristic of a high net-worth card), with the income requirement being slashed to S\$150,000 p.a. from the previously published S\$350,000.

Even the card face looks strikingly similar, with the sole difference being the font for “Infinite”.

So what has changed?

Of course, UOB has up its ante, with this being made a metal card now, the new standard for high income cards.

1. Improved miles earning rate

Let’s get to the main reason why you got this card (apart from showing it off): the miles. Under the old card, local spend was rated at 1.2 miles per dollar spent, which was not that great. For foreign spend, you would earn 2 miles per dollar spent on overseas shopping and dining, as well as on local spend at luxury boutiques. This was highly restrictive, given that many other cards, such as UOB PRVI is offering 2.4 miles on *all* overseas spend. Oh, also? There’s a cap in miles earned for overseas spending too.

The new card improved the earning rates significantly: 1.4 miles per dollar spent locally, and 2 miles for all overseas spend.

Best part? No conversion fees, no cap in spending.

2. Improved dining programme, introducing IHG Gourmet Collection

UOB runs a fairly decent dining programme, with a good partners network that constantly offers its cardmembers good deals.

For the old card, the dining rewards used to be quite grey: they listed on their website “dining privileges at renowned Michelin-starred and celebrity chef restaurants, such as a complimentary glass of wine, dining discount or private kitchen tour”, which really isn’t anything concrete.

The refreshed card offers an expanded dining privileges, the star of which was a complimentary one year IHG Gourmet Collection (worth S\$388), essentially offering a flat 25% off food and beverage at participating restaurants in IHG hotels across Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. Other benefits include:

- 15% off best flexible rate on all room types
- 2 hours of free parking when dining at any participating restaurant (ex-Crowne Plaza Changi and HI Singapore Atrium)
- 3 x \$40nett Gourmet Collection Certificates for each one of the participating hotels excluding Holiday Inn Express® hotels.
- 2 x \$40nett Gourmet Collection Certificates, valid across all participating IHG Singapore and Batam properties excluding Holiday Inn Express® hotels.
- 1 Group Dining Certificate per hotel, offering 50% off the total food bill, for up to ten persons. Not valid at Holiday Inn Express® hotels. Cannot be used with Gourmet

Collection card discount.

- 1 Complimentary Cake per hotel, valid at any restaurant. Valid with a minimum of two diners ordering of two main courses or buffets where applicable. Advance order of 2 days is required. Not valid at Holiday Inn Express® hotels.
- 1 Complimentary Bottle of House Wine per hotel, for a minimum of two diners ordering of two main courses or buffets where applicable. Not valid at Holiday Inn Express® hotels.
- 1 “Stay One Night, Receive One Night” Room Certificate including breakfast for two guests, subject to availability. Black-out dates apply. Valid on Friday, Saturday or Sunday night only. Valid at any participating IHG® Singapore and Batam hotels.

However, do note that there's a spending quota of S\$1,000 to hit if you want to continue enjoying the complimentary membership for the next year. Otherwise, there will be a preferential rate of S\$68 (UP S\$388) that will be levied on the card, which is still a very good deal.



GRAND HYATT SINGAPORE

The most sumptuous for you and your guests.

- Up to 50% off your total weekday lunch bill¹ at Pete's Place, Oasis and StraitsKitchen:
 - 2 adult diners enjoy 50% off
 - 3 adult diners enjoy 33% off
 - 4 adult diners enjoy 25% off
 - 5 adult diners enjoy 20% off
 - 6 adults diners and above enjoy 15% off
- Up to 30% off your total weekday lunch bill² at mezza9:
 - 2 to 10 adult diners enjoy 30% off
 - 11 adults diners and above enjoy 15% off

For reservations, please call your UOB Visa Infinite Concierge at 1800 253 2288.
Grand Hyatt Singapore 10 Scotts Road, Singapore 228211 Tel: 6738 1234

Apart from the IHG Gourmet Collection membership, there's also discounts for weekday lunch dining at Grand Hyatt Singapore, as well as RWS restaurants.

3. Four lounge access passes a year

The new card now comes with Dragon Pass, with four complimentary lounge visits a year. Subsequent visits are priced at US\$25 each.



So this means you get access to all pay-per-use lounges at Changi Airport, including all SATS lounges and Plaza Premium lounges. At the Airport Wellness Oasis at T1, Dragon Pass holders may also redeem a free 30 minute massage, so just in case you need a free one before you fly.

While an improvement over the last version of the card, this to me is a incredibly silly proposition for a card that commands such a high annual fee, given some competing cards (such as Citi Prestige) offers unlimited complimentary visits for cardholders and a guest.

4. Free Singtel ReadyRoam

This is the first such perk I have seen for a card, offering free data roaming for cardholders. While Citibank has the M1 branded credit card, that card only provides waiver for activation fees for Data Passport.

What UOB has offered for this card is a one-time activation of ReadyRoam each month, which is good for 1GB of data. Any more than that each month, you will foot the bill.

This will be funded through a rebate credited to the cardholder's statement, and can only be claimed when a complex set of requirements is met, including:

1. Having the phone subscription under the same name as the cardholder
2. Charging your Singtel bill to the UOB Visa Infinite Metal Card
3. Activating the ReadyRoam plan
4. Travel overseas in the same month as the activation of the plan

My question is: how will UOB verify that you actually did activate the service or that you actually travelled overseas, if you don't use the card overseas? Do they have access to the bill from Singtel? That will be very worrying.


While this is a good perk to have, I will rather that the terms are not so onerous.

5. Lower annual fee, better annual gift

Apart from the income requirement, the corresponding annual fee has been reduced significantly too. The old Visa Infinite card required an annual fee of S\$1926, which you will be given 60,000 miles (UNI\$30,000) in return. The new card now requires only S\$642, and you will get 25,000 miles (UNI\$12,500) in return. This works out to about 2.56 cents per mile, much better than the previous 3.2 cents for the sky-high annual fee.

What remains the same

Some of the things that remain the same as the previous edition of the card include entry to private clubs such as Tower Club and the China Club, along with dining benefits. If private clubs are your thing, or you have a lot of business networking to do, this may not be a bad thing in lieu of having to shell out for annual membership fees at these places.



PRESTIGIOUS MEMBERS-ONLY CLUB ACCESS

Tower Club Singapore

- Exclusive access to dine at Tower Club Singapore
- 50% off dim sum at Ba Xian on Saturdays
- Enjoy a complimentary bottle of premium wine on your birthday
- Complimentary evening valet parking

The China Club, Singapore

- Exclusive unlimited access to dine at China Club Singapore
- Enjoy a complimentary bottle of champagne on your birthday
- Complimentary parking

For all reservations, please call your UOB Visa Infinite Concierge at 1800 253 2288.

The Visa Luxury Hotel collection and car rental benefits also remain, but these are also available to holders of all Visa Signature cards or higher. Also, you are almost better off scouting for better deals elsewhere than through these phantom perks.

Of course, the card comes with complimentary travel insurance, UOB travel concierge, which are almost staple for most of the platinum cards and above for UOB.

Conclusion

The UOB Visa Infinite metal card definitely has improved its dining proposition significantly, particularly with the inclusion of IHG's Gourmet Collection membership.

Also, with the lower annual fee and income requirement, the card is now pegged at a more appropriate level for the perks that they are giving out with the card. At the previous S\$350,000 p.a. income requirement, this is hardly an attractive card.

However, as a travel card, it is neither competitive on its miles earn rate, or for its travel perks such as lounge access. In comparison, Citi Prestige gives you unlimited entries with Priority Pass, which is definitely an edge over the UOB Visa Infinite metal card.

credit card, singapore, UOB