

Friendly Skies

How to make your connection

Ever notice how hard it is to find the LGBTQ people in airports? Air travel sure throws my gaydar all out of whack. Homo-looking guys turn out to be het men who've been Queer-eyed. Sauntering women with dykey haircuts are just Canadian.

The moving walkway carries me past unidentified strangers to my connecting flight. At least I see my people on TV. In all the waiting areas every newscast blares some same-sex marriage-related story. Go team.

I haven't eaten since dinner last night and am looking forward to some good old airplane food. Flying across time zones they usually manage to have you in the air between meals. But this flight takes four hours and no matter how you slice it, includes lunch time.

I've still got an hour's wait. The airport gift shop/newsstand is selling single pieces of fruit – the only living food on site – for \$1.75. The apples are so shiny even Snow White would be suspicious. I pass, but salivate a little anyway.

Eventually I board, find my aisle seat and buckle in. Our flight attendant is very faggy. Straight men who work in this swishy profession tend to act extra macho to defy the stereotype, but this guy is a total queen. If feather boas were part of the allowable flight attendant uniform, he'd be flouncing one across his shoulder while he reminds you to stow that bag completely under the seat in front of you, Mary.

Thank God(dess) another member of my tribe is onboard. If I can make contact, he might slip me a packet of snack mix before takeoff. That would hold me until lunch. Then we get the bad news: no food. Airlines no longer offer in-flight meals. Who knew? On this 1700-mile flight they don't even serve pretzels. My belly gurgles disappointment.

We're told we can purchase a restaurant quality sandwich or salad for \$10. The nerve. I do not have an extra \$10 to spend on what's supposed to be included in the deal.

It's the principle of the thing. Airline meals are part of our culture. You can't change the rules. It's unnatural. It goes against tradition. Even the bible says "Let all who are hungry come and eat."

Where's the constitutional amendment codifying that the institution of air travel is a union between one person and one meal? (Rumor has it a few renegade airlines flout the law and issue meals anyway.)

Why should I have to pay for airplane food – something first class passengers take for granted? It's not fair that some of us are treated as second class. Unequal. Under less famished conditions, I'd raise hell, but there's no fight in me. I'm too hungry. I will have to tough it out.

We are all sealed into the oxygen deprivation chamber, aka the cabin. Nice word choice, but this cabin has no burbling brook nearby. No fireplace. Not even a moosehead, although some of us passengers could pass for dead animals, we're so lifeless from breathing recirculated jet fuel fumes. The flight attendant sashays down the aisle checking seatbelts. I try to send him homo vibes.

After takeoff, I open my tray table and set out my travel journal, my wedding photo on the cover. Miss Thang rolls by with his beverage cart. I make a point of glancing at the portrait of Wifey and me, and then up at him, flashing my best We Are Fam-i-ly smile. My stomach growls, but you can't hear it over the engine noise.

Apparently I've made contact. "Are you hungry?" I nod with my most LGBTQ-solidarity look. He leans in close, "I'll see if we can get you something – don't tell anybody."

At last, I get to cash in on those special rights we've heard so much about. Flyboy serves my food with a conspiratorial wink. I'm happy – in a carbon monoxide kind of way – all the way home.



The flight attendant sashays down the aisle checking seatbelts. I try to send him homo vibes.

Sally Sheklow has been a part of the Eugene community since 1972 and is a member of the WYMPROV! comedy troupe. Her column, which began at EW in 1999, also runs in several other newspapers and magazines around the country and Down Under.

fashion at first sight

Buffalo EXCHANGE
New & Recycled Fashion

131 E. 5th Ave (between Oak & Pearl) 687-2805 BUFFALOEXCHANGE.COM

DELUXE

1331 willamette **one year anniversary sale**
fri & sat 12-7
sun 12-5

50% off all used items

See Catie Live at the McDonald Theater on Friday 4-16

ON SALE NOW

CATIE CURTIS ★

Dreaming In Romance Languages

ON SALE 12.99 EACH

Welk Music Group

★ **The place to find it.**

cd world

Corner of West 11th & Seneca | 541 683-6902
www.cdwebworld.com

On sale through May 7, 2004