

This is the second of the series of
'Traveling with TARGET'

In this series, this medium travels to unquestionably one of the best hotels in Germany in order to enjoy a German Christmas. Then, it is a train journey to Prague, the Capital City of The Czech Republic. A drive through the German countryside via limousine puts the TARGET team in Salzburg, Austria, in order to enjoy the ringing in of the 2009-Year at the world-famous Sacher Hotel. What may be surprising to TARGET Subscribers is to learn that things are not, always, that which they are cracked up to be after scanning stories, written by self-serving, travel reviewers of the Popular Press.

FLYING ON EMIRATES TO EUROPE

Flying on Emirates Airlines, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, from the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to Hamburg, Germany, starts from one's home, where-ever it may be within the 416 square miles of the territory.

A Mercedes-Benz limousine, complete with uniformed chauffeur, picks one up at one's home, places the luggage in the boot of the luxury motor car, and it is off to Terminal 2, Cheklapkok Airport.

The effortless journey takes about 35 minutes and, then, the chauffer requests that his charges ought to stay in the motor car while the luggage is offloaded and placed onto trolleys for the 2-minute walk to the First-Class, Check-In Counter.

After checking in the luggage, it is off to The Emirates Lounge, close to Departure Gate 60 where a hot meal awaits all passengers.

At the 80-seater, Emirates Lounge, the service and the food are all excellent, equal, in fact, to many good restaurants in the HKSAR.

This was the beginning of **TARGET's** second series of travel tales.

In this 11-part series, this medium travels to Hamburg, Germany, staying at the 112 year-old, Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten for 6 days before taking the train to Prague, The Czech Republic, where the hotel of choice was Mandarin Oriental, Prague, where this medium stayed for 6 days.

Then, after a return to Hamburg for another 6-day stay at Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten in order to experience a German Christmas, it is off to Salzburg, Austria, in order to sample the very famous Hotel Sacher Salzburg, the 'sister' of the hotel of the same name in Vienna, which is the birthplace of the world-famous Sacher Torte, and to celebrate the coming of the New Year.

Emirates Airlines was selected over other airlines because:

- (a) It is about \$HK20,000 cheaper than most other airlines for a long-haul, first-class trip;
- (b) Emirates Airlines does not impose a fuel surcharge on passengers; and,
- (c) Any airline must be an improvement over Air France, the airline that transported **TARGET**, during the first travel series from the HKSAR to Paris, France, and Italy.

The aeroplane from Cheklapkok Airport to Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, was an Airbus 330-200.

It is not the best of aeroplanes by today's standards.

Of that, there can be no question.

The first-class seats are rather hard, their reclining position is very tight (especially, if one weighs more than 100 pounds), and one has to be fleet of foot when nature calls because, in the first-class section of the aeroplane, one is competing for the commode with 12 other, first-class passengers as well as 8 crew members.

In respect of **TARGET**'s seat, the cassette player broke down so one could not view movies on demand.

It was minor inconvenience, but one had to ponder whether or not the aeroplane had been completely inspected, prior to take-off.

As for the menu on this 8 hour, 30-minute journey, it comprised only snacks and a light breakfast.

The menu was labelled, '*A la Carte Dining*', and, although it was stated that one may order a complete meal, it was an outright lie.

However, luckily for **TARGET**, since the flight left Cheklapkok Airport at 0034 hours on Friday, December 12, 2008, a full meal had, already, been enjoyed at The Emirates Lounge.

With regard to the service, during the flight, it left a lot to be desired, not because the crew was unwilling to serve passengers, but because they, clearly, had not been fully trained as to their duties.

If one wanted pyjamas, for instance, one had to ask for them.

The same was true for a bag of personal toiletries. And so on.

It mattered little, also, whether or not one was strapped into one's seat, during landings and take-offs, because it appeared that the members of the crew paid scant attention to such requirements.

On arrival at Dubai International Airport, one was subjected to a complete search of one's belongings, including shoes, all hand-carry baggage, and a complete screening of all incoming passengers.

It was a very strict search and one had to be prepared for a 30-minute wait before one was cleared to proceed passed the first check-point.

The First-Class Lounge at Dubai is wonderful and one is served a wide assortment of foods, from pâté de foie gras, to simple scrambled eggs, to a steak – at 0500 hours!

One may enjoy a shower at the Lounge and there is, also, a spa to enjoy if one feels the urge.

The wait at Dubai was an enjoyable 4 hours before the next leg of the journey.

**A View of The First Class Lounge
At Dubai, The United Arab
Emirates**

The trip from Dubai to Hamburg, lasting 6 hours, was aboard a Boeing 777-300.

This aeroplane was a vast improvement over the ageing Airbus 330-200 which **TARGET** had to endure on the first leg of this journey.

In this aeroplane, one is able to enjoy a hot meal, if one so desires – which was, also, a huge improvement over the victuals, offered on the Airbus 330-200.

The pouring champagne was Dom Pérignon, Vintage 2000.

The trip was uneventful; the service was excellent.

However, once again, the crew was slovenly when it came to making certain that all passengers were strapped in for take-offs and landings.

On arrival at Hamburg at about 1330 hours, **TARGET**'s team was met by a chauffeur who insisted to take control of the luggage, comprising 3, large suitcases and 3, hand-carry bags.

The drive to the hotel took about 35 minutes on a cold, winter's afternoon where the temperature was at about 2 degrees Celsius.

And so began a very enjoyable stay at one of the best hotels in Germany, a stay that will long be remembered.

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