

HD OFF DUTY --- Adventure & Travel -- Road Warrior: On Planes, Sleep and Don't Eat

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Simon Henry is the co-CEO of Juwai.com, a real-estate portal that offers world-wide property listings for Chinese home buyers.

The Shanghai-based Australian talks to the Journal about pounding the pavement, polite immigration officers, and enduring food poisoning on a 15-hour flight.

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WSJ: How often do you travel?

A: Probably once every two weeks.

WSJ: Where do you go most often?

A: Hong Kong, Shanghai, San Francisco, Sydney and London.

WSJ: Preferred airline?

A: Generally Cathay Pacific [Airways] because our head office is in Hong Kong and it has the best connectivity to everywhere else in the world.

WSJ: Favorite airport?

A: Hong Kong, because it has great food, great services and great staff. Shanghai would be a close second because Chinese immigration [there] is probably second to none. They're friendly and welcoming. After getting off a long flight, it's nice to get people who actually smile and say, "Hello, how are you, good morning."

WSJ: Favorite hotel?

A: The Dusit Thani in Bangkok. It's classic old-world service, great location and good food. The rooms have a colonial feel with timber walls, timber floors, comfortable couches and lounge areas. They've got a garden oasis in the middle of the hotel where you sit and hear the water and see the carp, and nine or 10 restaurants on site. It's a place you can go and just not leave.

WSJ: Packing essentials?

A: Multi-power adapter, iPhone cord and my computer. They're with me everywhere. I also bring a travel pillow and La Mer moisturizer.

WSJ: Packing strategy?

A: It takes me 10 minutes to pack for a trip whether it's for a week or 10 weeks. I just start at my feet and work my way up: socks, slacks, underwear and shirts. The main thing is not to overpack and the most important thing is money, passport and wallet. Everything else you can buy.

WSJ: Travel tips?

A: Book early and upgrade using airline points if you have them. That extra 2 inches makes a big difference.

WSJ: Tips to avoid jet lag?

A: Be so exhausted before you get on the plane that you sleep the whole way. The best thing is to stay as natural as you can -- [drink] lots of water. Set your clock to the time of your destination as quickly as possible and try to get into that time zone as soon as you get on the plane.

WSJ: How do you stay in shape on the road?

A: I walk a lot. And most importantly, watch what you eat.

WSJ: Favorite city to visit?

A: London. It's the only truly world city. You can be in London for three days and not hear any English spoken. There are so many international people. It's a mixture of villages, a delight to be in, and everything you want is there.

WSJ: Favorite restaurants in London?

A: Costa Coffee. You don't tend to get really good coffee in Shanghai, and London has some really good coffee.

WSJ: Which Asian city has the best food?

A: Bangkok, closely followed by Tokyo. They tend to base their meals on incredibly fresh products that are very high-quality and have a lot of different, diverse flavors. I always get street-side noodles in Bangkok and barbecue in Japan. Usually the smaller the barbecue restaurant, the better.

WSJ: Best travel experience?

A: A five-week holiday 10 years ago where we spent the whole time between London and Paris with family and friends walking the cities all day every day. It was the first time I'd ever been to London or Paris, so everything was new.

In Paris I had my first pizza with a raw egg in the middle. It sounds awful but was absolutely sensational.

WSJ: Worst travel experience?

A: Getting food poisoning from a meal on a 15-hour flight to New York. Apparently it's supposed to be almost impossible to get [food poisoning on planes] because they radiate the food to such a level. But I hadn't eaten anything for 24 hours beforehand, so it was the only thing that made sense. [The flight attendants] were apologetic but they couldn't really do anything.

WSJ: So do you avoid airline food now?

A: Yes, I try. I now make sure I eat before I get on the plane and have only a few snacks on **board**.

Edited from an interview by Alyssa Abkowitz

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