



# Travel Industry TODAY



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# ARE YOU IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL II

Steve Gillick

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26 Sep: 2012: Readers really liked Steve Gillick's Long Haul article and had lots to say about it. Here's the second half. Read, learn, enjoy.



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## Planning your own flight schedule

The airline will pretty well tell you when things are about to happen including:

- When the flight will depart the gate
- ‘Take off’ and Landing times
- When the beverage service and first food service will begin
- When the mid-flight snack will be served
- When the final meal will be served

Therefore you can plan your own ‘activities’ during the flight: when you want to sleep or go for a walk or watch one of the 3 movies they will usually show on a long-haul flight

## What to eat / drink

- Stay irrigated! Flying tends to de-hydrate you, so drink a lot- (and this is why you may prefer an aisle seat for easy escape to the washroom)

- Don't drink a lot of alcohol ♦ as this tends to dehydrate you even more
- Don't eat too much. You don't want to endure a 13 hour flight feeling bloated and uncomfortable.
- Remember that if your 6th sense tells you not to eat something that is new or looks or smells 'interesting', listen to it! This is why you brought some snacks with you ♦ just in case.

### **What to physically do for 12-13-14 hours**

- Read
- Watch movies
- Watch people
- Catch some sleep
- Eat
- Go for a walk to the back of the plane
- Stand at the back and do some stretches
- Freshen up, brush your teeth, wash your face
- Drink lots of water
- Use the washroom as required
- Reflect on your destination
- Chat up the flight attendant –or your neighbour ♦ about things to do at the destination (what's the best bar, the best restaurant, where can I get amazing photos etc.)

Pretty soon it will be time to freshen up again; start collecting your belongings and put them back into your carry-on.

- The Flight attendant will hand out the immigration card and/or custom cards for you to fill out (which is another reason why you brought your own pen with you)

- Land, Disembark, Go through Immigration, Collect your bags, Go through Customs and there you are!

## Secrets of the Experts

1) Limited washrooms mean you need to maximize your timing:

*Good times to use the washroom and avoid the line ups*

- After you board the plane (but only if you are close to the washroom so you don't hold up the boarding process)
- When the flight attendants wheel the serving cart past your seat and you have 10 rows of people in front of you that need to be served before your food arrives
- A few minutes before the end of any of the in-flight movies
- A few minutes after you finish your meal, before the trays are collected pile your tray on top of your travelling companion's and use the washroom
- As soon as the aisle clears after the final snack is served.

2) Bring your own entertainment system. Many people will bring an ipod, computer (or similar). Don't forget to bring a back-up battery in case yours runs out.

3) Personal reflection: Make a list of things you have wanted to think about. With your laptop or your pen and paper in hand use your time to be

creative, or to complete something you have been meaning to do for a while. Always wanted to get your resume in order? Always wanted to write a book about travel? Here is a great opportunity.

4) Learn a language. There is so much you can download on your ipod or personal listening device. Programmes such as Earworms or Rosetta Stone or Berlitz are a great way to learn some words in the language of the destination you are about to visit. The nice thing is that there will be people on the flight returning to their home country and if you feel like chatting, you can get some practice (and some correction) on how to pronounce certain words

5) Research your destination. Get out the map and the Guide book and do some trip planning. Ask a person on the flight (or one of the flight attendants) if they have any recommendations for special restaurants or attractions or places to take photos (or whatever your interest is)

6) Make friends with at least one flight attendant. Not every passenger treats them nicely ♦ so you can! Make a friend and then get a smile whenever that person walks by your seat. You may even find that your drinks are replenished a bit faster.

7) Above all, remember that 'getting there' is part of the joy of travel. If you want to have one of those 'National Geographic Magazine' experiences, then you have to go outside of your usual travel zone. Want to start checking countries off your "Gee I've always wanted to go there" list, and then get prepared for that long-haul flight. And you know what? You will most likely say to yourself, once you land at your destination, "That was not so bad, after all. Time really flew by quickly."

Counsel your clients to challenge the ordinary. Step out of their self-imposed travel zone and explore the world. There is nothing to lose except old travel habits and memories of returning to the same destination for the tenth year in a row!



Steve Gillick

A tireless promoter of "infectious enthusiasm about travel", Steve delivers his wisdom once a month in his column *The Travel Coach*.