

UK Based Carriers Are Best and Worst for In-flight Amenities BA and Virgin in World's Top Five for Food and Amenities A Clean and Roomy WC is Essential Comfort, Above Good Meal for Brits Brits Love TV and Shopping in the Skies

London, May 6, 2008: TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel community has just announced its airline amenities (in-flight food, entertainment, seating and personal comfort products) survey among more than 1,600 travellers worldwide. UK based carriers top and tail the table for amenities with Virgin Atlantic selected as best and for the third year running. RyanAir was nominated worst airline for amenities. Despite its fall from grace over Terminal 5, British Airways figures in the top five for both food and amenities, along with Virgin Atlantic.

American Airlines was selected as worst for food among all travellers while British travellers gave that particular wooden spoon to RyanAir.

Let Me Entertain You

Forty-four percent of all (50 percent of British) respondents said television at their seat is the in-flight entertainment feature they value most. Interestingly, 12 percent of British travellers nominated the flight route map and five percent newspapers, compared with seven percent and three percent, respectively, for all travellers worldwide. The British are far less interested in real-time satellite TV or internet access than all other travellers.

Flying Essentials, Luxuries, Premiums and Purchases

Twenty-six percent of those surveyed said a full meal is the comfort feature they value most on an airline. For Brits, however, food came second to a roomy and clean lavatory.

Thirty-six percent of all travellers (43 percent British) said the in-flight luxury they would most be willing to pay extra for is a bed.

Thirty-seven percent of TripAdvisor respondents are willing to pay up to a 10 percent premium for a more comfortable seat and better legroom, while just over one-fifth would pay up to 20 percent extra for that luxury. Thirty-two percent said they are not willing to pay any premium.

Fifty-five percent of British travellers said they had bought from an in-flight shopping catalogue compared with only 33 percent of all travellers.

Food (and Drink) for Thought

If it meant a cheaper fare, the airline amenity most travellers could do without is the complimentary snack (36 percent.). The snack that travellers worldwide including Brits favour most is cheese and crackers, followed by fruits and nuts.

The most popular beverage for travellers worldwide is bottled water, followed by soda/cola and wine. However while bottled water is also favourite among British travellers ((43 percent) we eschew fizzy drinks preferring wine (21 percent) followed by fruit juice (12 percent) and champagne (seven percent).

Nothing Personal

Fifty-six percent of all flyers said they prefer to check-in online from home, and 14 percent said they prefer checking-in using the electronic kiosk. Only 24 percent would rather check-in with an airline representative. However despite check-in queues of recent weeks, many British travellers still prefer the personal touch with 35 percent opting to check-in with an airline representative.

Said TripAdvisor European Communications Manager, Ian Rumgay, "Virgin Atlantic are to be congratulated in coming first for amenities and knocking 2007 winner, Singapore Airlines, off the top spot. Meanwhile this survey shows that there are significant differences in air travel preferences between the British and other nationalities. The airlines that succeed in customer satisfaction are the ones that recognise and cater to differences between nationalities.