# Pre – flight

I arrived the airport enough to check in and clear security. What I didn’t expect was for everything to go really fast, so I was basically done with over an hour to spare.

I spent time watching planes (what I like to do). Frankfurt Airport does have interesting aircraft.

There were at least a couple times when I was redirected for questioning: once before entering the check – in line, and once just after I left the Schengen area (that was when someone held a sign with a list of flight numbers telling them to go to the right. I was not questioned as my boarding pass was stamped).

# United Airlines Boeing 777 – 200ER Frankfurt to Chicago (pmUA config)

N218UA is serving our flight today. It’s nothing too important to note other than the fact that it’s a special livery plane, painted in Star Alliance colors. These seats have now been swapped out to a newer seat.

Boarding was done via automated gates. Boarding passes were checked for a stamp before scanning at the gate. If someone doesn’t have a stamp, the person would be redirected out of line.

The “Z” gates that I departed from did not have escalators, so I had to haul my bag downstairs for the bridge. Not fun, but definitely not the airline’s fault.

I was welcomed after I got onboard. He directed me through the galley to the starboard side. I walked to my seat.

I did measure these seats and found them to completely follow the website’s specifications. Pitch was 31 (I initially measured 30 inches), width was 18.1 and 18.5 inches for the middle seats, and recline was 5”, so a little over the website’s specification there. Armrests were 2.5 inches wide, so that was nice. In addition, most everyone had two armrests due to the light load of this flight. 0.

Seats were blue, and they looked like something back from 2010, but they’re being phased out right now.

The entertainment screen was only 7” and didn’t like me at all. Put it this way, I preferred using my phone as a screen, but only after I did some work.

The screen needed to be reset a few times and we departed Frankfurt a few minutes late. A manual safety demonstration was required for some passengers as screens went out.

A snack and a full can of drinks were served after departure. Flight attendants were polite and joked around very often. I ordered a Coke (they had some trouble finding Diet Cokes), and it was served with a packet of mini breadsticks.

Lunch was served around half an hour after snacks were collected. I had the Pasta and found it so horrible, that I was glad I had some carbs back in the terminal. I didn’t touch the quinoa salad. The Pasta was not great, but edible. Finally, the bread was just plain, cold bread, nothing special. Overall, most of this meal was disappointing, and the best solution I can tell you is to bring your own food.

Interestingly, Ice Cream was served with the meal, not as a separate course. I’m not sure if I understand the reasoning behind this as this was a daytime flight and there was no need to rush. It was Stem and Honey Ginger, something I’ve never tried before. I enjoyed it, but I’m not confident that others thought the same.

Full cans of drink were served. I had a lime sparkling water.

The past few times I’ve flown (and that includes two Transpacific flights last year), no announcement was broadcast. Not sure if this is new procedure.

After the meal was cleared, I used the lavatories before I stretched out and slept for the next four hours. By the time I woke up, we were over Canada.

A little over an hour prior to landing, pretzels were served. In it were ham and cheese. It was probably the best meal I’ve had on this flight (which was sad). I had a cup of orange juice with it.

**Overall, the flight was mostly good, some bad. I really don’t want to say it’s one way or the other because the crew was awesome and I really don’t feel like it’s fair for this crew if I think I had a bad flight over a disappointing meal. The crew did well with what they had to work with… it’s a shame that what they work with isn’t very well and there’s very little.**

# Chicago to Minneapolis on A320

How fortunate it is of me to take this flight from gate B4 (the same as last time even though it was a bit later).

After a line in the jetbridge, despite me boarding at Group 2, I was welcomed aboard. I walked to my seat and measured it. This flight will be full.

Oh man. Seats were not nice. I could feel how tightly pitched these seats are. Pitch was barely 30 inches as much as it pains me to say this. The good news is that it felt like 32 inches due to the design of these seats. I was looking forward to fly the A319/A320 to try this out. Width was 17.9 inches, for middle seats, 18.5 inches.

Pretzels were served with a drink on this flight. More than enough for a short hop.

Entertainment was available via the Wi – fi streaming to your own device. Also more than enough for a short hop.

**Overall, I’m pleased with the amount of amenities offered for the short hop. It really didn’t matter much.**