

OAG Executive Flight Guide

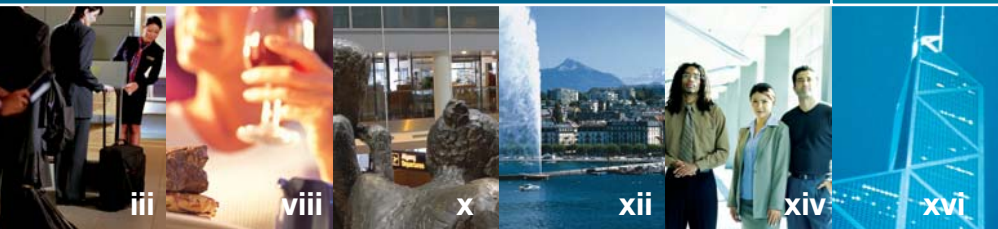
August 2003 Vol 22 Issue No 5

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Valid 01 August - 31 August

Samui Island, Thailand
This beautiful island off south-eastern Thailand is covered with coconut plantations and circled by palm fringed beaches.



Executive Travel

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Publisher's letter

Bargains abound in South East Asia, where a major drive to restore business is well underway. Following the worst period in living memory for airlines and hotels alike, caused by the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), they are pulling out all the stops to get frequent flyers and leisure travellers back to the region.

Cut-price fares and rooms and outstanding value packages are designed to reassure road warriors, trade fair participants, convention delegates and tourists, and to demonstrate unequivocally that it is business as usual.

Singapore Airlines, for example, which saw traffic plummet by 50%, has mounted its largest ever global campaign, with a range of half-price promotional fares. Cathay Pacific gave away 10,000 seats as part of its efforts to win back traffic, and Thai International is currently distributing 20,000 return tickets in a prize draw being held on all flights.

Hotels, too, are offering some remarkable deals — discounted rooms, three nights for the price of two, and value-added packages. All this unprecedented activity is good news for travellers to the region, who should make the most of the short-term measures — you can be sure that once business picks up, they will be quickly withdrawn.

Meanwhile, in this issue we look at what effect the SARS outbreak has had on in-flight catering and how the region's airlines responded to the dual challenge of offsetting the downturn in business and tightening up on hygiene to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

Elsewhere, we examine how the dress code has changed for executives on the move, highlighting the fact that appearances still count, even if collars and ties are no longer de rigueur in business class. And we look at Geneva, regarded as a Swiss role model for the expanding EU that surrounds it; and at Copenhagen Airport, the main hub for northern Europe and a gateway that does exceptionally well in IATA's customer satisfaction polls.

There is also a neat desktop clock in the shape of an aeroplane winging its way to the writer of this month's prize-winning letter; and we publish the first of our Wingtips, which wins another reader a stylish, multi-functional world time clock for the best travel suggestion of the month.

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ISSN 1478-453X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to OAG Executive Flight Guide, 3025 Highland Parkway, Suite 200, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515-5561.

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Typeset by OAG Worldwide, UK. Printed in Singapore by Times Printers Pte Ltd, Tuas Avenue 5, Singapore.

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News


 executive travel

Huge campaigns under way to tempt back travellers

Business in Asia is expected to resume quickly following the World Health Organisation's decision to relax its Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome travel advisories relating to Hong Kong and Beijing. The warning against all but non-essential travel had been in place for more than three months since the outbreak of SARS in the spring.

Cathay Pacific immediately announced the resumption of services, this month restoring more than 170 flights which had been suspended. It expects to be operating a full schedule by the end of September. And to kick-start the recovery, it announced a giveaway of 10,000 tickets. A 'Visit Hong Kong Now' promotion, already under way, offers up to 50% off flight and hotel packages, some of which include top Hong Kong hotels, such as the Conrad and Peninsula.

Thai Airways International is also giving away 20,000 return tickets in a prize draw being held on every flight between now and the end of September. Entry forms are being distributed throughout the cabins for a weekly draw, the winners of each flight receiving a return ticket on the same route and for the same class of travel. Of the total, 80% of the tickets to be won will be available on international inbound services. Prizes have to be redeemed during a three-month period between April and June next year.

Other airlines, including Singapore, Dragonair and China Southern, have launched campaigns and discounted fares to tempt back travellers.

All smiles as Accor cuts rates

French hotel group Accor's 'Smile across Asia' promotion, which runs until the end of September, offers discounts of up to 50% at more than 80 participating properties across the region.

Examples of the top deals include Sofitel Silom Bangkok, US\$76 a night; Novotel Apollo Singapore, S\$108 (US\$63); Century Roxy Park Singapore, S\$128 (US\$73); Novotel Century Hong Kong, HK\$736 (US\$94); Sofitel Hyland Shanghai, US\$95; Sofitel Jin Jiang Oriental Pudong Shanghai, US\$111; and Sofitel Metropole Hanoi, US\$120.

Accor Advantage Plus cardholders enjoy an additional 5% savings, and members of Thai Airways International's Royal Orchid Plus and Cathay Pacific's Asia Miles frequent flyer programmes will qualify for double miles when staying at Accor hotels for three nights or more. Rates are inclusive of breakfast for one or two persons but exclude tax and service.

Asia Business Travel Market

Some 200 regional travel buyers, nominated by OAG, will be among those attending next month's Asia Business Travel Market, which takes place in Shanghai at the Grand Hyatt hotel between September 3-5. A scheduled half-day OAG clinic will also offer valuable guidance and tips on ways to improve travel-planning skills, and demonstrate ways to save time and money using OAG's print and electronic planning tools.



TravelPostings

Your letters to the Editor

A change for the better?

How refreshing it was to travel through Asia during the height of the recent SARS outbreak. Uncongested airports, space on aircraft and choice of hotel rooms. While I respect colleagues who didn't want to travel or were ordered not to, and while I sympathise with those in the travel industry who suffered as a result, it was a pleasure to experience again the personal service for which the region was once renowned.

Rolf Hengt
Hamburg

This letter wins the writer a desktop clock, which will be winging its way to Hamburg. Congratulations.

Curtain call

Am I alone in thinking that Isabella Rossellini, an actor of undoubted class, is doing herself a disfavor by lending her name to Mandarin Oriental's 'He's a fan/She's a fan' advertising? Not only does this tedious campaign, with its contrived allusion to the company's symbol, appear poorly conceived, insipid and outdated, it has so far managed to attract the mandate of only a handful of C-list celebrities and, no doubt, only a few misguided extra customers as a result.

Time was when Mandarin Oriental exuded the same understated class as Rossellini. Both should know better.

Alice Lim
Singapore

Common sense prevails

Congratulations to the Casa Grande association of 4- and 5-star hotels and resorts in Bali, and others, for persuading the Indonesian government not to shoot itself in the foot and to again postpone the introduction of US\$50 visitor visas and maximum 30-day stays. While tourism will undoubtedly be a major beneficiary, so also will the year-round marine, arts and crafts industries that underwrite the island as one of Indonesia's primary exporters.

Bernadette Banini
Denpasar

A question of priorities

After the incessant hype about putting passengers first, it is typical of Dragonair now to ignore them completely and shunt freight to the top of its priorities.

Those of us who supported the airline during its early years of forging flights to the mainland were always prepared to forego promised comforts for the convenience of direct flights. But now to be told that we must play second fiddle to cargo or, as Dragonair puts it "the only way to help reduce losses", is nothing short of a slap in the face.

Even if you believe that the recent 65% cut in flights was due entirely to SARS, the idea that the airline is effectively forgetting its passengers in future while it invests in seven or eight new B747 freighters in the next five years is hard to swallow.

Peter Chen
Hong Kong

This stylish desk clock to be won by the writer of the best letter of the month



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News extra

US tightens entry controls

Business travellers are being warned they could be denied entry to the United States from October 1 as a result of tighter passport and security controls.

Those entering the country under the US Visa Waiver Programme will require a computer-readable passport, complete with barcode, or a valid visa in a non-readable passport. Without one, passengers will either be refused boarding at the departure airport, or entry on arrival. Currently, the 27 countries that participate in the Visa Waiver Programme include Australia, Brunei, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore, as well as a number of European nations, including the UK.

Acceptable business activities under the visa waiver programme include commercial transactions, such as contract negotiation or consultation with business associates, and participation in scientific, educational, professional or business conferences or seminars.

Another measure coming into effect soon will require most people applying for visas to be personally interviewed by US consular officials overseas.

Free trial offer

OAG is offering a free trial of its new *OAGflights.com* website which provides online access to the flight schedules of more than 850 airlines, including low-cost carriers.

Subscribers can check departure and arrival times, flight durations, airport and terminal information, cabin class availability and information about connecting services.

The annual subscription is the equivalent of US\$119 or US\$9.95 payable monthly. Visit www.OAGflights.com

New low-cost carrier?

The former chief executive of Singapore Airlines is reported to be planning a new regional budget airline. ValuAir, which is expected to fly to a number of south-east Asian destinations, is the brainchild of Lim Chin Beng, who stepped down from SIA in 1996.

Business class debut

Eva Airways has unveiled its new Premium Laurel business class with the delivery of the first of 10 Airbus A330-200s. The aircraft, which entered service last month on routes to Manila, Hong Kong and Macau, features redesigned and upgraded business and economy class cabins. In business, seats offer a generous 61-inch pitch and individual 10.4-inch LCD monitors, as well as noise-cancelling headsets. The galley is equipped with microwave, steam oven and an espresso machine, ensuring that piping hot food and fresh coffee is available at all times. The audio/video on demand in-flight entertainment system, in both business and economy, offers a choice of 10 films, a dozen TV shorts and five computer games.

Half-price offer

Half-price rooms are available until the end of September at the newly opened Mercure hotel at Narita Airport. The 250-room property, previously the Hotel Lets, is located next to the railway station and is five minutes from the airport by shuttle bus. It has extensive conference facilities for up to 500 people.

Airline of the Year

Singapore Airlines once again confirmed its position as the world's top carrier by sweeping the board at the 2003 OAG Airline



of the Year Awards. Not only did it win the overall title, but headed the list in five key categories, including best international first and economy classes, plus three regional awards. And Changi collected the accolade as the world's best airport for the eighth consecutive year, beating off stiff competition from Hong Kong and Dubai.

The prestigious OAG awards, now in their 21st year, also saw Qantas voted as the best airline based in the Australasia/Pacific region, ahead of Virgin Blue, which just missed out on best low-cost airline category, again captured by the American innovator of the concept, Southwest Airlines.

A total of 47 airlines and five airports competed for 19 regional and global awards. In Western Europe, British Airways carried off the honours, also winning the award for the best Trans-Atlantic carrier. Midwest Airlines topped the poll in North America, while Emirates secured the title in the Middle East/Indian sub continent. Continental Airlines picked up the award for the best business/executive class and Air Canada gained top billing for its frequent flyer program and website.

Airline of the Year 2003
Singapore Airlines

WINNER



executive travel

Best Airline based in Western Europe
British Airways

Best Airline based in Central/Eastern Europe
LOT Polish Airlines

Best Airline based in Asia
Singapore Airlines

Best Airline based in Central/South America/Caribbean
LanChile

Best Airline based in North America
Midwest Airlines

Best Airline based in Australasia/Pacific
Qantas Airways

Best Airline based in the Middle East/Indian Sub-Continent
Emirates

Best Airline based in Africa
South African Airways

Best Europe to Far East/Australasia Airline
Singapore Airlines

Best Trans-Pacific Airline
Singapore Airlines

Best Trans-Atlantic Airline
British Airways

Best International First Class
Singapore Airlines

Best Executive/Business Class
Continental Airlines

Best Economy Class
Singapore Airlines

Best Frequent Flyer Programme
Air Canada

Best Low-Cost Airline
Southwest Airlines

Best Airline Website
Air Canada

Best Airport
Singapore Changi

Why airlines make a meal of catering

You might not choose an airline for its cuisine, but you could think twice about flying it again if the food service is a let-down. How many of us forget a bad or hurried meal? Sheriden Rhodes on the importance of the in-flight experience and the impact of the recent SARS scare on airline catering in the Asia/Pacific region

THE outbreak of SARS forced carriers to take another look at in-flight catering — either cutting back on meal choices to offset the downturn in travel, or tightening up on hygiene to reduce the risk of cross infection. It's been a challenging time.

On the one hand, airlines must maintain high standards to meet customer expectations; on the other, they have been forced to take tough sanitation measures to reassure fearful passengers.

China Southern Airlines, for example, severely impacted by the SARS virus, moved swiftly to ensure safe flight operations and the health of passengers, airline staff and workers. Meals are prepared at its base at Baiyun International Airport in Guangzhou, southern China, where SARS is believed to have originated. Now it has moved to single-use dishware, and cold hors d'oeuvres and salads have been replaced by snacks.

Passengers eat meals which are separately

and individually hand packed at the Nanland Catering Centre, while in-flight face masks, cold tea and disinfecting tissue were offered during the scare. Jeff Ruffolo, the airline's senior international communications adviser, says this was a significant move for China's biggest carrier, particularly when you consider it serves up to 20,000 meals a day.

"You have to adapt to the market. Yes, SARS was critical but we were also dealing with fear," he adds.

Despite the challenges SARS created, airlines agree a good in-flight service experience remains an integral part of an airline's overall branding and is essential for attracting repeat bookings, particularly on long-haul flights.

Ruffolo confirms this is the reason China Southern never considered eliminating in-flight meals, either to control costs or for health reasons. "We still need to meet customer expectations, particularly in first and business class," he says. "We serve

authentic local cuisine from Guangzhou, such as dim sums, and fruit from southern China, and offer on-demand dining. These are what distinguish you from the opposition.”

Singapore Airlines spokesman Stephen Forshaw agrees. While the SARS-beleaguered airline reduced the number of main courses in first and business from four to three to contain costs, he says, maintaining the airline's reputation for quality and service is essential in order to continue providing the very best travel experience. The recent appointment of award-winning Australian chef Matthew Moran to the airline's International Culinary Panel — made up of eight leading cooks from around the world — plus improvements to service in economy, was evidence of the airline's commitment to meeting passengers' increasingly sophisticated culinary demands.

Forshaw says that measures to guard against SARS contamination were already in place at the airline's catering centres, rated among the best in the business. “We did, however, introduce new procedures if a passenger was suspected of carrying SARS, such as the destruction of their service ware, the cushions they were seated on, and any newspapers or magazines they were reading,” he explains.

While it is unlikely passengers book SIA simply because of the food, it would be among the factors they took into consideration when choosing who to fly with, he adds. “There's almost no question travellers could change carriers on the basis of a bad food experience,” he maintains.

David Bell, Cathay Pacific's spokesman for Australia, confirms that the outbreak of SARS led to two changes in the airline's in-flight service. Warm laundered towels were replaced by the pre-packed disposal variety that are “less sexy” but more hygienic. And in business class, cabin crew no longer push a meal trolley down the aisle for passengers to make their choice. “We ask for their selection beforehand and plate it in the galley; this is more hygienic and reduces any possible risk of cross infection,” says Bell.

Like his contemporaries, he believes in-flight service is important in terms of customer perception and expectation. “Providing good food is certainly part of the airline's overall branding and image,” he says. To this end, Cathay Pacific differentiates its product by cooking fresh rice on board in first class, and links up with major Hong Kong restaurants to feature their dishes as part of an ongoing value-added programme.





Copenhagen

Destination
(CPH)

Scandinavian gateway is Europe's top-rated airport

Denmark's Kastrup is a consistently high performer in terms of customer satisfaction. Leon Barber reports

By necessity, all journeys by air have to start and end at an airport. Passengers have no choice in the matter, other than using an alternative gateway — if one exists.

It is, therefore, a matter of some pride to the Danes that Copenhagen is ranked as Europe's best airport, and second only to Dubai in the world ratings, in terms of customer satisfaction. Some 70,000 randomly selected passengers were asked to rate more than 50 airports in 22 different categories, ranging from transport to and from the airport to courtesy and helpfulness.

As northern Europe's main hub, the airport's three terminals last year handled 18.3 million passengers. More than 60 airlines serve a total of 120 destinations worldwide, including 10 within Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

There has been an airport at Kastrup since 1925, when grass on the runways was kept short by grazing sheep, which were shepherded away before take-offs and landings. Today, it is one of Europe's most

user-friendly gateways, with a 45-minute connection time, and a 12-minute rail transfer into the heart of the city. Once the decision was made some years ago not to relocate the airport, there has been a massive investment programme, culminating in the opening of the spacious and impressive delta-shaped Terminal 3 in 1998. Two years ago, a 382-room Hilton, linked to the terminal by covered walkway, was added. There is also a transit hotel within the terminal for short-term stays between flights. Other facilities include a business centre with a range of well-equipped meeting rooms, the largest of which seats up to 50 people, and a good choice of quality shops.

Passengers can pre-order duty- and tax-free goods online up to 24 hours before departure and collect their purchases at a special Buy-Fly pick-up point.

And today, it is not sheep that graze prior to take-off, but passengers in various restaurants and outlets, including a Harrods buffet and food hall. No wonder there is a high satisfaction rating.

At-a-glance guide

Location: 8km/5miles southeast of Copenhagen

Transport links: Trains operate every 20 minutes from the airport station in Terminal 3 to the city centre, Helsingør, and to Malmö in Sweden. Journey time is just 12 minutes to central Copenhagen and the one-way fare is Dkr22.50 (€3). There is also a regular bus service, and taxis, which generally take around 20 minutes to complete the journey, cost Dkr150 (€20). The fare includes the tip and can normally be settled by credit card

Minimum connecting time: 45 minutes international (30 minutes domestic to domestic)

Airlines: Adria, Aeroflot, Air Baltic, Air Bosna, Air Botnia, Air France, Air Greenland, Air Malta, Atlantic Airways, Austrian, Avioimpex, Azzurra, Balkan Bulgarian, British Airways, British Midland, Cimber Air, City Air, CSA Czech, EasyJet, Egyptair, Estonian, Ethiopian, Finnair, Iberia, Icelandair, Iceland Express, Iran Air, Islandflug, JAT Yugoslav, KLM, Lithuanian, LOT Polish, Lufthansa, Luxair, Macedonian, Maersk Air, Malev Hungarian, Nordic AirlinK, Olympic, Ostfriesische Lufttransport, Pakistan International, Pulkowo, SAS, SAS Commuter,

Scan Con Travel, Singapore, Skyways, SN Brussels, Spanair, Sterling, Swedline, Swiss International, TAP Air Portugal, TAROM Romanian, Thai International, Tunis Air, Turkish, Ukraine International, Varig, Virgin Express, Wideroe



Executive lounges: British Airways, Servisair, Novia, SAS

Facilities: hi-tech business centre (T3) with 14 meeting rooms; wireless Internet access (€5.50 for 30 minutes); children's area; two banks; ATMs; post office; 48 speciality shops, including Whisky World and the Cigar Club; nine restaurants and fast-food outlets, plus a Harrods buffet and food hall among a dozen cafes and bars

Airport hotels: transfer hotel (within the airport); Hilton, linked by covered walkway; Quality Dan; Radisson SAS

Car rental desks: Avis, Budget, Europcar, Hertz, Sixt

Departure tax: included in price of ticket

Website: www.cph.dk





Geneva

Swiss role model

Those anxious to discover what the enlarged European Union could eventually look like might care to peep over the Alps into Switzerland.

Colin Ellson reports

Destination
(GVA)

Currency: Swiss franc (SFr)

Tipping: not usual, as hotels and restaurants add a substantial service charge. Taxi drivers do not expect a tip

Time: GMT +1

Electricity: 220 volts (three-pin round plugs)

Public holidays (2003): August 1; September 11; December 25, 31. **2004:** January 1; April 9, 12; May 1, 20, 31; June 22, 29; October 9; December 25, 31

Climate: because of the altitude (400m above sea level), warm clothing is needed in the winter, when average temperatures are -2°C to -6°C . In midsummer, the temperature ranges from 13°C - 25°C . Rainfall throughout the year

Airport: 5km/3 miles from the city centre. Trains leave every 10 minutes and complete the journey in just 6 minutes (SFr5). Buses take around 30 minutes and cost SFr2.20, while the taxi ride is normally 15-20 minutes and costs SFr30-35.

Airport hotels: Crowne Plaza, Inter-Continental, Movenpick, Ramada Park

Business hours: 07.30-17.00 (with a lunch break of two hours)

International dialling code: 00 41 (22)

In emergency: 117 (police), 118 fire, 144 ambulance

Business do's and don'ts

Do make appointments and make a point of arriving a few minutes early

Do dress smartly and demonstrate both politeness and courtesy

Do show you are in control of your emotions, both in respect of your private life and finances

Don't try to be exciting. Reliability is more important to the Swiss

Don't be surprised at the level of smoking

Don't boast or show undue curiosity in an individual's personal life — the Swiss like to remain private

Each of Switzerland's 26 cantons is similar to the EU's member states — due to number 25 when Central Europe joins the Club in 2004 — in that it values independence and likes to make its own decisions. Nevertheless, the federal government takes care of almost everything — much as many in Brussels are rumoured to want — leaving only schools, roads, taxation and town planning to the regions.

It's a system that has prevailed since 1848, when the state was formed in the face of considerable opposition, and it seems to work well: Switzerland has remained neutral, keeping its head when all around were losing theirs in two world wars, getting on with the business of making money from banking, financial services and tourism, and holding the coats when other nations fall out.

In this, Geneva has played a key role. It is home to the European office of the United Nations, the HQ for 200 or so international bodies like the Red Cross and World Health Organisation, and won lasting fame when it put its name to the Geneva Convention. Such is the city's involvement in world affairs, that some 70,000 of the 200,000 French-speaking population are on secondment from overseas. Quite a posting.

Set on the shores of Lake Geneva (Lac Lemman), its icon the Jet d'Eau fountain that shoots 600 litres of water per second 140 metres into the air, with Mont Blanc visible to the south, this cosmopolitan city is the dynamic face of Switzerland, in complete contrast to the green pastures, mist-filled valleys, cow bells and

snow-capped peaks of popular imagination.

It was a favourite watering hole of Lord Byron, whose libertine lifestyle was diametrically opposed to the teachings of Calvin and Knox, who laid the foundations of the Reformation in Geneva. The majority of Genevèse also ignored the black-robed priests, and the dancing, theatre and wine which they condemned put down firmer roots, gaining the city an enduring reputation for both independence and — in Swiss terms — a love of fun.

Geneva is divided by the Rhone, its centre on the Left Bank (Rive Gauche), where every style of European architecture is represented, and Calvin's chair is on display in the 12th century Cathedrale St-Pierre.

Across the river, the Rive Droite houses the main financial district of Quai de Mont Blanc and the best of Geneva's 120 hotels. To the north is the Rectangle d'Or, site of the World Trade Center, and eastwards the smart district of Eaux Vives, backdrop to the Jet d'Eau.

The fountain is at the centre of celebrations in 2003, designated The Year of Water long before the eerie coincidence of land-locked Switzerland winning the Americas Cup for yachting. Geneva also wins laurels for its 1,000 gourmet restaurants and lakeside inns, serving fish newly caught in the lake, washed down by fine wines produced at the 2,000-year-old vineyards just outside the city gates.

In one respect at least, not a bad role model for the EU.



Keeping up appearances

Although the dress code has changed, appearance still counts for those travelling on business — even if collars and ties are no longer de rigueur in business class. Eileen Orr with some practical advice on what to wear and what to pack

Sartorial sloth is a crime most evident in flight. Respect for one's fellow travellers, as well as oneself, has become such a neglected consideration that to some of us, the other passengers cause enough disquiet to negate many of the good experiences the crew toil to provide. Who wants to sit for hours wedged next to unsavoury flesh clad in tacky garb more suited to beachcombing?

In today's PC world, airlines agree that dress codes are unthinkable (brave assertions while secretly cringeing at the shorts and flip-flops brigade). "Paying passengers can wear what they like," is the common response. Note the word "paying". If you're after an upgrade, then it's a good idea to look worth it.

Sitting for long hours in cramped conditions, clothes need to be comfortable but in thinking 'loose' some travellers seem to loosen their brain at the same time, or at least the sartorial side of it. Casual comfort does not mean scruffy, an excuse to dress for gardening or a spot of interior decorating. 'Comfortable' need not rule out elegance or style, and there lies the trick of looking good and being at ease.

In the pressurised limbo of flight in the company of hundreds of strangers, we are at the mercy of each other's manners and being appropriately dressed not only makes us feel better, but in a civilised world, is a visible sign of respect for others.

Wear neutral or subtle colours, both stylish and easy to mix and match. Opt for quality where possible; ensure clothes are clean and well cared for.

Silk retains sweat stains, linen crumples mercilessly; cottons and soft wools are easier to manage. A cashmere sweater is handy when the cabin temperature falls, and for later in over air-conditioned hotel rooms, more soothing than a structured jacket. Keep accessories to a minimum.

Special compression flight socks, widely recommended as a precaution against the development of deep vein thrombosis and the prevention of swollen ankles and feet, should be put on just prior to take-off. Classic loafers are ideal for slipping on and off but, if you must wear sandals, at least ensure feet and toes are immaculate.

For health reasons as well as personal comfort, avoid tight fitting garments around the waist and thighs. Business shirts are not meant to be worn hanging over trousers and too much unbuttoning is never a good thing.

Only the lean can get away with denim jeans as long as they appear to be a natural style for the wearer — rarely the case. Quality cotton trousers with a classic top, on the other hand, can look fine on most. T-shirt fans should discover a personal good fit, buy black, white or neutral and ensure they're

always pristine. Much maligned in the past, synthetics should be tried and tested as many do not travel well, although recent technology has produced some fine quality fabrics that are not only practical but also well-designed. Check with upmarket stores and explore the offerings of travel clothing specialists, being careful to avoid a caricature look — only intrepid explorers could possibly find a use for all those pockets, strings and flaps.

Heading for colder climes? It makes sense to carry a dark overcoat or heavy-duty raincoat. With business clothes, wear thermal underwear rather than a sweater on top and consider a hat. The right one may be best found from a wide choice at your destination where they are the norm.

For hot and humid weather, lightweight fabrics are a must and again, perhaps a locally bought hat. Keep a tiny decanted phial of high factor sun cream handy to apply to nose and bald spot before venturing off the aircraft into sizzling sunshine. Bare and pasty-legged females may feel better with a previously applied fake tan.

The bottom line is to feel comfortable, look decent and blend into the business of flying as well as with contacts on arrival. On some flights in certain classes the crew may hand out sleeper suits (Virgin's have become a cult item) and while the rest of us only get the chance to sport the ubiquitous eye mask and socks, what they'd really like to see us all wearing is a smile. After all, our sartorial madness gives them plenty.

Keep ready packed

- ▲ Sellotape to roll around hand to brush down clothes; for emergency hem repair.
- ▲ Two clothes pegs to hang items from hotel wardrobe hanger or to close room curtains properly.
- ▲ J-cloth, for damp pressing.
- ▲ Plastic swivel-hook clothes hanger for de-creasing clothes in shower.
- ▲ Clothes coordination: Select in neutrals or around two colours only.
- ▲ Quality footwear and bags make a difference.
- ▲ Hotel trouser presses are equally useful for skirts and plain tops.
- ▲ For style in the sun, don't forget flattering sunglasses.

wingtip

In India, it is useful to know that people often respond positively to a question by shaking their head in a way Westerners might interpret as 'no'. It can be very confusing and lead to genuine misunderstandings.

Submitted by Spencer Hanlon, UK managing director of Airplus International, London W4, whose tip wins him a World Time Clock. Send your suggestions to Wingtip, OAG Executive Travel, OAG Worldwide, Church Street, Dunstable, LU5 4HB UK, or e-mail eteditor@oag.com



What's on

A selection of major conferences, exhibitions, sporting, cultural and other events around the globe during August and September

August

- 1-5 Sydney International Boat Show
- 1-31 Taipei Aerospace Technology Exhibition, World Trade Centre
- 2-5 Wine Australia (exhibition), Melbourne
- 3 German Grand Prix (motor-racing), Hockenheim
- 7-16 Royal Queensland Show, Brisbane
- 9 Singapore National Day
- 12 Queen's Birthday celebrations, Bangkok, Thailand
- 24 Hungarian Grand Prix (motor-racing), Budapest
- 26-29 Mobile Data Services World Forum, Seoul, Korea
- 29-31 Hong Kong Convention & Expo Summit, Hong Kong
- 30-22/9 Lantern Festival, Singapore



September

- 3-5 Asian Business Travel Market, Shanghai
- 5-8 Pret-A-Porter, fashion showcase, Paris
- 11-21 Frankfurt Motor Show, Germany
- 13-16 International Robot Exhibition, Tokyo
- 14 Italian Grand Prix (motor-racing) Monza
- 15-1/10 Antiques Biennale, Paris
- 22-23 World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meeting, Dubai
- 26-13/10 Paris Motor Show, France
- 28 United States Grand Prix (motor-racing), Indianapolis
- 29-5/10 Japan Open (tennis), Tokyo

