

United got us there, but what an awful plane! (But surprising results from my contact with the airline)

Our trip to France was a bit convoluted-

- SFO-Chicago (Flight/United)
- Chicago-Munich (Flight/United)

Munich-Lyon (Flight/Lufthansa)

followed by

- Lyon-Avignon (SNCF train)
- Avignon-hotel (Rental car)

This is nothing new to me; long (seemingly-endless) travel "days" without sleep have become the norm. I don't look forward to them, but you get past them and somehow the brain-numbing ordeal seems to set your clock to local time a lot faster; I feel 100% adjusted the day after arrival. The experience isn't enjoyable but it's a means to an end. And in the end, everything worked out as planned, but I gotta say, the second leg's plane, an aging 767 that seemed older than UA's Rhapsody in Blue corporate theme song, was close to disgusting in Coach.



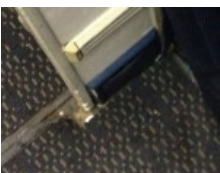
Upper panel loose above right side emergency exit (above row 19)

Loose panels over the emergency exit door, worn & torn wall-mounted pouch for United's magazine and safety materials, and the carpet? I think United salvaged the stuff we threw out last year when we redid our floors! Thin, torn in places, and the only thing holding it together was likely the dirt. Even the overhead bins were an issue; this had the old style that don't allow you to place your luggage in front-to-back, so space is drastically reduced by people having to place their rollboards sideways.



This is pretty shabby... first thing you notice getting to your seat.

There have been a number of recent changes to United's elite flyer programs, making it seem that they only really care about a small number of customers who buy high-priced last-minute fares for business trips. I sure hope they don't run out of space up front for them, because anybody sitting in the cheap seats of this particular plane wouldn't think the airline thought much of them.



Did United scavenge the rug we replaced at the shop?

In general, I've thought that United had been doing a pretty decent job, recovering from their bankruptcy a few years past, and the various problems that came with their merger with Continental. But if they're still letting a piece of equipment like this one fly the friendly skies, clearly having been in need of substantial renovation for a number of years, you just gotta wonder.



Now this is cruel... blocking access to Biz & First with a food tray... wine, cheese, fruit & nice table cloths...

But they did get me to Munich, on time, and without hassle. Something that would have been a challenge for them just a couple years ago.

Lufthansa? Oh my goodness, how much more apologetic, in an amazingly-sincere way, could you get over the fact that you were going to be leaving 4-5 minutes late due to delays getting baggage loaded? And then again at the end of the flight. The pilot's German accent caused us to think he said 45 minutes, which made sense; who would be apologizing for 4 or 5? Nice clean plane too.

The photos and descriptions of United's 767 were sent to United via their website form. Read on for the surprising result.

Part 2- United Responds

Mr. Jacoubowsky,

Thank you for contacting United Airlines. I regret learning about your disappointment with the appearance of the cabin aboard flight 655 11July13. In efforts to provide you with a seamless travel experience, United expects our staff to maintain the aircrafts to ensure the cabins are safe and comfortable.

The comfort of our passengers is a primary focus for us, and I truly regret you were disappointed in our service. Each aircraft adheres to a rigorous maintenance schedule to help ensure our customers enjoy safe and comfortable travel. I will include your comments in our monthly Customer Care report. The report will be reviewed by our Technical Operations Team. I am confident necessary repairs will be made.

Please be assured your comments have been reported to the members of senior management team as well, for internal review. As a goodwill gesture I have added thirtyfive hundred bonus miles. to your MileagePlus account.

We appreciate your business and look forward to welcoming you on board a future United Airlines flight.

Regards, xxx xxxxxx Corporate Customer Care

Part 3- United is fixing the planes! (response below from a friend who works for United, in aircraft maintenance)

Mike: Did you send UAL the same comments about your France trip you posted a while back? They heard from somebody. Quite a few legacy United 767 aircraft have recently had interior audits done. The worst plane spent about a week at SFO. More than 100 items were replaced, cleaned up, or re-worked. This plane wasn't supposed to be in for routine major mechanical service until late this year. Keep your comments coming.

Xxxx