



Jeremy Clark

# Clamour for glamour

**Jeremy Clark** rediscovers style, on set at a Hollywood studio



**Just recently I gave a talk about how, in most cases, food is undervalued by airlines. In the presentation I refer to the 'Good Old Days' and show the predecessors of modern day air travel: the ocean liners. These guys knew how to travel in style and companies like Cunard and P&O delivered it.**

When Pan-Am started its Clipper services across the Pacific and Imperial Airways/BOAC with Flying Boats to all corners of the Empire, it was these self same people travelling. So the service had to be on a par.

Something happened in between the 1940's and 2000 that turned airlines from a service-based industry into glorified livestock transportation or parcel delivery service – with you and I being the parcel. Airlines once run by service-minded people were now run by bean-counters, for whom the passenger is a tiresome inconvenience that needs feeding and entertaining whilst in their care.

I have written plenty about this in previous columns so I shall

refrain from venting yet more wrath here – instead I can tell you dear readers that 'the experience' is still alive with an airline called Air Hollywood. Your Pan-Am experience begins at check-in where you get a 60's style boarding pass, ticket jacket and first class carry-on tags. You're invited into the Clipper Club lounge where you can mingle with other enthusiasts, share stories, and make new friends. Then you board the exact replica of the 1970's B747 where you're instantly sprung back in time to the Golden Age of travel.

Stewardesses in original Pan Am uniforms welcome you aboard with a cocktail and the quiet lull of Sinatra's soothing voice. Passengers are encouraged to explore the aircraft – from First on the main deck, and the Upper Deck dining room, all restored to Pan Am's original cabin décor.

After the safety demonstration and a welcoming message from the flight deck Main Deck passengers get the plush "Sleeperette" seats while Upper Deck passengers enjoy a dynamic social atmosphere. Everything is authentic with careful attention to the exquisite service delivery of the era and menu offerings.

The gourmet four-course meal includes shrimp cocktail, Chateaubriand carved from the trolley, Roasted Chicken with Peppercorn Sauce. And who remembers the dessert cart? Well here it is again with knobs on!

There's just one small problem however: the plane doesn't actually go anywhere. It's not a plane at all but a film set in a Hollywood studio. But never mind, nostalgia enthusiasts don't have to go to Hollywood to experience 1940's aviation. The first new runway to be build since the 40's is earmarked for Heathrow. Britain being what it is means we still have at least another 10 years of Golden Age experiences to enjoy! ●

