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### About Us

#### Go Bucket List Travel LLC

Go Bucket List Travel LLC is a full-service travel agency located near Richmond, Virginia with agents in New Kent and Charlottesville. We specialize in designing exceptional international vacations, honeymoons and destinations weddings.

Go Bucket List Travel LLC is accredited by the International Airlines Travel Agent Network and Cruise Line International Association and is a member of the American Society of Travel Agents. We are also certified by the State Corporation Commission to sell travel insurance to our clients.

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## Our Report Card for Turkish Airlines

Dear Bucketteers,

We have been often asked "What is your opinion on Turkish Airlines?"

So, for our recent trip to the Far East we flew on Turkish Airlines and wish now to share with you our experiences.

In 2016 we tried the new United Airlines Polaris Business Class non-stop service from San Francisco to Singapore with a return from Singapore on ANA Airlines through Narita, Japan with a direct connection onto Washington Dulles. 25-Hours over and 22-hours back.

This year we faced 31-hours outbound and 32-hours on the return through Istanbul.

### **The Turkish Airline price was 65% of what we paid United last year.**

Turkish Airlines is a member of the "Star Alliance" and flies nightly from Washington Dulles to Istanbul, Turkey. From Istanbul there are connections to most of the world's major airports...and many you may have never heard of.

Turkish Airline also offers free hotel stays and/or city tours for those with long layovers at the Istanbul Ataturk Airport. We wanted to sample these on our 9-hour layovers.

### **Our Report Card: Overall Grade: B+**

We would use Turkish Airlines again. Business class was an exceptional value. The late-night schedule was trying. Information on the free

Istanbul extended layover benefits should be included with the ticket information.

**Onboard Staff Size and Attention: A.**

Can't say enough about the attention we were given by the ample staff. They were always around checking on us and very responsive. English was a bit sketchy for some but that didn't take away from their friendliness and attention to detail.

**Business Class Seats: B.**

Our IAD-IST Airbus 330 aircraft had a 2-2-2 design in business class. The IST-SIN Boeing 777ER came with a 2-3-2 business layout. The lay-flat seats seemed a bit old-fashioned with limited adjustments and no direct aisle access for the window or middle passenger. Seats only came with a UPC power port. Reading lights were overhead. We did like the large storage compartment under the monitor. Came in handy for shoes and other gear.

**Night-time Bedding: A.**

The attendants did make up the lay-flat seats with a comfortable quilt bedding and cover set along with a large pillow.

**Onboard Cuisine: A.**

Turkish Airlines is known for its highly-rated cuisine and we agree! After takeoff a chef came to us to explain the menu...three main course options and multiple starters and desserts along with a soup to choose from...a delightful 4-course main meal on each flight along with a breakfast or late snack. Breakfast was also ala carte with a range of sections including a choice of eggs.

**Airplane Cleanliness: A.**

It was nice to see fresh-cut flowers and potted ivy in the rest rooms along with rattan reeds in scented oil glasses.

**Entertainment System: B+.**

Numerous choices on a wide screen monitor that was fixed to the back of the seat ahead of us. Would have preferred to have had a closer screen. In the 777 2-3-2 option, the middle seat passenger [Tony] had a view of the screens on his right and left. The business class seats came with **excellent Denon sound suppression** earphones. The planes each featured outside

cameras for a pilot's view of takeoffs and landings.

**Onboard Climate: C.**

The cabin temperatures for the east bound flights were too warm and each flight was very dry. The longer flight times made this an irritant.

**Schedule: C-**

We had a very late 11pm departure from Dulles and a 2am departure from Istanbul enroute to Singapore. Coming back we faced an 11:35pm departure from Singapore and a reasonable 2:45pm flight out from Istanbul. For each night flight the cabin was lighted for a complete dinner service. The food was great but eating in the middle of the night was a bit strange.

**Ataturk Airport, Istanbul: C+**

On the arrival from Dulles we had to deplane by steps to busses. We were then dropped off at an airport corridor with no clear signs of where we were and where to go. Eventually we found our way up to the international waiting area. For the flight from Singapore we deplaned by jet bridge and followed the crowd to the international transit passenger passport control lanes. We appreciated the separate business class lanes so we could bypass the very large crowds coming off the early morning flights. In the terminal, the information desk staff were not english fluent.

On each arrival at Ataturk we were at a loss to find information regarding where to go for the free hotel and/or Istanbul tours promised for Turkish Airlines extended layover passengers. We wasted our money on the tourist visas we had purchased on-line so we could venture off airport.

The central international waiting area was filled with multiple shopping and dining options. Ataturk is a very busy airport and we were impressed with how many passengers were coming and going at all hours of the clock.

It is important to be at the gate 90 minutes prior to boarding a USA-bound flight. There are four steps through passport control and security screening that will take a while. Business class passengers did have their own lane to skip the very long queue heading to the first passport station.

### **Turkish Airlines Business Class Lounge: A.**

Very impressed with this outstanding, large two-level lounge. Multiple wonderful food and drink stations catering to passengers from across the globe. Free massages along with showers. For fun ask the golf-pro for free lessons in a simulator or you can try your hand at the pool table or the slot-car race layout...a big and little boy favorite.

Also:

### **Changi Airport, Singapore: A**

Special attaboy for the Singapore Business Class Early Check-in Lounge, available for most airlines. We were given access to a special comfortable lounge off the ticketing floor where an agent checked us into our Turkish Airline flight. We then had a direct line to passport processing. Very civilized!

### **More to Come in 2018**

We are overwhelmed with numerous New Year's deals and offers for resorts, cruises, theme parks and much more, plus many early booking offers for 2019 cruises, tours and river cruises.

### **Join Us in 2018 or 2019**

We still have room on our July Northern Italy tour, our August Ireland Exploration as well as our new 2019 tours, including Bucketeer tours in January to Egypt and in April to Greece.

Please call us at

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And don't forget to check out our **Facebook** page for many great deals on 2018 and 2019 vacations.

We wish you a fine start to 2018!

Please accept our sincere gratitude for your continued support and referrals.

Smiles,

Nancy & Tony Cassano

Carrie McCrory

*The Bucket List Concierge Team*™

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