

A RANT ABOUT AIRPORTS



The airport is a haven for those who love complaining. You can complain about the unbearably long queues, gripe about the snarled security personnel asking pointed questions about your luggage, whinge about fellow fulminating passengers who sit uncomfortably in purgatorial departure lounges, and bluster about flight delays

and four-hour long waits for a plane that might never come.

Airports are regularly voted one of the most stressful places on the planet for a reason. People who want to travel from A to B are, instead, treated to a hub of suspicion, fear of terrorism and hectic security checks.

Innocent passengers will become convinced they're terrorists after being subjected to a barrage of questions. People who are calm pools of Zen in any other situation will turn into raging bulls, pacing red-faced around departure lounges after being asked "Did you pack this luggage yourself?" 50 times.

More stresses and strains

The pressure of answering questions to serious security professionals is a hair-pulling situation for more flippant individuals. One joke answer or stuttered reply could see you sitting in an interrogation room, and all because you said your luggage looked like a bomb had hit it.

Once you've narrowly escaped a cavity search, your next obstacle is the departure lounge, a place that looks twinned with Limbo. There, the symptoms of stress manifest themselves more fully. No longer are you busied by security procedures. Instead, you simply wait in a location that believes a Costa Coffee and duty free vodka are enough to keep a group of agitated people happy.

By the time you manage to board your plane, the only relief you'll enjoy will be that you didn't have an aneurysm during your latest airport ordeal.

Gain your airport Zen

A hypothetical survey of people in an airport splits them into three groups - the stressed, the apoplectic and the weirdly calm.

That latter group of people are who we'd like to focus on for the last section of this article/rant. These weirdly calm people have an edge over the stressed. They've come prepared.

For a start, they've used an airport parking service. The best example of this is Gatwick meet and greet parking, which picks up your car right outside your terminal and leaves it in a safe location until you return.

Then they've arrived early enough to not endure endless queues before their flight.

And instead of hanging out with the plebs in a departure lounge, they've booked a VIP departure lounge experience that comes complete with complementary drinks, daily newspapers and free Wi-Fi. In the back of their heads, the weirdly calm are considering the schmucks who didn't bother to fork out a little bit extra.

The take-home fact of this article/rant is this - spending a small amount more on your airport visit will turn that stress-laden obstacle course into a breeze. Consider it before you take your next flight.

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