

April 20, 2014

Greetings again,

Here is the 4th and final pre-launch communication. The first concerned money, pickpockets, etc. The second included tipping issues, clothing, and a checklist of optional things you may want to bring. The third was the Ladies Letter. This, the fourth, contains some last minute details, as well as a time conversion chart and a hotel list for you to leave with your loved ones and at work.

I received a couple of questions about meeting at the 4-Points Sheraton mentioned in the 1st letter. I hope the following clarifies:

Since most folks stay at the 4-Points Sheraton the night before, we need them back at the hotel by 8pm or 9pm on Sunday to hand out Cruise Books, etc, and to ensure they aren't stuck in the "It's A Small World" ride at Disneyland.

You don't have to show up at the hotel, you just have to show up for the flight. It's your option. You can get there at your convenience, so please don't feel pressured. We'll bring your Books to the airport if you are not at the hotel.

We should start arriving at the EVA Airlines check-in counter by 9:30pm on Sunday, 4 May. Our flight leaves 4-hours later.

We will begin moving folks on the hotel shuttle to the airport at about 9pm.

There are decent places to eat and relax at the international terminal. There are restaurants on the 2nd floor before security. After security there is a brand new shopping mall that includes eateries.

Once we arrive in Taipei, we all need to stay together. We will go through the transit gate security scanners and then we will find a quiet place to present the Big Speech. After that, we will cut everyone loose. Be sure to muster at our departure gate about 45-minutes before launch.

AIRPORT SECURITY (Domestic and International)

For those of you who have not flown for a few years:

At the airports, expect to see heavily armed authorities; drug dogs, explosives dogs, and customs dogs. And long lines.

- 1) Make sure that you put any pen knives, nail clippers, metal nail files, scissors, eyeglass repair kits, tools, etc in your checked bag, otherwise they will be confiscated at the airports.

- 2) If you've ever hauled ammunition in your luggage for hunting or range-firing, do not use those bags for air travel. The detection machines are VERY sensitive and they can pick up trace amounts of gunpowder --- and you may be searched for a long time.
- 3) Pack all aerosol cans (shaving, insect repellent, deodorant, etc) in your checked baggage and place them within easy reach. Security may want to inspect them.
- 4) Do not take photos of, nor ask any airport personnel or security guards, about weaponry, tactics, AOR's, hours worked, etc. You may be detained as a security risk. Airport personnel are trained to interrogate and detain any such people who question them. This is to prevent surveillance and intelligence-gathering by those who would do us harm.
- 5) Do not even think about joking about terrorists, bombs, hijackings, etc. It has always been a federal offense --- one in which, in the past, you could sometimes talk your way out. But since September 11th, they play no games, there is no excuse, and people will be arrested for such behavior.
- 6) If you notice anything the least bit suspicious, REPORT IT.
- 7) You may be asked to remove your hat, shoes, belt, etc for inspection. You may be required to have your person searched. You may have to submit to a whole-body scan. You may have your entire checked and carry-on baggage emptied and searched in minute detail. Take it all good-naturedly. It's to keep everyone safe. Get to your airports early for this eventuality.
- 8) Just prior to entering metal detectors, you will have to empty your pockets of anything metallic (pens, coins, keys, etc) and pass these through the X-ray in plastic bins. You may want to place your pocket metal in your outside carry-on bag pockets before getting to the scanners to avoid this awkwardness and to speed things up, then take it back out again after you are cleared. Laptops, cameras, and cell phones will have to go through as well, and these electronic items may have to be turned on to prove they are real. Security personnel will instruct you.
- 9) These new procedures have made flying very safe and reassuring, but it has also made the security personnel very keen-eyed and intense. It's all good.
- 10) Intoxicated persons will not be allowed to board aircraft. Also, on international flights, alcoholic drinks are free. Individuals who become intoxicated during flights will be prevented from boarding connecting flights at the next airport.
- 11) At the airport, always keep your passport and boarding passes protected, but easily accessible for inspection.

- 12) Do not place your passport or international tickets in your checked bags! It is also NOT advised to place your passport in your carry-on bag and stored in the aircraft's overhead bins or under the seat, for fear of being stolen while you sleep or are otherwise unaware. Keep your passport highly secure on your person.
- 13) Your most important document is your passport. Loss of your passport will result in an extremely costly and time-consuming effort for you to replace, especially overseas, and the tour may have to leave you.
- 14) Cell phones are to be turned off when they close the aircraft doors.
- 15) You will not be permitted to bring any liquid drinks past security checkpoints opened or unopened. Please take a moment to peruse the new carry-on restrictions (especially the **"3-1-1" Rule**) at <http://www.tsa.gov> as well as your particular carrier's own rules.
- 16) Lastly, you will not be allowed to lock your checked bags unless you have TSA locks (Vietnam is the exception). Therefore, you may want to keep valuable / irreplaceable items with you.
- 17) On our last trip, a man's nose hemorrhaged due to the very dry air on the long trans-Pacific flight. He had to be treated in Taiwan and missed continuing to Vietnam with us. If you are prone to nose-bleeds from dry air, you should bring (or request from the flight attendant) a surgical mask to wear during the flights. This will maintain humidity in your air stream and help to prevent nose bleeds.

Very soon we'll be in Vietnam. This time we'll actually be able to stand straight up without anyone shooting at us! Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

14 days and a wakeup.

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