

Leavin' on a jet plane

It seems like I've done a lot of flying since I started college in Massachusetts. I mean, I'm no comparison to Tom Hanks' character in "The Terminal," but it was a bit startling when I connected to DIA's wifi and it said "welcome home."

At this point, I have a sort of love/hate relationship with flying. On the one hand, it's a major pain to wake up when it's still dark out, lug around heavy baggage and basically spend a whole day sitting in planes and airports.

On the other hand, though, I'm really starting to appreciate the theatrical aspect of travel. Airports are like an alternate reality where birds fly indoors, sidewalks move and time doesn't exist. Once inside the airport it's easy to forget what time of day it is. People are seen eating burgers, downing coffee and sitting down for a beer 24/7.

My favorite part of travel would definitely have to be the people-watching. I've seen my share of "unique" people in the world, but there is no place like an airport to see an entire spectrum of different individuals.

One airport guarantee is the beach bum. You could be in Denver or Athens or anywhere between, and the season is irrelevant—there are always chill looking guys in shorts and flip flops, looking more ready to lounge in a lawn chair than board a plane.

Fashionistas are another airport must-have. Sitting near the moving sidewalks in the terminal is tantamount to watching a high fashion runway show. Since airports are invariably a hub of international travel, there are styles from around the globe.

Much like the beach bums, fashionistas have no concern for the weather. Scarves warm their necks in 90 degree weather and miniskirts offer little warmth during the winter months. How they can maneuver the jetway in heels or tote suitcases without damaging their manicures is

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nothing short of a miracle. And why anyone would want their bare legs sticking to a plastic seat at the end of a four-hour flight is beyond me.

I've given up trying to understand the airport people; I simply sit back and enjoy the show. The only challenge is to keep my laughter to a decibel that won't have a mob of eccentrics chasing after me.

Obviously not everyone gets the chance to view the airport entertainment on such a regular basis, so I thought I would share my top five airport moments.

—At the Orlando airport 90 percent of departing travelers have just finished a vacation at Disney World. The parents are looking ragged, and the Mickey Mouse-eared kids are getting on their parents' last nerve. It's like waiting for a dam to break.

—It's always amusing catching smug businessmen secretly playing World of Warcraft on their laptops.

—Ryanair, a European budget airline, is infamous for its strict baggage policies. If your luggage is bigger than a shoebox it must be checked. People are always trying to avoid the 35 euro fee and cramming their too large luggage into too small spaces.

—Spotting a celebrity is a rare chance in an airport, but when it happens, it's brilliant. In Dublin I was going through security parallel to Rihanna. I guess no one told her wearing sunglasses indoors, flanked by body guards isn't the most inconspicuous means of travel.

—My favorite airport moment of all time came in the form of a pretty regular looking guy. The fact that he was wearing sweatpants with suspenders, however, made me laugh till I nearly cried. Seeing this man against the backdrop of fashionistas was just too much to handle.

It's hard to say, but I do think the amusing travel moments outweigh the never ending TSA

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announcements, turbulence and snoring neighbors. Maybe.