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MAKING BUSINESS TRAVEL WORK FOR YOU

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE OAG FLIGHT GUIDE WORLDWIDE December 2004

CHEERS: CHICAGO

Stylish Tippling

IN THE

Old Toddlin' Town

PLUS:

Biz Travel Secrets
from Advertising Agency
Warrior **Jerry Gibbons**

Regions: New Air Routes,
Hotel Expansions and
Airport News

Publisher's Letter

WILL 2005 BE THE YEAR FOR THE BUSINESS TRAVELER?

Finally, some positive news for the travel industry. After all the challenges we've faced in the travel industry the last few years, news that forecasts a growth in business travel—growth that could exceed pre-2000 levels—is, well, music to my ears. Predictions for 2005 shows both domestic and international travel to be on the upswing.

According to the latest Travel Industry Association of America's (TIA) forecast, "overall traveler spending by domestic and international visitors in the U.S. is forecast(ed) to increase 6.9 percent by (year-end) to nearly \$593 billion; up from \$555 billion in 2003. An additional 5.3 percent increase in 2005 will bring expenditures to well beyond the \$600 billion mark to \$624 billion."

The forecast goes on to say, "...this is the year of recovery the travel industry has been waiting for. Its the first year since 2000 that all travel industry sectors are showing increases in demand, with some finally exceeding 2000 levels."

Other notable statistics:

- U.S. residents will take nearly 144 million business trips by the end of the year, an increase of 4 percent over 2003.
- In 2005, business travel will increase 3.6 percent to nearly 149 million trips.
- International traveler spending in the U.S. is projected to increase 11.2 percent by the end of the year to nearly \$72 billion, and increase nearly 8 percent in 2005 to over \$77 billion. However, these spending levels are well below the \$82 billion spent by international visitors in 2000.
- TIA forecasts leisure travel volume will grow 2.9 percent this year up from a 1.9 percent increase in 2003. It will increase once again in 2005 by nearly 2 percent.

It's great to end the year on a positive note. Between the challenge of a weak economy and the stress of the increased security, the last couple of years in business travel have been hard on all of us. I hope that you will take time during this holiday season to reward yourself for having "survived" the toughest period business travelers have ever had to endure. It looks like things are improving, so here's to a bright, happy New Year!

Happy Travels,



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Opinions

Updates

Insider Tips

Reflections

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OAG Frequent Flyer Forum

Frequent Flyer's goal is to give travelers opportunities to applaud superior customer service or to gripe about bad customer care. And many times, we take these accolades and complaints straight to the source, so the airlines, hotels and other travel service providers learn how to serve you better.

It is all about our readers!

Frequent Flyer is an advocate for business travelers and part of our editorial mission is to offer our readers a forum where they can voice their opinions, both good and bad, about the airlines they fly, hotels they stay in, destinations they visit, tech products they use and more. Our Forum is the best way to discover travel tips such as the best new restaurants, ways to upgrade to first class and hidden freebies hotels are offering.

Forum

We really want to hear from you and share your experiences with other travelers. Please write to us via e-mail at FFeditor@oag.com or by postal mail to Lisa Davis, Editor, Frequent Flyer, 3025 Highland Parkway, Suite 200, Downers Grove, IL 60515. **Every response we publish will receive a free gift.** It is our way of saying thank you for taking the time to talk to us and your fellow travelers.



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When Jerry Gibbons broke into advertising in 1957, all the power hitters were silver-tongued, pinstriped, buttoned-down Manhattan hucksters who sold soap, shortening and snazzy mobiles by jackhammering a boring spiel or jingle into the consumer's subconscious. Two years later, a thoughtful, low-key writer named Bill Bernbach put an odd beetle-shaped German car on a white page, wrote the words "think small," and changed the advertising world forever.

WISE ADVERTISING AGENCY **WARRIOR** Bends with Times but Does Not Bow

BY CHRIS BARNETT

Back when Gibbons was a rookie, advertising-agency rainmakers traveled like royalty, flying first class, staying in fancy suites, feasting on porterhouse, and inhaling three martinis at lunch. "Damn the expense account, just get the advertising account," were the marching orders. But free-wheel spending on travel and entertainment changed in the 1980s when lunches started going PC — salads and sparkling water — and agency profit margins were suffering.

These days, with the old 15-percent commission and 17.25-percent markups as dead as Pan Am, a lot of ad folks fly Southwest or economy class on the majors and pray they can snag an upgrade with miles ponied up from their personal accounts.

Back When Flying Was Grand

In five decades on the road, Gibbons, now executive vice president of the 1,200-plus agency offices of the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA), the most influential 10 percent of the 13,000 agencies nationwide, has lived through a laundry list of changes in his industry and in business travel. Some he's embraced; others he adapted to; and still others he's ignored.

Gibbons, who started in a Young and Rubicam mailroom, won his spurs building, heading or co-owning some of the most creative and successful advertising word and picture factories in San Francisco — the West Coast Mecca for his craft. His own tour of the front lines included a seven-year stint

as president and CEO of legendary Doyle Dane Bernbach's San Francisco office. (Jerry joined a year before Bill Bernbach died so he did meet the man who triggered advertising's "creative revolution.") Gibbons is an incurable sentimentalist who remembers when flying was fun, client lunches were long, and hotels and restaurant owners had presence and personality.

"Flying in the '60s, everything was better," he recalls. "Seats were bigger and had more legroom. Drinks were free. Flight attendants were friendlier and everyone was looser. Being based in San Francisco, I flew United to New York, Delta to Atlanta and Miami, and everyone always flew PSA to L.A." Gibbons loved the PSA Midnight

Flyer for \$13 one-way. He could work all day, take a client to dinner, and dash to LAX to catch the last bird north.

"It was all business travelers and college kids, very few families," he recalls. "You'd get a contact just being on the plane."

Gibbons tells of the time in the late '60s, when he had worked round the clock on a new ad campaign for Fuller Paint Company in Los Angeles. During the presentation, his creative director colleague shocked the client by thrusting his hand in a can of yellow paint on an expensive conference table just to demo the power of color. They were going to spend the night in L.A. but changed their minds and made the near midnight dash from a saloon in South Gate to Los Angeles International.

"I left the car at Hertz, we jumped on the TWA flight to San Francisco, and immediately fell asleep. I heard the pilot announce over the loudspeaker, 'Fasten your seatbelts;

we're about to land in Denver.' Denver?" Turns out the plane was hijacked, diverted to the Mile High City, and Gibbons slept through it all.

PSA itself was hijacked by USAir in a late 1980s acquisition and the laughs and fun vanished. Gibbons switched his loyalties to

"I always get to know the general manager; I demonstrate some knowledge about his hotel.



I get better service that way."

on the road
with Jerry Gibbons

United Airlines for transcon flights, mainly because of its Mileage Plus program. He flies Southwest on short hauls, mainly to Los Angeles, and books Delta when going south. "What really drive my airline choice are destination, departure time and price," he says. Gibbons insists he will not fly long, out-of-the-way routes just to rack up frequent-flier miles, even though he uses his own miles to upgrade from coach to business or first class whenever he can.

Travel in 2004

Gibbons, who hops around the 14 Western states meeting with the top brass at AAAA member agencies and attending conferences throughout the United States, recently tried JetBlue and found it "all right." "I will fly it again because you know what you're getting," he says. "Other airlines have lowered their quality standards."

While a rising tide of business people book their own flights online, Gibbons says the San Francisco office of the Four As (as the trade association is usually called) is going back to a travel agent. “For years and years, we used a travel agent and then, on a companywide level, we tried Expedia,” he explains. The San Francisco office “had a hard time making it work — too many protocols, too many screens — and we couldn’t see where we were saving time and money,” Gibbon says. Still, some flights are booked directly on the Web.

Hotel Choices

In choosing hotels, Gibbons admits to being of three minds. He consults an extensive network of friends and colleagues in different cities for recommendations. He also sticks with old favorites “because I’m comfortable there,” he confides. “They know me and take care of me.” But he also likes “variety and to find new places.”

His tastes in hotels are pretty eclectic. The ad man will often choose a Kimpton “boutique” hotel, a hip Ian Shrager hotel, and a Ritz-Carlton or Four Seasons hotel, but only when the Four As has events there and he can get the low room rate often granted top executives of an organization staging a conference.

It comes as no surprise that Jerry Gibbons doesn’t just check into a hotel and closet himself in the room. He networks and shmoozes among the staff to get acquainted. “I always get to know the general manager; I demonstrate some knowledge about his hotel,” he maintains. “I get better service that way.”

Wining and Dining

Nor does he take time out every day for a business lunch, even in San Francisco, which has great restaurants wall to wall. “Lunch isn’t an everyday occurrence anymore,” Gibbons says. “It’s more like an event. In the

old days if you were an account supervisor, or a creative director, and didn’t have a lunch date, you were dead.”

For one thing, while Moose’s, Tadich Grill and Sam’s are still alive and busy, most of the places that catered to the city’s ad and media crowd are gone or changed — places like Doro’s, Ernie’s, Pucci’s Pub, Tilden Place. True joints and saloons like Cookie’s Star Buffet and the late Morty Miller’s Templebar, where overworked copywriters would rush out for a cheap lunch — two drinks and a sandwich — have vanished.

“Flying in the ’60s, everything was better. Seats were bigger and had more legroom. Drinks were free. Flight attendants were friendlier and everyone was looser.”

Gibbons concedes traveling for business and entertaining clients and prospective customers is a bit of a high-wire act for him. “At my point in life, I’m looking for comfort but I don’t mean over-the-top luxury.” That’s why he often advises visitors to steer clear of hotel restaurants with lofty prices and venture out — with some guidance, of course. “I’d rather walk around and take my chances on a smaller restaurant that’s been recommended to me.”

Personal Favorites

What the near lifelong San Franciscan and longtime business traveler downplays is that he, on his own, is quite the gourmand. He’s also compiled a list of his personal favorite Bay Area eateries and has similar one-sheet guides to great eating in a half-dozen big-league cities where other advertising agency folks are his local, on-the-ground critics and scouts.

A lifelong PSA loyalist until it was bought and shut down in 1987, he is now a **United** and **Southwest** frequent flier, occasionally **Delta**.

Took his first **JetBlue** flight and terms it “all right.” Will try it again.

Bailed out of **Expedia**, back to a travel agent.

Books San Francisco business lunches at **Moose's**, **Sam's** and the new **Town Hall**.

Favors eclectic hotels — **Kimpton's** small “boutiques,” hip **Ian Shrager hotels**, **Ritz Carlton** and **Four Seasons** but only at discounted conference rates.

Out-of-town recommendations range from **Mothers** in New Orleans, to **Il Terrazzo Carmine** in Seattle, to **Whist** at the Viceroy Hotel, **Valentino's** in Santa Monica, California, and **Billie's** at 52nd and 1st in New York City.

Rents mainly Thunderbirds from **Hertz**.

EN ROUTE WITH JERRY GIBBONS

BY CHRIS BARNETT

Many places on his list are predictable to the city's homegrown foodies and locals but others are real discoveries, making his tip sheets a real service to visitors who don't want to rely on Zagat. A sampling of his listings: Mothers, a quirky, popular, locals mostly breakfast and lunch hangout in New Orleans (504-523-9656); Globe, an intimate late-night restaurant in San Francisco favored by the city's serious chefs who flock for a feeding after their shifts (415-391-4132); Il Terrazzo Carmine in Seattle (206-728-7000); Whist at The Viceroy in Santa Monica, California (310-451-7511). The lists go on.

Gibbons is a native Californian — Coalinga in the hot, dry Central Valley to be exact — so he drives to get around any town rather than crawl in a cab or a town car. Not exactly shocking is his penchant for rent-a-car-companies — the rental decision is based on their advertising. He rented from Alamo for a while when Hal Riney/Publicis was creating its wry, witty TV commercials. He has a soft spot for Avis because his old alma mater, Doyle, Dane, Bernbach, cooked up the iconic “We Try Harder” campaign. But most of his car-rental dollars go to Hertz,

largely because he can find Thunderbirds at most of their locations. “They're comfortable and it saves me time,” he says, “because I don't have to learn all about a different car each time I rent.”

Meantime, Jerry Gibbons was relaxing over lunch recently at Town Hall, an airy, comfortable, brand-new restaurant south of Market in San Francisco that looks like old San Francisco. He was tie-less, yet resplendent and relaxed in khakis and traditional blue blazer and noodling about future trends in branding things like food. He says the day is coming when top-quality branded foods will put their logos on menus — as a consumer service. If a restaurant serves, say, Niman Beef New York strip sirloins, just saying USDA prime beef is not enough to win over brand-savvy consumers.

Sure enough, Gibbons didn't order a slab of sirloin for lunch; he chose a sensible salad crowned with scallops for his protein and vegetables. The perfect choice in this low-carb, low-fat, low-sugar world. But he kicked it off with one ice cold, very, very, very dry martini served straight up with one olive in a beautiful glass. Some traditions die hard. **ff**

CHEERS: CHICAGO



STYLISH

tippling

IN THE OLD TODDLIN' TOWN

BY CHRIS BARNETT

AL CAPONE'S FAVORITE HAUNT Chicago crime lord Al Capone ran his vice empire out of plush suites in the old Lexington, Hawthorne and Metropole hotels. But to unwind after work with a drink, music and some gangster rap, he headed for the Green Mill, a Prohibition speakeasy at 4802 N. Broadway where young whiskey was bootlegged out through a trap door in the back and a tunnel under the street. The Green Mill was rumored to be a key link in Capone's supply chain.

Meeting a client or entertaining a prospect? Chicago is chockablock with stylish oases and inviting barrooms.

Libational historians say the entrepreneurial mob boss preferred a certain table at the Green Mill, across from the stage, and when he swaggered in, the band struck up his favorite song, “Rhapsody in Blue.” But he never ordered the house whiskey. Capone buff and amateur biographer Mario Gomes says the don drank Italian Chianti — too much of it — and usually got wasted. Yet a Green Mill barkeep today named Tom — no last name, please — says Capone’s real poison of choice was “coke” and not that syrupy sweet, fizzy water that mixes well with rum.

Demented from syphilis, Capone died of a heart attack in 1947 in Florida but the old (circa 1907) one-time speakeasy fared better. It is now a respectable cocktail lounge and jazz club with live music nightly and a lively bar. Martinis, Old Fashioneds and cocktails popular in the ’30s, ’40s and ’50s are stirred and served at approximately \$7 each. Cover charge is \$6 to \$15 depending on the band booked that night. There’s no surcharge for sitting at Capone’s table. Thirsty for more trivia on Big Al? Visit www.alcaponemuseum.com. (**Green Mill Cocktail Lounge, 773-878-5552**)

Where Legends are Made

Legend and press agency claim the Clark Bar at 2116 N. Clark was the scene of the St. Valentine’s Day Massacre in 1929. So what better place to have a Bloody Mary and soak up Chicago’s sordid saloon and hoodlum history? Not true. Here’s the lowdown on the mow down. Tommy guns crackled and blood

flowed a few doors away at the SMC Cartage Co. garage at 2122 N. Clark. Today, it’s a nursing-home lawn.

No one knows if City News Service reporter Walter Spirko, who scooped Chicago’s six dailies on the shoot-’em-up story, had a drink to calm his nerves. CNS journos, who inspired the classic newspaper movie *Front Page*, usually kept a half pint in the desk drawer and decompressed on a bar stool at the gritty Billy Goat Tavern. The bar, dating back to 1934, was itself the inspiration for the great “Cheezborger, Cheezborger, No Fries, Cheeps” *Saturday Night Live* skit. Any business traveler who fancies authentic thirst parlors should swing by for suds with owner Sam Sianis. (**Billy Goat Tavern, 430 N. Michigan Ave., 312-222-1525**)

A Private Club without the Fees but All the Ambience and Decor

Meeting a client or entertaining a prospect? Chicago is chockablock with stylish oases and inviting bar rooms catering to corporate buccaneers, their cronies, colleagues and customers. The polar opposite of the Green Mill is Seasons Bar in the Five Star, Five Diamond Four Seasons Hotel at 120 East Delaware Pl. Seasons is subdued and strikes me as a private club without the attitude — or membership dues. The intimate bar has 20-foot ceilings and a dozen brown leather bar chairs but the room also has nooks and crannies filled with leather chairs for private conversation. Need to caucus? Stake



Greenhouse Bar
Ritz-Carlton Hotel
160 East Pearson



Aria Bar
Fairmont Chicago
200 N. Columbus

out table 30, which has a sofa, chairs, dim lighting and seats four but two people fit far more comfortably.

Seasons is a sophisticated saloon in the middle of a work-like-a-dog, play and party-hard metropolis. You won't catch the Bears or NASCAR races on the telly because there is no television, no bar dice betting, no frat boys or sports fanatics ranting and cheering. *They* drink at Mike Ditka's cool joint over at 100 East Chestnut or 5,000 other watering holes in town. Here, longtime mixologists Irish Paul Murphy and Nikklas Berggren host a civilized crowd. Many are standup drinkers who lean toward martinis and Scotch.

But there's no shortage of creativity. A pedigree Seasons cocktail is the Iced Vine, a blend of fresh green grapes, Canadian Inniskillin ice wine and Ciroc, the French vodka distilled from grapes. The drink is served up garnished with a few grapes, and even at \$14 apiece, you don't seem to mind the steep tariff because the pour is tasty and generous. I took a swan dive into the Seasons martini, a tart yet satin smooth concoction of Finlandia cranberry vodka, Stoli orange vodka and apple schnapps — delicious at \$12.50. Still, I'm a gin martini guy and the bar stocks all the best brands.

Outside, winds are whipping off the lake and gusting in the concrete canyons, temperatures are nose diving, so Murphy is

trotting out his Santa's Cookies and Cream in mid-November. His chill-chasing cocktail is a traditional mug of steamed milk laced with Frangelico served with a mini-mountain of cookies for \$9. But Seasons isn't just a froufrou watering hole. Far from it. White wine fans can order a hefty pour of Jordan Russian River chardonnay at \$15, or for the red wine crowd, a Hangtime pinot noir from California's Santa Maria Valley at \$13. Hungry? Bar manager Michael Plotz says check out the thin-crust spinach, caramelized onion and feta cheese pizza at \$16 that serves three. (**Seasons Bar, Four Seasons Hotel, 312-649-2348**)

Cutting-edge Drinks and Bites

I don't normally think of Fairmont Hotels for cutting-edge mixology but the 2-year-old Aria Bar (www.ariachicago.com) at the Fairmont Chicago, 200 N. Columbus, changed my mind. Instantly. The top of the "plank" is illuminated white onyx and a 26-foot long contemporary mural hangs above a copper-colored leather banquette. Seating is comfortable and tables are not cheek to jowl to run up a few more bar tabs.

Décor aside, bar chief Andre Zotoff is a switched-on chap who proffers drinks by the flight. I recently took a flight of six Sangrias — coconut, mango, peach, passion fruit, among others. I was expecting something trite and

touristy but the small (3 oz.) was robust and flavorful. Price: \$12. Excellent nibbles (now called “small bites”) are offered ranging from crab cakes, shrimp spring rolls, vine-ripened tomatoes and peppered beef for a relatively small price. Don’t miss the cheese and tomato flat bread, one of five tasty varieties.

In a ploy that would have Big Al Capone spinning in his grave (he’s buried at Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Hillside, Illinois, if you are wondering), Aria is passionately wooing the urban hip males who call themselves Metrosexuals. These are straight men who invest lots of time and considerable cash to look and live like pro models out of GQ. For instance, Aria does flights of different “tiny teenies” for this crowd (or anyone for that matter) plus a Metrosexual Martini — Ketel One, Ciroc — the French grape-distilled vodka, and a dash of vermouth served on a mirrored tray. This \$12 drink also comes with a free pass to a nearby salon good for a \$16 manicure plus \$16 in cosmetic lotions and potions. Such a deal.

Still, Chicago is a big, brawny, beer-drinking town so what if you don’t cotton to “tiny teenies”? You won’t go thirsty. You can get a towering glass of draught Miller Lite, Sam Adams or Bass Ale for five bucks or go Chicago all the way and order a bottle of hometown-brewed Goose Island Honkers Ale. (Aria, Fairmont Chicago, 312-444-9494)

Where Not to Go

I was tipped that the bar at Chicago’s Peninsula Hotel was an excellent venue for relaxing over a get-acquainted drink with a new contact. After all, the hotel wins all the major accolades including five stars from Mobil and five diamonds from AAA. But on my one visit, I was underwhelmed. You can smoke cigars in Chicago barrooms and while I like the leaf, the dark bar reeked of stogies. Our waiter had the personality of a sloth and

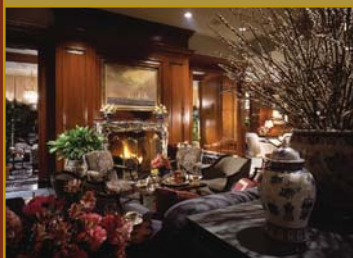
a gait to match. Plus, drink prices were, well, *pricey*. My advice: Skip it.

Chicago is a big, brawny, beer-drinking town so what if you don’t cotton to “tiny teenies”? You won’t go thirsty.

Where George Clooney Goes

Talented, personable bartenders are a rare breed but the Ritz-Carlton Hotel at 160 East Pearson, which is actually a Four Seasons-managed hotel, has a guy named Joseph Dashto who’s been stirring, shaking and pouring for 26 years. He’s as smooth as 30-year-old Scotch and has a few hundred stories to share. Working the Greenhouse Bar just off the lobby, Dashto has made vodka tonics for ex-Raider coach turned ABC color commentator John Madden and actor George Clooney. He was prowling the plank when the great Stevie Wonder sat down at the bar piano and rified for 20 minutes. Dashto’s a craftsman who knows how to make a legendary French 75 Cocktail — champagne, vodka and fresh lemon juice — and can move them across his bar at \$14.75 apiece. Now that takes real skill in this economy.

The Greenhouse Bar, no surprise, is light and airy thanks to a glass ceiling and at night you can see stars. It may look like a resort in the city but, make no mistake, it’s all business.



Seasons Bar Four Seasons Hotel
120 East Delaware Pl.



Bob Kelly, vice president of sales for S.P. Richards, an Atlanta-based office products company, had his Compaq laptop on the bar, his Tungsten PDA in his pocket, his Sony C-610 Bluetooth-enabled camera cell phone in his hand, and he was online thanks to Ritz-Carlton Wi-Fi, and working at 7:30 p.m.

Kelly was staying at another hotel he described as “skanky” but he’ll have an après-work drink at the Greenhouse. Why? “The staff at this Ritz is in a different league,” the veteran road warrior says. “It makes all the difference in the world.” (**Greenhouse, Ritz-Carlton, 312-266-1000**)

Best Discovery, and the Best Bloody Mary in the World

Still, the big surprise in my recent Chicago pub-crawl was discovering a very small bar (six stools) and a traditional, warm and cozy restaurant, both called RL attached to the Ralph Lauren store at 115 E. Chicago Ave. just off Michigan Ave. For a haberdashery, this is a serious saloon with a following far and wide. Daniel Chudowsky and wife

Kathy from Cleveland swear “RL makes the best Bloody Mary in the world.” It’s \$8, imaginatively garnished with a tiny sour French pickle, blue-cheese-stuffed olive and a lemon wedge but is it the best in the world? That’s laying down a big bet.

The barmen here are purists. RL’s house cocktails are a repertoire of classics from the ’30s and ’40s that never go out of fashion. Gibson, Tom Collins, Rob Roy, Side Car, Bellini, Negroni, Manhattan and a martini priced from \$6.50 to \$8.50.

Ironically, it was a Brit, Elliott Martyn, vice president of marketing for Smallbone, a designer of extreme custom kitchens in the U.K., who summed up RL’s allure most succinctly. “I was walking around Chicago for over an hour looking for a place that grabbed my attention,” Martyn explains. “It reminds me of a smaller version of the American Bar in the Savoy Hotel in London.”

High praise indeed. The Savoy’s American Bar is nearly a century old and in my humble opinion, one of the smartest cocktailing addresses in the world. (**RL, 312-475-1100**) **FF**



RL’s house cocktails are a repertoire of classics from the ’30s and ’40s that never go out of fashion.

Regional UPDATE

New Airline Routes and Services, Airport Expansions, Hotel Upgrades and International Services by Jerome Greer Chandler & Norman Sklarewitz



WORLD

AIR ROUTES: Major news from the Far East. After a 12-year hiatus, **Taiwan** and **South Korea** are poised to resume passenger flights. Service was suspended when **Seoul** established diplomatic relations with **Beijing** back in 1992. Look for a number of announcements soon regarding new flights...More low-cost intra-European service. Hapag-Lloyd Express starts **Edinburgh-Hamburg** flights December 5. There will be a trio of weekly roundtrips. **AIRLINES:** **SN Brussels** (the successor to legendary **Sabena**) and **Virgin Express** are merging, the latest step in the continued consolidation of the European airline industry.

AIRPORTS: There's a new pay-for-use arrivals lounge now open at **Vancouver International**. The Plaza Premium Arrivals Lounge charges C\$25 for five hours. Included in the price: showers, light snacks, business-center usage, and soft drinks. If you just want to take a quick shower and freshen up for half an hour, it will cost you C\$10.70...**Newcastle Airport** just finished a £7-million expansion. What fliers will notice are new eateries and retail stores. Perhaps the best thing about the expansion is an Internet Lounge...Airport parking can be pricey, especially in the United Kingdom. A week-long stay at **London Heathrow** can cost as much as 147 GBP. Pre-booking cuts the cost to 84 GBP—but by ferreting out the cheapest deal a flier can get by for as little as 58 GBP per week. There's a new Web-based service that allows you to do just that—search out the least expensive parking options. It encompasses 22 U.K. aerodromes,

and more than 100 car parks. The service is free. www.simplyparking.co.uk

RAIL SERVICE: Be aware that Delta is axing its code-share agreement with **SNCF-French Rail**. The pact will be no more as of December 1. It has allowed DL fliers to connect to and from trains at Paris Charles de Gaulle International to a dozen destinations.

WEST

AIR ROUTES: Starting December 15, Aloha Airlines will offer a daily nonstop run



between **San Diego International** and the island of **Maui**. The service actually will begin at **Reno/Tahoe International** and operate down to **SAN**. Used on the service will be the 737-700 with 12 seats in first class and 112 in coach. AQ 475 will depart daily from **Reno/Tahoe International** at 6:30 a.m., and arrive in **San Diego** at 7:56 a.m. The flight continues nonstop from **San Diego International**, departing at 8:46 a.m. and arriving in **Kahului, Maui** at 12:40 p.m.

On the return, AQ 476 will depart from **Maui** daily at 12:50 p.m. and arrive in **San Diego** at 7:49 p.m. The flight continues to **Reno**, departing at 8:39 p.m. and arriving at 10:16 p.m....Las Vegas-based Allegiant Air continues to give its home town increased services. Ready to kick off on October 28 will be a year-round, nonstop service between **Las Vegas**

McCarran International and **Will Rogers World Airport** in **Oklahoma City**. Service will operate four days a week—Thursday, Friday, Sunday and Monday—using the all-coach 162-seat MD-83.

AIRPORTS: After being closed for three years for renovations, the familiar shuttle trains at **Seattle-Tacoma International** are now operating. The run is between the Main Terminal Transit Station at the south end of the airport and the Main Terminal Transit Station at the north. Both transit stations are behind security and are accessible only to ticketed passengers. In addition, passengers can transfer from the Main Station trains to shuttle trains operating to either the North or South Satellite gates.

HOTELS: Business travelers going to Las Vegas to work and who want accommodations without casino noise and distractions will have that option come December 3. That's when the \$100-million

Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel opens. The 548-room property is located on Paradise Road, next to the Las Vegas Convention Center...As a result of a new Starwood management contract, what had been the **Denver Marriott Southeast** has been reflagged the Four Points by **Sheraton Denver Southeast**.



SOUTHWEST

AIR ROUTES: JetBlue just inaugurated nonstop A320 service between **Phoenix** and the **Big Apple**. The most you'll pay one-way is \$296...Beginning January 31, Delta begins nonstop mainline or regional jet service from **Austin, El Paso** and **San Antonio** to its **Salt Lake City** hub. There will be a trio of flights each day on each route...On the same day, DL adds an eighth daily nonstop from **Austin** to **Atlanta**. American begins mainline jet service from **San Antonio** to **St. Louis** December 16, as well as mainline flights from **Tulsa** to **STL** on January 31. **AIRLINES:** Flying **AirTran** and want to buy a drink?

Better be prepared to pull out the plastic—credit or debit. The carrier no longer accepts cash. Drinks in business class come gratis...The last of **American's** Fokker F100s has flown off into the sunset. The carrier retired the Dutch-built craft as part of its fleet-simplification plan. **American** is discounting business class fares from a number of U.S. cities to the Caribbean, Mexico and Latin America. This isn't a sale, but part of a long-term strategy. The cheapest C class fares can be had through a 14-day advance purchase. For example, DFW-Caracas goes for \$956 roundtrip. That compares with \$1,624 before...While discounting business-class, **AA** is increasing surcharges on all its international fares to help offset the rise in fuel prices. The Caribbean, Mexico and Central American tariffs have \$15 tacked on; South American, Asian and European fares \$25.

SOUTH

AIR ROUTES: Name a domestic destination served by Delta out of **Atlanta** and there's a good chance it's getting extra flight frequencies come January 31. Among the highlights: hourly service to **Baltimore/Washington International, Newark**

Liberty International and **Boston Logan**. Talk about saturation, there will be 14 daily nonstop **Ft. Lauderdale** flights, and 15 **Orlando** departures. The next logical



question: How is Delta going to shoehorn all these flights into an airport that's already congested at key times of the day? The carrier says it will "de-bank" **ATL**, spreading departures out in a steady stream throughout the day. This, it says, will "safeguard on-time performance." Beginning December 1, Delta Connection will fly you non-stop from **Tampa**

International to Huntsville, Charleston, South Carolina; Columbia, Greenville/Spartanburg and Knoxville. Not coincidentally, Independence Air starts flying those routes November 3...November 8 is the projected start date for nonstop US Airways Express flights from **Charlotte** to **Akron/Canton**. Regional jets will do the duty.

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES: **Martinair** plans to launch daily nonstop **Miami-San**

Jose, Costa Rica service October 31 using a 737-800. The flight will connect with the Dutch carrier's 767-300 service from **Amsterdam**.

Low-fare **Spirit Airlines** has asked the Department of Transportation's blessings to begin nonstop **Fort Lauderdale-Mexico City** service January 15. Two-class MD-80s would make the run...Is nonstop **Atlanta-Beijing** service in the cards? It is if DOT approves Delta's bid to begin flights in 2006. 777s would ply this very long route on a daily basis.

MIDWEST

AIR ROUTES: Out of **Kansas City**, Midwest Express is launching seasonal nonstops to **Ft. Lauderdale** and **New Orleans** December



4. Those flights will run through April 17. Best news: The airline is making its **MCI-San Francisco** flight a year-round affair...Beginning October 31 look for two more daily Southwest departures from **MDW** to both **Los Angeles International** and

Oakland. That means five dailies on each route...December 1 Delta Connection will link **Cincinnati** with a pair of southern destinations: **Wilmington, North Carolina** and **Newport News**. There will be two regional jets each day on each route...Northwest AirlinK says it will launch nonstop flights from **Wichita** to **Detroit** January 12. There will be a pair of Canadair Regional Jets daily. The new flight will open up **Wichita** to Northwest's international service, especially its Asian offerings, out of **DTW**...Northwest AirlinK has added a third daily nonstop from **Des Moines** to Northwest's **Memphis** hub. **AIRLINES:** **ATA** is the latest carrier to charge extra when reservations are made via any mode save its Web site: \$5 if you buy via a reservation's agent, \$10 if it's via a city ticket counter or at the airport...More buy-on-board eats. **Ted, United's** low-fare entry, is serving up what it terms "TedSelect SnackBoxes." There are four varieties, and the price is \$5. Among the offerings in the "JumpStart SnackBox": Nabisco Wheat Thins, a Dole tropical fruit and juice bowl, Azar fruit-and-nut mix, and Wuyi Rock Tea, an organic

green tea.

HOTELS: If Michigan's capital city is your destination, there's a new 104-suite **SpringHill Suites** awaiting. Located at 111 South Marketplace Boulevard, the hotel is five miles from Capital City Airport, and within decent distance of Michigan State University, Capital Center, and the Old Town Historic District...Boil it down and the best (or worst) thing about a hotel room is the bed. That, after all, is essentially why you book one—to sleep. To that end, the **Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Suites** has installed Sheraton Sweet Sleeper beds in all 1,209 guestrooms. The beds feature an 11.5-inch thick, high-coil-count Sealy Posturepedic® Plush Top mattress, five down and allergy-sensitive pillows, and crisp cotton top and base sheets.

NORTHEAST

AIR ROUTES: Beginning January 31 there will be no need for New Yorkers to connect over **Atlanta** to access **Tallahassee**, the state's capital. That's because Delta Connection is scheduling a pair of daily nonstop regional jets out of **JFK**...American Airlines is dumping a pair of long-range domestic routes out of **New York JFK**. As of

November 1, say so long to **JFK-Long Beach** and **JFK-Phoenix**. AA says it's



re-deploying the airplanes to support expansion out of its **Dallas/Fort Worth** hub. What it didn't say is that both routes are strong JetBlue markets...Another blessed **Atlanta** bypass. Delta Connection launches twice-daily Canadair Regional Jet service from **JFK** to **Pensacola** January 31. The carrier recently announced **Kennedy-Tallahassee** flights...More **New York** news. January 31 signals the start of thrice-daily **LaGuardia-Charlotte** flights on Delta Connection, as well as once-daily **JFK-CLT** service...February 6, US Airways Express intends to begin nonstop regional jet service from **Philadelphia** to **Wilmington, North Carolina** and **Washington Dulles**. **AIRLINES:** **US Airways**, fighting to escape the depths of yet another Chapter 11 filing, is loading up in Philadelphia, boosting the number of flights from the

city to 495 daily by February 6. The really good news for frequent fliers is the way those flights are to be arrayed. Instead of traditional connecting banks, they'll be spread out more smoothly throughout the day. This should cut congestion.

AIRPORTS: The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is fishing about for someone to launch ferry service from **John F. Kennedy International** to Manhattan. The ferry slip will be located near the AirTrain station at **JFK**. That's at Lefferts Boulevard. Look for the PA to award a contract in the not-too-distant future for ferry service from **LaGuardia** to Manhattan as well.

HOTELS: Looking for low-cost lodging in **Boston**? Consider the new 132-room **Comfort Inn** at 900 Morrissey Boulevard. The hotel is less than five miles from downtown, and offers free shuttle service to Logan International as well as the JFK Subway Station. **FF**

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