

Post



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# Off to Paris, yet again - July 3, 2024

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## ***SUMMARY***

Up well before dawn to get to the airport two hours before our 5:58am flight to JFK. Had lunch at JFK then Lyfted to Newark. Hung out in La Compagnie airline's very nice lounge with champagne, beer and food. Boarded our all-business class flight to Paris Orly with more champagne and food. Attempted to sleep with some success. - Karen

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## ***DETAIL***

Well, today's the day we head back towards Europe. Temperatures in Texas are getting up there and it's time to get away. We've been planning this trip for weeks, months even. The main course will be a long cruise up and down the coast of Norway but the appetizer is France, starting with Paris. They're hosting the summer Olympic Games there but we'll be long gone by then. It'll be interesting, though, to see the venues they've erected for the games and how they've (reportedly) cleaned up the city and Siene.

Our Paris flight is at 7 p.m. which sound damn reasonable, but alas it's out of Newark, New Jersey and we're flying back east on American (to use miles) so we have to get there in plenty of time (in case something goes wrong). Word is that our travel day, July 3rd, is forecast to be one of the busiest travel days of the year.

Our plane from Austin departs Austin at 6 a.m. so our pre-paid Ride-share is picking us up at 3:35 a.m. If our flight is delayed or cancelled, we can change our ride, but have to do it at least one hour before our scheduled time. As such I'm getting up at 2:30 a.m. Luckily we've been going to bed, and getting up, earlier and earlier. 2:30 a.m. shouldn't be a problem.

It turned out our flights leaving on time, yay! We finish the last of the 50 things on my check list (we'll be gone close to two months), drag our bags outside and lock the door. Jorge, from Cuba, drives us to the Austin airport. At 3:45 a.m. there's almost no traffic. The airport is busy but at 4 a.m. there won't be anywhere to buy coffee for another hour. This is an outrage!

Our flight's full, of course. We booked our tickets and got our seats long ago, and with my status with American we're in the exit row. When the flight attendant finally wheels the cart to our row I get a beer (figuring we're on vacation and my body clock already thinks it's 2 p.m.) Later, waiting outside the lavatory to get rid of it, I notice a sign that, in essence, says "there's no ashtray in this lavatory, but there is one in the lavatory across the aisle. Sure enough, there is! Go figure.

At JFK we head to the ride share area to grab a Lyft over to Newark. Along the way innumerable swarthy gentlemen offered us rides to wherever, thank you no. Between airports it's an hour drive and costs \$150+ plus tip, yikes. At Newark we now have many hours til our flight, and even until the airline's lounge opens. For jollies we weight our luggage. We're carrying on, so between suitcase and handbag/daypack we're allowed 18Kg each. We weight our stuff and find we each have 18.0Kg. What are the odds!

Close to check in time we get in line and meet a very cute Bhodi, a totes adorbs wirehaired terrier. He'll be on the flight with us, but doesn't have his own seat as he prefers to sleep with his owner. Eventually, at check in, we're asked if Paris is our final destination today. Well, tomorrow, but yes. Laugh, yes, tomorrow. At the lounge we avail ourselves of the free beer and champagne, and food. It's OK. The price is right. We down a sleeping pill on our way out of the lounge.

On the plane we get comfortable, have a pre-flight glass of champagne, and I'm asleep in no time. Karen stays up for dinner (nothing to write a blog entry about) and soon is asleep herself. If all goes according to plan, when we open our eyes we'll be in (or near) Paris.

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## Photos



Finally in Newark, outside we can see the Big Apple off in the distance.



Inside we take advantage of their scales to check the weight of all our luggage. Each of us has exactly 18.0Kg, precisely the amount we're allowed to bring.

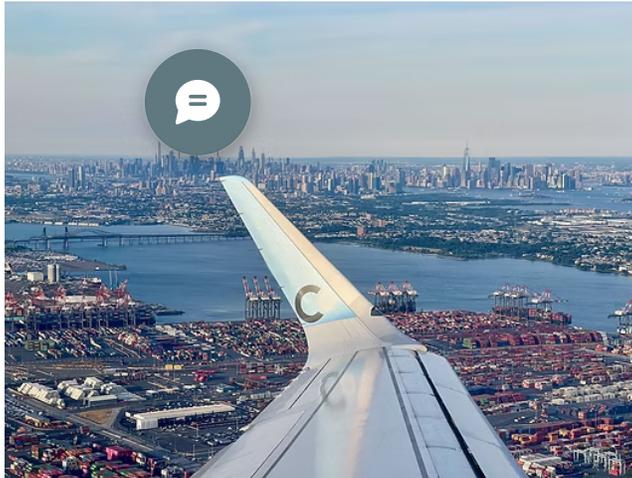


Waiting in line to check in we meet Bhodi,

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In the airline lounge we help ourselves to food and beverage. We want to sleep on the flight so we're having dinner now.



Finally in the air we get a better view of Manhattan Island. Sun's heading west and we're heading east, so we're hoping for a dark cabin soon. See you in the morning.

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