

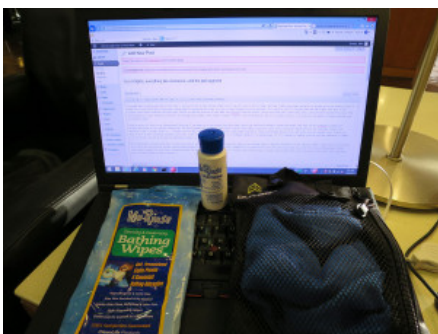
8 or 9 flights, everything like clockwork, until the last segment (plus road warrior's essentials)



Chillin' at the LAX United Club

It seemed like a really good idea at the time. I arrived at LAX at 5am, and my flight out to San Jose wasn't until 8:30am. And that flight would mean having to be picked up at the airport, and I'd rather be as self-sufficient as possible, taking public transportation to get as close to home (Redwood City) as possible. So I check to see if I can get onto the 6am flight that goes to SFO instead, which would eliminate the three-hour layover at LAX and allow me to take BART and CalTrain from the airport. Really did seem like a good idea, until, once everyone boarded the plane, they announce that it's gone mechanical and won't be leaving until, maybe, 8:30. There's another flight to SFO in 40 minutes, but it's already full-up, so I'm back on the phone to United, getting onto my original flight.

Could be worse; at least on an international itinerary I can hang out at the United Club with comfy chairs and electrical outlets, drinks and snacks. Not that I'm not drunk & snacked-out already! Was going to say "drunk & snacked out" but while grammatically-correct, that doesn't quite sound right, especially since I resisted a mixed drink on the overnight flight from Honolulu to LAX. Â I thought about it... if maybe a Gin & Tonic (about the only mixed drink I like) might help me to sleep, but thought better of it. Not quite sure why though. Since I have, at most, 3 or 4 "drinks" (anything alcoholic) per year, I feel funny about asking for one, as if somehow, whomever I'm asking knows. As if I'm going to screw-up ordering something as simple as a Gin & Tonic and betray my lack of something-or-other. Go figure.



This is what makes it possible to be on the road without a shower and not feel like you're rolled around in kitty litter. Bathing wipes, rinse-free shampoo and a travel towel. Where has this been all my life???

Worst thing about traveling like this, besides the lack of anything over two hours of sleep at a time, is not feeling clean, a natural consequence of not taking a shower. Especially on a trip like this, which has been entirely through tropical/high-humidity areas (Honolulu, Guam, Manila). Thankfully I've learned a bit over the years and picked up a pack of No-Rinse Bathing Wipes (think diaper wipes designed for King Kong), No Rinse Shampoo, two extra sets of clothes, and a travel towel, all picked up from our good friends just down the street at Redwood Trading Post. It all works surprisingly well; after two days on the road I don't feel any worse off than halfway through a workday. Actually, not quite so sure about the shampoo. It does get ride of any greasy feeling, but your

hair feels a bit crisp, like some hair-care product that tries to keep it in place. But definitely better than feeling greasy.