

# Frequent Flyer<sup>®</sup>

MAKING BUSINESS TRAVEL WORK FOR YOU

October 2004

Making a Hotel  
Your Home Away  
from Home

## THE EXTENDED- STAY BOOMLET

### **PLUS:**

Tips on Avoiding  
Travel Burnout

**Regions:** New  
Air Routes, Hotel  
Expansions and  
Airport News

## Publisher's

# Letter

### LIFE ON THE ROAD

Like many of you, as a business executive, I spend about 35 percent or more of my time on the road. That's a lot of hours away from home. And as memory serves, earlier in my career, when I was an ad sales manager, I probably spent closer to 60 percent of my time in hotels and in airports.

As road warriors, we can all relate to the countless hours we travel, a lot of which, unfortunately, can be stressful: flight delays, lost luggage, canceled room reservations, lost car-rental confirmations; the list goes on. The stressors of travel seem unavoidable, especially when you travel as much as I do. And one major reality as a road warrior is travel burnout, most often perpetuated by grueling travel schedules. There comes a point when your body and your mind have had enough of sitting in the middle seat, of being cooped up in an airplane for long periods of time. But as tired as you get, your travels must go on.

This month's *Frequent Flyer* section zones in on the realities of travel burnout, offering valuable advice on coping with nerve-rattling travel hang-ups. Advice comes from industrial psychologists, some of whom recommend an all-natural therapy that includes vitamins, lots of natural light, and brisk walking. And if exercising and being outside when you travel is close to impossible, our professional experts offer other tips to help you decrease your travel stress.

*Frequent Flyer* also features a fast-growing trend in travel: the extended-stay boomlet. Extended stays, such as Homewood Suites by Hilton and Wyndham's Summerfield Suites, are the travel industry's best-kept secret. The reason? Extended stays are committed to helping travelers live better on the road at lower costs. Many extended-stay properties offer average room rates of \$66, which include lots of space, high-tech amenities, kitchenettes, and, believe it or not, fireplaces—a new amenity being offered by Marriott's Residence Inns.

While the frustrations of travel will never go away, I hope this month's stories on travel burnout and finding your home away from home in an extended-stay room will give you ideas on making your life on the road more enjoyable and a little less stressful.

Happy Travels,



Kathy M. Marr

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Gripes



**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.

## OAG Frequent Flyer Forum

### 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](mailto:FFeditor@oag.com) or by postal mail to Lisa Davis, Editor, Frequent Flyer, 3025 Highland Parkway, Suite 200, Downers Grove, IL 60515. **Every response that 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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One of the hotel industry's best-kept secrets is the boom in extended stays, the roadside residences that cater to the long-haul, stay-put business traveler. After several slow years paralleling the travel recession, the hotels that like to call themselves inns, suites and studios are back in the fast lane.

"Whether you're on a long-term project, attending management training, or involved in a relocation," reads the pitch from Marriott, "Residence Inn understands what it's like to

be away from home for a few days or more." The ubiquitous chain, in fact, coined the term "extended stay" in 1975.

Now 25 years later, Marriott is one of the leaders in the parade of longer-stay properties that are luring ever more business travelers as they try to live better at a lower cost on the road. And no chain is growing faster than Extended StayAmerica whose motto is "the affordable way to stay and stay."

Other high-profile hotel brands besides Marriott are catching the "residential" fever.

For example, Hilton has its Homewood Suites, which it describes as “your perfect second home when you spend a few days or more away from home.” On its Web site, it goes on to exclaim: “Enjoy residential-style spacious studio, one- and two-bedroom suites with fully equipped kitchens, plus a daily complimentary breakfast and an evening Manager’s Reception every Monday through Thursday. All this for the price of a traditional hotel room.”

But don’t necessarily expect to find the longer-stay hotel breed in your neighbor-

hood. Shows and conventions have discovered that the apartment-style hotels proliferating America’s travel landscape are a bargain. The average room rate is about \$66 compared to \$86 for the whole U.S. hotel industry, according to Smith Travel Research, a premier consultant for gathering hotel data and tracking trends.

“With the end of the dot-com bubble and the war in Iraq, T&E was the first to go,” Kathryn Potter, vice president of marketing and communications for the American Hotel & Lodging Association, says. “The

## THE *Extended-stay* *Boonlet* Making a Hotel Your Home Away from Home

BY PAUL BURNHAM FINNEY

hood. Despite the growth of extended stays, “more than 40 of the hundred largest markets we surveyed in the United States didn’t have them,” according to Mark Skinner of the Highland Group, an Atlanta hotel consultant. Among the popular destinations waiting for the Extended Stay and Marriott revolution to hit town: New York City.

### The Price is Right

Not all the extended-stay buffs are Honda software specialists in Atlanta on loan to their headquarters in Torrance, California, or a Raymond James broker transferring from Orlando to Minneapolis to work for Piper Jaffrey, or a Boeing financial analyst shipped from Seattle to Chicago for a training seminar.

One of those extended-stay secrets is that business travelers on routine trips to trade

demand weakened at the high end and shifted more to the low end. Extended stays provide a lot of value — you have a kitchenette and a microwave along with suite-size space in most cases.”

The business traveler with a yen for a room at Extended StayAmerica, Marriott or Homewood is looking for home-away-from-home comforts at a good price. “You’re appealing to a different customer,” Potter notes. “Look at the boutique category, the see-and-be-seen hotels with small rooms and a big scene in the lobby, lounges and restaurant. It’s a totally different traveler who finds extended stays appealing.”

The reports from guests are for the most part glowing. “I just spent the weekend at a Residence Inn in Columbia, South Carolina,” an executive based in Washington, D.C., who

prefers to keep his name and whereabouts private, says. “We were dropping my son off at USC, writing checks and saying tearful goodbyes. We hunkered down in a two-bedroom loft with three TVs, a kitchen and a fireplace. I even cleaned out the ‘Market’ package next to the front desk and bought most of their Ben and Jerry’s ice cream and Starbuck’s mocha frappuccino.”

## Two Dozen Players

While demand in the United States lodging industry has grown 5.5 percent in the past year, the extended-stay segment has spiked 6.9 percent, according to Smith Travel’s Brian Ferguson. For business travelers, the extended options are increasing weekly, especially as well-known chains set up or buy subsidiaries that cater to the long-stay crowd. Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, for example, owns Summerfield Suites, which has 22 properties and 3,136 rooms.

The long-stay numbers are impressive. Of the total 4.48 million hotel rooms in the United States, 224,020 are now extended stays divvied up among some 1,962 hotels operated by 24 hotel companies. The top three brands by numbers of hotels and room count — all national — are Marriott’s Residence Inns (442/52,193); Extended Stay America (342/37,871); and Hilton’s Homewood Suites (135/15,218). Other major players include Homestead Guest Studios, Intown Suites and Hawthorn Suites. Among the stragglers are more modest brands such as Homegate Suites, Inn Suites, Lexington Hotel Suites, Mainstay Suites and Savannah Suites.

For price-conscious business travelers there are big differences among the extended stays. Residence Inns charge from about \$85 to \$135 a night — or more — depending on length of stay while Homewood similarly has a rate that varies from \$109 (for less than four days) to \$99 (five to 14 days), \$89 (15 to 29), and \$80 (30 or more). And then Extended Stay appeals to the diehard budget traveler with a daily rate of about \$50 — or \$40 if you book for a week.

Typical of the action in the business, Extended Stay alone has three brands at varying weekly price levels: Crossland Economy Studios from \$179 a week, Extended StayAmerica Efficiency Studios from \$249, and StudioPLUS Deluxe Studios from \$299. But they’re all still inexpensive, ranging from \$28 to \$43 per day. Even so, there are rates here and there that reflect what the traffic can



## Inns, suites and studios with \$66 average room rates, lots of space and kitchenettes are bargains

bear — for instance, \$420 weekly at an ESA in Silicon Valley with a daily rate of \$90.

## Extended Expansion

In the race to woo business and leisure travelers, the extended-stay leaders are bulking larger and larger. Last May the Blackstone Group, a blue-chip, well-heeled Wall Street investment company, helped combine its own solid Homestead Village (132 properties), based in Atlanta, with Extended

StayAmerica, with headquarters in Spartanburg, South Carolina, to garner some 31 percent of the longer-stay market. Totaled together, the ESA mini-empire of four brands amounts to nearly 70,000 rooms, putting it in first place.

The merger comes in the wake of several years when even cheaper extended-stay rooms were hardly immune to euphoric overbuilding in the late '90s and the post-9/11 downturn in travel. Occupancy reached 74.8 percent in 2000 but then crashed with rates falling to 70.5 percent in 2001, 68.8 percent in 2002, and 67.6 percent in 2003.

Extended StayAmerica is a case in point. It faced hurdles in the past three years of dismal travel numbers with its occupancy rate dropping from 80 percent in 2000 to 68 percent in 2002. So the recent Blackstone offer was like found money to George D. Johnson Jr., who launched Extended Stay in the good times of 1995.

Now the hotel industry is crowing about the rebound in 2004. "2005 should be a great year," Smith Travel's Jan Freitag says. "And the rising tide should raise all ships, including extended stays, if the increase in room inventories is modest."

### Even Fireplaces

As a quality pacesetter, Marriott's Residence Inn offers a long list of amenities, beginning with free high-speed Internet access in rooms to fax, copy and print business services. Other features:

- Suites are 30 percent larger than traditional hotel rooms, Marriott says.
- Kitchens come equipped with a full-size refrigerator, coffee maker, microwave, dishwasher and cooktop ovens (in some locations).
- Many suites have fireplaces.

And there are several Marriott extras that add some nice complimentary frills: a daily hot breakfast buffet, work-week social hour, weekly manager's barbecue, a grocery-shopping service, and a Sport Court that does triple duty for basketball, tennis and volleyball.



**As a quality pacesetter, Marriott's Residence Inn offers a long list of amenities, beginning with free high-speed Internet access in rooms to fax, copy and print business services.**

## FINDING A HOME

**Extended StayAmerica**  
800-398-7829  
[www.extendedstayhotels.com](http://www.extendedstayhotels.com)

**Homewood Suites by Hilton**  
800-CALL-HOME (225-5463)  
[www.homewoodsuites.com](http://www.homewoodsuites.com)

**Marriott's Residence Inns**  
800-228-9290  
[www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com)

**Wyndham's Summerfield Suites**  
800-822-4200  
[www.summerfieldsuites.com](http://www.summerfieldsuites.com)

## Apartment Dwellers

Appropriately, it was an apartment developer who helped Marriott come up with the first Residence Inn. The link couldn't be simpler: When traveling on business — or for pleasure — you do stop, and sometimes for more than a few days. Couple that with the mobility of Americans, and the extended stay of the 21st century is a natural. A move from Boston to Las Vegas to cut living costs? A new defense contract that requires a three-month stay at a project site near L.A.? There's a market there that doesn't require an M.B.A. degree to identify.

While long-term lodgings have always conjured up the image of furnished apartments, dating back to the early 1900s, the fact is that hotels have provided extended

**There's no stopping business travelers from turning an ordinary hotel into an extended-stay property. All it takes is booking it for, say, a couple of weeks or months and striking an attractive deal on the room rate and perks.**

stays for decades, as noted by Professor Paul Groth of the University of California (Berkeley) and author of *Living Downtown: the History of Residential Hotels in the United States*. Scanning the long-term lodgings that dot today's hotel landscape, he said in a conversation with real-estate counselor Carol Lloyd, "My guess is that it's the apartment hotel being reinvented," referring to the 1920s hotels that provided "small units with services and perhaps a dining hall."

One of the advantages for both extended-stay operators and business travelers is the pricing structure. "It's not only a product designed for long-term stays, but it's also got tiered pricing," Jim Holthausen, senior vice president of brand management for

Homewood Suites, says. He makes the additional point that business travelers are driving some 70 percent of the increase in demand for extended stays, largely because of their response to the value-for-the-money appeal. And he says that extended stays, on their part, can lower costs, thanks to fewer check-ins and checkouts and — with guests in a do-it-yourself lifestyle mode — less frequent room cleaning.

However, there is no stopping business travelers from turning an ordinary hotel into an extended-stay property. All it takes is booking



it for, say, a couple of weeks or months and striking an attractive deal on the room rate and perks.

For several years Ralph Rickey, a Honda supply-side manager, did just that in a relentless weekly coast-to-coast commute between his home and office in Atlanta and the automaker's establishment in L.A. Before he was done, he knew every Mexican, seafood, barbecue and California-cuisine eatery in the vicinity of Torrance, as well as every running route worth covering before the day's work began.

The local Hilton, arguably the best in Torrance, treated Rickey like a king with a suite and thoughtful touches — for instance, a Chinese dinner late at night in the executive lounge — that helped make up for the weekly separation from his wife and kids. It made his extended stays something approximating a home away from home. ■■

## inside RESIDENCE INNS

For a closer look at what Marriott has to offer business travelers at its hundreds of Residence Inns, Paul Burnham Finney talked by phone with brand executive Brad Colton, based at the chain's headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland. Here's what he said:

You'd be surprised at who stays at our Residence Inns.

A lot of our guests are consultants working on government business or retail managers opening a strip mall. Then there are insurance adjusters dealing with a flurry of claims in Florida in the wake of Hurricane Charley. Or engineers doing work for Lockheed Martin who come to D.C. but don't want to rent an apartment.

Have you thought of the high cost of hospitalization these days? Well, let's say you want a facelift and then a couple of weeks out of sight before going public again. You don't need an expensive hospital to recuperate after elective surgery. What's your easy option? You go to an extended-stay hotel.

In any case, with demand growing as travel picks up, we're opening 30 to 50 inns a year — that's our target for 2005. Originally we favored suburban locations. But now we're expanding in major cities such as Washington and Philadelphia. The majority of our inns are franchises.

One reason we've moved cautiously in urban areas is the cost of building. Land itself is such a big cost factor, and it varies by region. You have to take into account the square footage of a Residence Inn. The room size is some 30 percent larger than a traditional hotel room.

Our customers like our rooms mostly because of the additional space. Some 50 percent of our

occupancy are extended stays — from a week to a couple of years. You heard me. Several years.

Space Cadets: But along with those marathon stays, why are there so many guests on shorter stays — just a few days here and there?

We've found that people who stay with us during a relocation get to like the larger rooms. And then when they go out on business trips after resettling, they book our inns.

They also like the homey feel of an inn. I've worked in full-service hotels, and they're simply not as warm. In a Residence Inn you get to know other guests and the staff — if you want to. And the extra services like our comp and incidentally highly rated hot breakfast buffet are a big draw.

I don't want to comment much on our competitors, but I've looked in Extended Stay's rooms and I don't believe the quality of the furnishings is at the same level as ours.

The 40/60 Split: How Residence Inn demographics break out depends a lot on location. At our Orlando and Anaheim properties, some 90 percent are leisure travelers. But at our inn in Pentagon City in D.C., some 80 percent are business travelers mostly dealing with the government.

Right now, the split between women and men booking our inns is about 40/60. But we're seeing a heavier percentage of female travelers coming along year by year.

If a Residence Inn isn't quite the right fit for some travelers, maybe one of our full-service hotels will suit them better for an extended stay. If they say, "I'm going to stay with you for six months," we'll buy a fridge and a desk and might not even charge for them.

Princely Stays: As business goes global, we're expanding our Marriott Executive Apartments that are popular for long stays. Two are opening soon in Shanghai and London adding to the ones we already have in Bangkok, Brussels, Budapest, Dubai, Hong Kong, Prague and other cities.

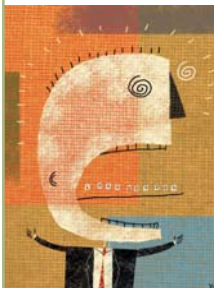
Saudi princes do take over whole floors for long stays in our Ritz-Carltons. They're big spenders, need I say. But we also have 120 TownePlace Suites for \$20 to \$30 less than our Residence Inns.

As you can see, we try to cover all the price points for business travelers. ■■

# FLIGHT PLIGHT

BY JACK MCGUIRE

Travel burnout — a growing corporate problem (and how to cope with it)



Harold Cabot has had it — “Up to here!”

“I’ve been standing in line, stuck in airports, and bumping through the unfriendly skies for 16 years. Sitting on the tarmac

before takeoff, waiting for an arrival slot, clearing customs. I’m sick of it,” the California-based sales exec says.

Let’s face it. Business travel ain’t what it used to be; if it ever was. Jam-packed access roads to the airport. Long lines at the check-in counter. Weather delays. Over-crowded restaurants. And that was 20 years ago.

Today, more than 100 years after the first flight, conditions seem worse than ever in our code-orange world of seemingly endless hang-ups and holding patterns (nearly 58,600 delayed flights were reported at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport in the first half of 2004 alone).

## Reading the early warning signs

Unless you’re flying on the corporate jet or in first or business class, sleeping on 300-count satin sheets in a classy hotel and dining at the Ritz, eventually the constant repetition of nerve-frazzling travel hang-ups — a middle seat in coach, lost luggage, rental-car-counter bottle-necks, jet lag — can start to take their toll.

Yet even the most grueling travel schedule can be tolerated, industrial psychologists say, if the payoff is a step-

ping stone to promotion. But when a position is perceived as a dead end, it can lead to serious problems ahead.

“The physical and mental strain of frequent travel is manifested in a variety of ways, many times duplicating the same symptoms seen in mild depression and various forms of anxiety,” Dr. Marie-Annette Brown, professor and researcher at the University of Washington in Seattle, states.

“Cooped up in the semi-dark atmosphere of an airplane for extended periods of time is in itself highly conducive to the creation of a condition that could be considered ‘travel burnout.’” Add to the mix the many problems associated with travel these days and the body sends out clear signals of distress, Brown says, co-author with Jo Robinson of *When Your Body Gets the Blues*.

In a recent telephone interview, Brown cited a mind/body malaise frequently seen in her patients, and labeled by the authors as the “body blues,” symptoms that might very well be the same as those reported by sufferers of travel burnout, including:

- low energy
- overeating
- weight gain
- sleep difficulties
- mild anxiety
- mild depression
- tension and irritability
- difficulty concentrating
- decreased interest in sex

“Most people have some of these symptoms some of the time,” Brown says, “but they’re able to shake them off through simple lifestyle changes that can lead to a more energetic, hopeful and relaxed way of life.”

Dr. Brown and her colleagues at the University of Washington designed and developed a program of all-natural therapy, based on these three simple activities:

- 1** Walking outdoors at a brisk pace for 20 minutes five or more times a week.
- 2** Creating a more natural light environment by getting more light during the day, but less at night.
- 3** Taking six common vitamins and minerals on a daily basis, including B-1, B-2 and B-6, vitamin D, folic acid and selenium.

At the end of a placebo-controlled, randomized study, tests revealed that participants showed marked improvement; they were less anxious, angry, irritable and stressed.

### Avoiding future problems

Some people are just better equipped than others to cope with travel-related hassles. The objective, according to Thomas McMahon, president of the Orland Park, Illinois, executive search firm that bears his name, is to attempt to identify these individuals before hiring them.

“During the initial interview,” McMahon advises, “try to determine whether the applicant displays the type of personality traits that fit not only the job’s requirements, but the candidate’s compatibility with frequent travel, if that’s a significant prerequisite of the position.

“The ideal candidate will be a high-energy-level individual, a self-starter who can work without close supervision. If the job entails travel, 75 to 50 percent, even 25 percent of the time, it should be clearly pointed out that some lifestyle modifications will likely be necessary, particularly if the candidate has never traveled extensively.

“Where a great deal of travel is required, and especially protracted trips overseas, a single person who is free to be away for long stretches, loves travel and is eager to earn frequent-flier miles for future personal trips may be a more suitable candidate than one who is married and has young children.

“Before the latter considers accepting the position, he should sit down with the spouse and kids, depending on their age, for a serious family discussion on major lifestyle changes that probably will be required.”

Although a certain degree of stress “goes with the territory,” according to travel-industry experts, every effort should be made to keep it to a minimum. One way to break up heavy travel patterns is to schedule the employee back in the office for a string of days between long trips. In many

For those unfortunates who just can’t seem to cope, high-flying fellow travelers and professionals in the field offer help to:

identify warning signs before the problem gets out of hand

avoid stressful situations in the first place

make your life on the road much easier to help prevent travel burnout

companies, traveling salespeople who head for the airport on Monday morning are back home again no later than Thursday afternoon. A driving trip of short duration can also be scheduled to balance the long-haul flights that require several days out of town or an extended period overseas.

### How to cope

Members of the have-job-must-travel crowd who face a laundry list of enervating

## Cooped up in the semi-dark atmosphere of an airplane is highly conducive to the creation of “travel burnout.”

travel problems offer valuable survival techniques they have picked up along the way.

“It’s not only the hours spent in flight that can cause problems,” Minnesota-based veteran flight attendant JoAnn Kuzma Deveny says. Kuzma Deveny is the author of *99 Ways to Make a Flight Attendant Fly Off the Handle*. “It’s just as likely to be the cumulative effect of the whole frustrating on-the-ground travel routine these days — the endless rush to the airport, late planes, ‘mechanical problem’ delays.”

Still on the job, Deveny says she puts into practice coping mechanisms acquired during her 25-year flying career. Here are common-sense suggestions she offers to help thwart travel burnout:

**Come prepared.** Bring along a “comfort pack” — a neck pillow, eye shades, earplugs — once offered on all long-haul flights but not always provided today.

**Don’t rely on airline food** that may no longer exist. Bring along a sandwich and favorite snacks.

**In flight,** skip the alcoholic beverage or carbonated drink. Drink plenty of bottled water to avoid the effects of dehydration.

**Disconnect.** Turn off the laptop and the cell phone. Relax. Read a book or a magazine. Try to nap.

Another tip for reducing travel frazzle, offered by New York-based public-relations consultant and former press-relations manager for Lufthansa Airlines, Lucille Hoshabjian, is to allow a bit of extra time on both ends of your trip. “With all the flight delays encountered these days,” she says, “it’s not a good idea to schedule

a meeting immediately after your flight arrival time.

“And forget about carrying your luggage aboard to save time later at the baggage-claim area,” she adds. “Today, every passenger seems to have the same idea. Overhead compartments are jam-packed. You have to be among the first on board to take advantage of the limited space. It may be a lot easier in the long run to just check your baggage through.”

Another way to enhance personal comfort in flight, Hoshabjian says, is to wear comfortable clothes. “Dress neatly, of course, but don’t be concerned about being ‘dressed up.’ A casual suit of wrinkle-proof fabric makes sense. My first choice is a pants suit, a nice one, but something that can provide warmth once I’m settled in and trying to get some sleep on an overnight flight. Certainly those skimpy little blankets many airlines provide aren’t worth much.

“Remember, too, that in higher altitudes your feet can swell. So tight-fitting shoes or boots may not be practical. Consider a pair of slip-on shoes that are easy to get into and out of.”

And finally, this added note — the “traveler’s creed” as practiced by Hoshabjian and her fellow members of the Society of American Travel Writers with equal application whether they are traveling on business or pleasure:

**Never stand if you can sit.**

**Never sit if you can lie down.**

**Never go past a restroom without using it.**

Words to travel by. **FF**

# Regional UPDATE

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



## WORLD

**AIR ROUTES:** Heading to **Peru** for business? Air Canada will start flying non-stop **Toronto-Lima** thrice-weekly beginning November 1...Air China was to have begun thrice-weekly **Beijing-Munich** service by the time you read this. 767-300ERs are deployed on the route. In another move, Air China is scheduled to begin thrice-weekly 767-200 service from **Beijing to Dubai** September 2.

**AIRLINES:** **British Airways** is about to refurbish its venerable 767 fleet, fitting Club World business-class seats and World Traveller Plus economy seats to the aircraft...This could elevate carry-ons to new heights. Low-fare **Ryanair** is looking for ways to

eliminate checked baggage. The idea is to save money.

**HOTELS:** There's a new **Four Points by Sheraton in Shenzhen**, specifically in the Futian Free Trade Zone. The 278-room hotel is close to the Guangdong-Shenzhen Expressway. To keep connected, there are dual-line speaker phones and voice mail...By the time this report goes live, the new 500-room **Radisson at London Stansted** should be open. Stansted is an increasingly popular launch pad for low-fare intra-European service...Looking for reasonably priced lodging in London? Consider **The Shaftsbury in Soho**. It just achieved **Best Western's Premier** status. Rates start at £99...Got to get in some work while on vacation? The 120-room **Presidente InterContinental Puerto Vallarta** now sports a 24-hour business center with Internet access. There is also a pair of meeting rooms for the times you can lure your colleagues from the beach to take care of a bit of business.

eliminate checked baggage. The idea is to save money.

## WEST

**AIR ROUTES:** Allegiant Air based in **Las Vegas** will begin year-round nonstop service between **McCarran International** and the **Dane County Regional Airport in Madison**. Service will operate on Thursday, Friday, Sunday and Monday using the 162-seat MD-83. Departure from **LAS**



will be at 12:55 a.m. arriving in **Madison** at 6:20 a.m...On October 1, ATA Airlines will add a second daily roundtrip between **LAX** and **Indianapolis International** to its schedule. The eastbound run from **LAX** will depart at 12:35 p.m.

**AIRLINES:** Over a period starting October 18 and continuing into December, **United Airlines** will offer upgraded 757 service on the Los Angeles International-John F. Kennedy International run. This "premium domestic service" will include three-cabin configuration. Among the goodies: First-class pax will have lie-flat seats (only ones on any domestic run) with 5 feet of space between rows; business-class pax will have more recline to their leather

seats with 4 feet of space between rows; those in economy are promised more room, too, with a 34-inch pitch versus the previous 31-inch pitch. All seats have 110-volt connections that require no adapter to customers in all classes of service. Comparable service upgrades will come for the transcon run between San Francisco International and JFK starting late December until late February of next year.

**TECHNOLOGY: Encinitas, California** has completed installation of a metro **Wi-Fi** system for its downtown area. The service promises to provide access from inside buildings, outside cafes and other locations. Pricing favors residents. They will be charged \$29.99 a month under a one-year contract; businesses pay \$39.99 a month, also on a one-year contract.

**INTERNATIONAL SERVICES:** Come October 31, **America West** will make some major increases in its Mexico services. On that day it will begin nonstop service between **San Diego International** and **Puerto Vallarta, Mexico**, and the next day another nonstop to **Los Cabos**. Service between San Diego and Puerto Vallarta will be offered on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Service between **San Diego** and **Los Cabos** will be on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Runs

will be operated by **America West Express**, which is operated by subsidiary airlines of **Mesa Air Group**, using Canadair Regional Jets. Also coming up for **HP** and its Mexico services: It will add nonstop service between **LAX** and **Acapulco** and between **Oakland** and Los Cabos starting on December 18. Service between Los Angeles and Acapulco and Oakland and Los Cabos will be offered on Saturdays and will be operated by America West Airlines using Boeing and Airbus aircraft. On the same days, **America West** will begin a weekly run between **Las Vegas'** **McCarran International** and the same two Mexican destinations. Service to **Puerto Vallarta** will be offered on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Service to **Los Cabos** will be on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. The service will be provided by America West Express, which is operated by subsidiary airlines of Mesa Air Group, using Canadair Regional Jets.

## SOUTHWEST

**AIR ROUTES:** Here's something new: Southwest is cutting some service, not just cutting it but doing so on its historic home turf. October 31 look for fewer flights between **Dallas, Houston Hobby, Austin** and **San Antonio**.

Here are the details: **HOU-AUS** is cut from 10 to eight roundtrips daily; the key **DAL-HOU** run loses three roundtrips, slipping from 32 to 29. There will also be three fewer departures from **HOU** to **SAT**, and two fewer from **San Antonio** to **Houston**. Aside from needing the airplanes elsewhere, this Texas native believes one of the reasons for the pulldown could well be that more fliers are driving short intra-Texas routes these days—because of security delays and attendant airport hassles...Terrific news for



**Tucson** fliers—nonstop service to the New York area. September 30 is the launch date for once-daily Continental service to **Newark Liberty International**...There will be more mainline competition in the **Albuquerque-Chicago O'Hare** market when United launches twice-daily service October 4...UA is also adding another desert route the same day: **O'Hare-Tucson**. This too will be twice-daily...Remember, October 1 is the start date for JetBlue's new flight from **Phoenix** to **New York JFK**. A caveat: The PHX-JFK return is a red-eye.

**HOTELS:** Headed for the east Texas oil fields? Consider the new **Quality Inn Conference Center** in **Tyler**. It's just off I-20 at 2843 N.W. Loop 323...Name change in **San Antonio**. The former **Regency Inn** near Fort Sam Houston is now a **Roadway Inn**.

## SOUTH

**AIR ROUTES:** Low-fare Independence Air continues to spread its wings with three more new southern routes. There are now a half-dozen daily roundtrips from **Savannah to Washington Dulles**. As of October 1, **Charlotte** gets an octet of nonstops to IAD; and high-tech **Huntsville, Alabama** gets perhaps the most frequent service in its history to the nation's capital—six daily nonstops to **Dulles**...Frontier JetExpress begins **Little Rock-Denver** flights in October. There will be a pair of daily nonstops, both via



regional jets...October 1 is the start date for nonstop **Pensacola-Dallas/Fort Worth** flights via American Eagle. Four daily ERJ-145 departures are on the

books...More intra-Florida service. September 30 Continental Connection begins flying three times each weekday from **Miami to Gainesville**; and twice each weekday between **Tampa and Gainesville**. These are propjet flights.

**HOTELS:** There's a new **Hilton Garden Inn** in **Columbus, Georgia**. You'll find it four miles from Columbus Metro Airport, just off Highway 80/22 (the J.R. Allen Parkway) and Bradley Park Boulevard.

**INTERNATIONAL SERVICES:** **American Airlines** has boosted **Miami-Bogota** flights. There are now three daily departures.

## MIDWEST

**AIR ROUTES:** Headed to the desert Southwest? There will be more mainline competition in the **Chicago O'Hare-Albuquerque** market when United launches twice-daily service October 4...UA is also adding another Southwestern route the same day: **O'Hare-Tucson**. This too will be twice-daily...One more desert departure: **ORD-Palm Springs**, also starting October 4, and also via United. This is a seasonal deal, running through April...One of UA's most interesting initiatives is the December 16 launch of **O'Hare-Maui-Kona** service.

It's a great way to burn off frequent-flier miles...Low-fare Independence Air has begun nonstop **Cleveland-Washington Dulles** service



with Canadair Regional Jets, nine of them daily...Hard on the heels of Northwest's announcement that it is making **Indianapolis** a focus city, hometown ATA is upping the ante on its home turf. Come November 20, ATA will boost **Florida** service from Indy. It's doubling **IND-Fort Lauderdale** service. There will be two departures daily. **IND-Orlando** goes from two to three roundtrips per day, as does **Indianapolis-St. Petersburg/Tampa**. **Fort Myers** is upgraded too. Where there were seven weekly roundtrips, there will be 14.

**AIRPORTS:** High-speed wireless Internet landed at **Cleveland Hopkins International**. It's provided via SBC FreedomLink, and is available at all gates, ticket counters and baggage claim. The daily fee: \$7.95...Boston Stoker Gourmet Coffee has opened a second location at **Dayton International**. It's located in baggage claim.

**HOTELS:** Hotel amenities don't mean a thing to frequent fliers if they don't get a good night's sleep. **Sheraton** understands. The **Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers** has installed Sheraton Sweet Sleeper beds in 1,209 of its guestrooms. This thing is a multi-layered construct, featuring an 11.5 inch-thick, high-coil Sealy Posturepedic® Plush Top mattress, five down and allergy-sensitive pillows, and crisp cotton-top and base sheets. Have a nice night.

## NORTHEAST

**AIR ROUTES:** Low-fare Independence Air continues to spread its wings with three more new southern routes. There are now a half-dozen daily roundtrips from **Washington Dulles** to **Savannah**. As of October 1, **Charlotte** gets an octet of nonstops to **IAD**; and high-



tech **Huntsville, Alabama** gets perhaps the most frequent service in its history to

the nation's capital—six daily nonstops to Dulles. Independence just launched 13 daily flights from **IAD** to **New York JFK**...US Airways is increasing capacity by up to 90 percent to five cities out of **Washington Reagan National Airport**. The carrier is bringing back mainline service (that means larger jets) to **Buffalo, Syracuse, Indianapolis** and **Manchester**. It's also beginning mainline jet flights from **DCA** to **Columbus**. All this happens September 8.

Terrific news for **Tucson** fliers—nonstop service to the New York area. September 30 is the launch date for once-daily Continental service from **Newark Liberty International**. This is the only nonstop between **TUS** and **New York City**. From **EWR, Tucson** fliers can connect with an array of CO's transatlantic flights...More flights from

**Baltimore/Washington** to the Buckeye State. October 31 Southwest Airlines adds two daily nonstops from **BWI** to **Columbus**. That makes for five flights daily.

**AIRPORTS:** Head's up.

**Aviation Daily** reports Northwest is going to close its World Club at

**Philadelphia International Airport**.

**HOTELS:** Got business in New England, perhaps the **Bristol, Connecticut** area? There's a new 120-room **Clarion Hotel** at 42 Century Drive. Take Exit 31 off Interstate 84.

### INTERNATIONAL SERVICES:

Maybe it's new traffic generated by the outsourcing American companies are doing these days; maybe not. In any event **Delta** is laying on a second daily flight from **New York JFK** to **Mumbai** (a.k.a. **Bombay**) from October 31 through February 27, 2005. The craft makes an intermediate stop in

**Frankfurt. FF**

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