

TRAVELLING WITH TARGET TO GERMANY

Travelling long distances by air, aside from being almost a complete and utter bore, can well become a painful experience unless one is sufficiently fortunate to select the correct carrier.

In retrospect, as far as **TARGET** () was concerned, it was very apparent that this medium had chosen the wrong carrier to take our three-member team to Germany on November 28, 2015.

Travelling on Business Class from Hongkong to Munich, Germany, aboard Flight LH731 on an Airbus 340-600, belonging to Deutsche Lufthansa AG, an international carrier, commonly known as, simply, Lufthansa, was an experience that this scribe would not hesitate to describe as being one of the worst 13 hours of air travel that this medium has, ever, had to endure.

The Business Class seats, on this flight, were, really, quite basic and, among other things, they were terribly uncomfortable (one's bottom starts to ache within two hours of sitting in an upright position).

Cosmetically, however, the accommodation had a pleasing appearance, at least at first glance.

For anybody, who is more than five feet tall, weighing in excess of 100 pounds, it is quite difficult to obtain a comfortable position in one's seat in order to snooze a little as **TARGET** learned within a couple of hours into the flight.

One of the many problems that this medium came to realise, very early in the journey, was that the seats were, really, very poorly designed, being too narrow for the average, European adult male or female with leg room, being simply quite inadequate.

If one attempts to assume the supine position in order to obtain a modicum of comfort, one quickly discovers that the leg rest, when fully extended from beneath the seat, causes one's body to become too cramped so that one must curl up one's legs in order to try to fit into the very tight place.

When the blood stops flowing sufficiently in one's legs so as to cause one to feel acute discomfort due to cramps, it is far too late to think of trying to obtain some much-needed rest.

One is soon, thereafter, forced to give up the ghost and to sit in the semi-darkness of the cabin, praying for an end to one's suffering.

But incantations to that Being, up there, is of no avail.

As for the food that was served, during this long, boring flight from Hongkong, no words can describe it: It was just that bad.

After about four hours into the journey, one's thoughts turn to praying and asking Him:

'When will this horror stop?'

When the Captain informed passengers that the Airbus was making a descent into Munich Airport, it was as though one's prayers had, at long last, been answered.

At the immigration counter of Munich Airport, one finds oneself, looking into the face of very friendly Government official who, after asking as to the reason for **TARGET**'s visit to this city of about 1.50 million people, stamps the passports and, within minutes, one has collected one's luggage and is out of the airport and into a waiting motor car, which speeds down a highway at 6:15 a.m. in the direction of the heart of the city of Munich.

The Lufthansa flight is, mercifully, soon forgotten (praise be the Lord!) ... except for the muscle ache that lasts for a couple of days.

The return journey to Hongkong, on January 8, 2016, was diametrically opposite to that of November 28, 2015.

The reason: The aeroplane appeared to be more modern than the one that transported **TARGET** to Germany.

But, for the most part, the food continued to be horrible.

For breakfast, for instance, one was told that insufficient scrambled-egg portions had been ordered and that passengers were told that they must eat fried rice, German style or be happy with some stale rolls and two slices of insipid cheese.

(Actually, the fried rice was not too bad, as it turned out.)

The Mandarin Oriental, Munich

The Mandarin Oriental, Munich, is nestled in the heart of the old part of the city of Munich, within a short walk to Maximilianstrasse, the best – and the most-expensive – shopping street in the city.

The hotel building is 135 years old, having been, originally, Munich's opera house.

In 1990, the building was converted into a hotel and, about one decade later, it was purchased by the Mandarin Oriental Group.

The hotel has 48 rooms and 25 suites, all of which are tastefully decorated.

As hotel accommodation goes, it ranks highly, no doubt, however, it does not have a fine-dining restaurant!

In this medium's opinion, the Japanese eatery that was opened last November was a terrible decision on the part of Management.

It could well turn out to be a red herring in due course.

There are so many very good, Bavarian restaurants in Munich, especially those, specialising in the cuisine of this part of Germany, that one would find it exceedingly difficult to go hungry in this lovely old city.

As for the service in the hotel, it is excellent: One only has to hint of a request – and Bob's your uncle.

TARGET did, however, have to suffer from (a) an electrical fault in one of the rooms that left this room in total darkness and took more than five hours to remedy the electrical problem and (b) from a complete failure of the heating system in both rooms that took the best part of eight hours to remedy.

For the most part, the serving staff of the hotel try their best to make one comfortable, but, when one is at the mercy of technical staff, one has to grit one's teeth because to anger such workers would be counter-productive.

Interestingly, although this medium had booked a suite of four rooms for 42 nights, Management did not see

its way clear even to grace **TARGET** with a glass of Champagne as a welcoming libation.

The General Manager of the hotel is Mr Wolfgang Greiner, a German national.

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