

Post



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# Headed for Paris (through Newark!) - May 12-13, 2025

Updated: May 16, 2025

## ***SUMMARY***

Late afternoon flight to Houston, overnight at an airport hotel. Up early, early for our flight to LaGuardia. Uber to Newark where we had several hours to kill which we accomplished by wandering the terminal, having lunch, standing in line at La Compagnie check-in desk for a boarding pass that would give us the TSA Pre privileges we've come to appreciate. All you can eat and drink in the airline's private lounge then boarded the "all Business Class" flight. Such a treat! No dinner (we were full), and right to bed, if not to sleep. - Karen

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### ***DETAIL***

Getting to Paris meant getting first to New Jersey. Our airline only flies out of Newark which has been in the news of late as being a place you don't want to be flying in or out of. Argh. To minimize our chance of problems we've booked a flight to Houston the night before and on to Newark early the next morning (so we have possible backup flights later in case of problems). We don't want to miss our connection! With the Newark news we changed that to "fly into Laganardia and ride share over to Newark".

All went fairly smoothly. Some guy in line in front of me going through security left his expensive headphones behind and they were paging him to come back. I saw him as we walked through the airport and checked to see if he'd gone back. He had. Getting on the plane we are in one of the last groups and they are saying "room for only ten more carry-ons". We were like 10th and 11th in line. We both got to carry our luggage on, then there is not enough room, I have to check my bag. After a few minutes they figured out there is enough room. Whew!

In Houston at 3:30 am our alarm woke us up. We shower as we won't be able to again until late tomorrow afternoon, Paris time. It's too early for the free shuttle so we ride share over. At 4:30 am at the Houston International Airport it's eerily empty and quiet. What few employees are there are relaxing, awaiting the crush they know is coming soon. We're the first people in line at the TSA check and there's really no one behind us.

Karen asks me what gate we're flying out of. Off the top of my head I seem to recall E11 and sure enough the sign there does say LaGuardia, Yay. An hour or more passes and my phone and watch chirp and buzz and say boarding is going on. No one is moving and there are no announcements being made. Weird! We look back at the board and it says we're at the gate for a later LaGuardia flight. Whoops!

The guy in the center seat, sitting beside me on my non-working ear side, asks in an unintelligible accent if I'd mind changing seats with his brother "up there" so they can sit together. What? He repeats it a few times, saying his brother is in seat E12 (he means 12E but doesn't know how this stuff works). The lady in the window seat behind this guy is waving her hands furiously, mouthing the words "don't do it, it's a center seat!" Ah, of course it is. Sorry, no, I can't.

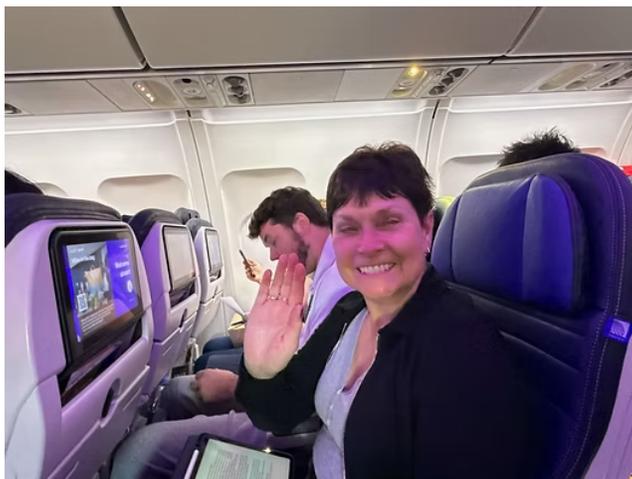
Over the PA it's explained why our flight attendant crew are all wearing neon blue jackets. They're trainees. They've been studying and practicing for the past seven weeks. This is their first time "flying solo". They'll be the ones trying to help us understand how these complicated seat belts work and serving us stale pretzels. Also onboard, though, is their instructor and a complete other experienced backup crew, just in case things get deep and dark. It's a crowded flight. We're told after this flight they'll be full fledged flight attendants. I'm thinking about all this as a young man (who doesn't look old enough to shave) is standing over me, trying to pour very hot coffee into a flimsy paper cup as the plane gently jerks from side to side.

We're in Newark by noon and the mandatory check-in for our flight's not open until 4:30. We have an OK lunch and then mill around beyond the empty cordoned waiting queue for our check-in. There are more and more people who come and stand around, too. Having done this before I eventually just go and stand first in the previously non-existent line, 30 minutes before the desk opens. Fairly soon everyone's in line behind me all thinking "Doh, why didn't I do that!".

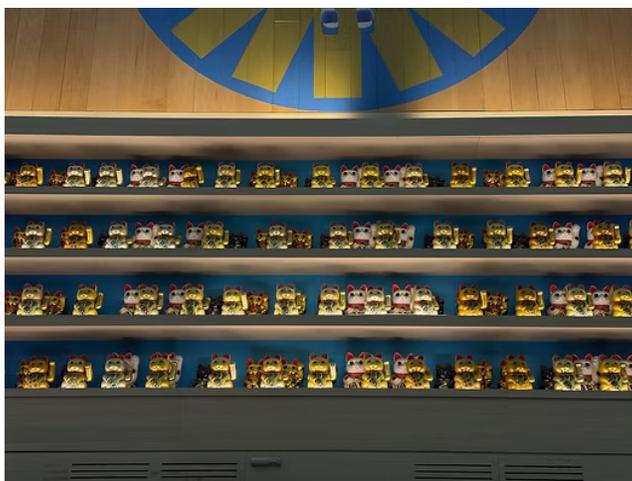
Checked in and through security we hang out in the special lounge this airline (La Compagnie) has for its passengers. We have an OK dinner and some drinks and eventually we're on the plane. We board, stash our stuff, take an OTC sleeping pill, and say no to dinner. We lay back and get as comfortable as we can for the flight. Hopefully the next thing we will hear is "Ladies and gentlemen, we are approaching Paris".

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## Photos



Karen waving goodbye (to her sister)  
before we take off from Austin



In Houston, at the George Bush (W? HW?)  
International Airport we stumble around  
at 5 am looking for breakfast. At a  
Japanese sushi restaurant we pass fifty or  
so lucky cats wave at us in semi-unison as  
we go by.



Finally in Newark and checked in we hang out at the airline's lounge before we board the plane. We're carrying on so we have all our things for the next six weeks with us. Burger, lentil soup, and caprese salad split for dinner.



On the plane to Paris at last Karen looks for our seats. The seat numbers are printed in medium height letters in medium grey on that dark grey strip, just below the overhead luggage compartment doors. No one (including we) could find them. Could the design be any more French? (wink)



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sleeping, but we do check what we're missing. We see the "Smocked Chicken" and try to envision a chicken in a smock. I'm not sure we have any better luck imagining a wheel of gouda in a smock.



One last 'goodbye' before we head off to Paris and head off (hopefully) to sleepy-land.



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