



HOUSEKEEPING



Air hostess, too, aiding mother with baby in comfortable sleeper berth. Below, dinner in the clouds is like dinner in a fine restaurant

AS THE sun drops into the west you lean back in your seat on the TWA "Skyscraper Chief." Since leaving Newark late in the afternoon you have been watching the scenery below. Now you begin to feel hungry. Then you turn at a question from the hostess.

"Would you like your dinner now, sir?"

A moment later she is back with a sturdy table that snips into the wall and while you watch she deftly sets your place. Gleaming silverware, linen, china plates and tempting hot food appear almost by magic. Here in the clouds, flying across the continent at 200 miles per hour, you eat a tasty meal served piping hot that is as good as any fine restaurant can offer. Next morning, crossing over the Colorado river into California,



in the CLOUDS

you may have breakfast served in bed if you like. Yet if you peer into the "kitchen" over which the hostess presides, you will find no stove and hardly any other equipment.

Behind this luxury of dining at your ease in the clouds is an efficient, unseen organization on the ground. In her job of keeping house in the air the stewardess has plenty to do besides cook for seventeen hungry passengers, so TWA transfers most of that work to the ground crew. Carried in pre-heated vacuum containers, the food served at dinner time was placed on the plane just before



Passengers leaving a "klysleper" at end of a transcontinental trip and, below, whiling away time in one of the berth compartments of a sleeper plane



is left Newark. Breakfast came on board at Albuquerque before you got up.

A year or so ago airplane passengers ate cold sandwiches out of a box and drank tepid coffee in a paper cup. To bring that kind of service up to date took lots of careful planning. Space on the planes is limited, weight must always be considered.

Part of the result is an ingenious group of cabinet drawers in which the table service and part of the food for each meal is placed aboard the plane. The boxes are freshly filled in the commissary department just before a plane leaves, and slide into shelves of a cabinet in the galley. Knives, spoons, and other silverware go into one drawer; linen, crackers, and other small items go into another. The "cold box," a miniature lightweight ice box cooled by Dry Ice, contains salads, frozen desserts, and other foods to be kept cool. The stewardess can reach anything she wants by sliding out drawers of the cabinet.

A rack in the galley supports eight two-quart vacuum bottles filled with hot water for making tea, bouillon, and other hot drinks. By means of special faucet-type heads the hostess can draw liquid from any bottle without supporting it in her hands. Another rack holds two one-gallon vacuum jugs filled with drinking water. In the galley also is a steam-table compartment kept hot with water warmed by exhaust gases where the four large vacuum jugs that contain the main course of the

meal are kept. Usually two jugs are filled with some such meat as baked ham while each of the others contains a cooked vegetable. Standing in her small compartment, everything she needs for serving meals is within reach. All she does is assemble the food on the plates and serve it.

Feeding the flying public is really a big business



Top, preparing meal in plane's galley. Below, vacuum jug in which food is carried

today. Eight restaurants along TWA's transcontinental route prepare the food. Hauling about 10,000 passengers per month, the line spends as much as \$100,000 per year on food alone. An individual dinner served free to a passenger costs ninety cents and a lunch costs about seventy-five cents, delivered to the plane.

In a year, one line serves fifty tons of fried chicken and more than twenty-five tons of chops, ham, and cold cuts. Added to these are other tons of assorted vegetables, fruits and bread. Half a million cubes of sugar are stirred into coffee cups in the air every year. Last year one air line alone served 190,000 meals aloft.

The food you eat in the air is no hit-or-



Stainless, felt, making up the berths in a "sky-sleeper" plane. *Below*, a typewriter is one of the conveniences found aboard the modern air liner. *Bottom*, magazines and extra blankets are stored away in overhead shelves above the seats.

miss assortment but is carefully selected according to a planned menu that is changed every day. Planning the meals is the job of the line's dietician, who chooses dishes which agree with you at high altitude and which may be carried in vacuum containers and still retain their freshness. Chicken is a favorite meat. Usually the menu is arranged to include dishes typical of the section the plane is flying over. Kansas City steaks are served in the middlewest, fresh trout for breakfast is an Arizona item, and avocado salads are part of a lunch or dinner in the southwest.

Serving meals is only part of the hostess' job. When you get sleepy the hostess prepares your bed with a few efficient motions. Each pair of seats in a sleeper or in the sleeping compartments of a combination plane convert into comfortable upper and lower berths resembling railroad sleeper accommodations. Each berth has its own window, electric light and ventilation, and contains a thick, comfortable lightweight mattress, mattress cover, sheets and blankets and pillow.

Sleeping in the clouds is no longer a makeshift arrangement. Berths are six feet and four inches long and more than a



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Housekeeping in the Clouds

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yard wide. Pilots make night landings with a particularly gentle touch so as not to disturb passengers. One of the problems for the tactful hostess these days is the passenger who snores so loudly that he disturbs other sleepers. Inside the sound-insulated cabin of the plane the noise of the motors is merely a distant hum.

The projected four-motor super-transport which the air lines are going to use a couple of years from now will be even more comfortable, for instead of landing at an angle they will land level with the ground. Berths will be horizontal all the time. This is going to be made possible by landing the plane on its two conventional wheels plus a third wheel let down from the nose of the plane. The tail of the airplane will remain in the air during a landing. These planes will be so large that at least two stewardesses will be necessary.

The stewardess of a sleeper plane has more than 1,000 items of equipment in her charge, including spare bedding for changes to be made when new passengers board the plane, a berth ladder for getting into upper berths, coat hangers and special clothes hangers for use in the berths. Her equipment includes soap, paper towels, paper drinking cups, extra blankets, shopping bags for stowing away debris that might clutter up the cabin, a fly swatter for flies that might hop into the plane during a ground stop, and a small broom for keeping the aisles clear. In her charge is a bottle of disinfectant for sterilizing the electric razor that operates off the ship's current, a portable typewriter, current magazines and the latest editions of newspapers, several games and a medical kit.

At Kansas City, if you wish to telephone from the plane while it is on the ground, the stewardess connects the plane's phone with the ordinary land wires through the airport exchange. So far, passengers can telephone from a plane only while it is on the ground, since not enough radio channels are available for radio telephone service for ordinary conversations.

In the air, however, the hostess answers the phone in the galley that connects with the pilot's cockpit to get the latest weather information and other reports the pilots think the passengers might like to know.

Besides being a registered nurse, each hostess must know much about aviation and be able to answer almost any question a passenger might ask. She must be able to explain intelligently how an airplane stays in the air, what the automatic pilot does, and even outline the air mass analysis system used in weather forecasting. The hostesses are thoroughly trained for their work at a ground school that is part of the air line's system.

Spring cleaning in the air comes at the end of every transcontinental trip. While mechanics are swarming around the engines, other members of the ground crew remove the rugs and seat upholstery from the cabin. Then the entire interior is cleaned with a huge vacuum cleaner. Mirrors and toilet fixtures are polished, used linen, bedding, and dishes are removed, and the galley is cleaned out. In the hangar the rugs and upholstery are brushed and cleaned. Spots are removed with solvent. Fresh supplies are put back in the plane, and after the cleaned rugs are laid down, canvas is placed over them to protect them from the shoes of mechanics hurrying back and forth to the cockpit.

Then the plane is ready to be washed. The ground crew wheels it out of the hangar and goes after the exterior with a fire hose, buckets of soapy mixture, and half a dozen long-handled brushes. Every inch of the fuselage and wings is scrubbed and the windows are polished. Finally the plane is ready for inspection and another flight, immaculately clean inside and out.