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PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS
Overseas Division
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DINING ALOFT - THEN AND NOW

What was it like for 22 elite passengers dining above the clouds on Pan American's 42-ton flying boat, Dixie Clipper, during the first commercial crossing of the Atlantic which began June 28, 1939?

"It was the last word in luxury for its day," is the opinion of John Salmini, of Rome, Italy, who with Bruno Candotti, now living in Venezuela, was one of two stewards aboard the inaugural flight 25 years ago.

Pan American's reputation for superior food service started with that initial flight. Waldorf-trained Salmini and his companion were hired expressly to plan, prepare and serve meals which would satisfy the tastes of wealthy passengers, many of whom were connoisseurs of good food.

Although they had ample accommodations aboard the flying boats for the preparation of meals, the pioneer chefs lacked many of the conveniences which make food service comparatively easy on modern Jet Clippers.

Pre-frozen meals, designed to last many hours and retain their freshness and flavors, were still in the experimental stages. Dry ice had yet to make its debut. Pan Am's vast commissary service

which today ships five million frozen meals, plus specialities all over the globe every year by air, was in its swaddling clothes. There was no Pan Am kitchen save on the airplane.

In order to chart meal schedules for flights which required days instead of hours, the stewards joined operating crews on survey flights across the ocean prior to the inauguration of passenger service.

Arrangements were made to purchase food from selected hotels, stores and restaurants at terminal points on both sides of the Atlantic. European cooks were cautioned to eliminate the use of oil in most meals prepared for consumption by Americans and heavy sauces were taboo.

Wines and liquors, including Champagne, were available on the Dixie Clipper and there was a complete formal table setting for each passenger. The dinnerware bore Pan Am's monogram.

The meals were typically American: shrimp cocktail, turtle soup, steak, mashed potatoes, asparagus, ice cream, coffee or tea, comprised the dinner menu. For breakfast there was a choice of fruit juices or fresh fruits, including strawberries and cream, dry cereals, poached eggs, bacon or sausage, rolls, coffee, tea or milk.

These high standards established 25 years ago are maintained aboard today's jet Clippers. Methods of preparing food have paced the advance of Pan Am's other services. In 1939 Salmini and his aide required hours to prepare the food service for comparatively few passengers. Today, because the time required to get from here

to there has been telescoped by jet speeds, and passengers are numbered in the hundreds, more revolutionary methods became necessary.

Infra-red ovens are geared to cook 16 steaks to rare, medium or well done perfection in seven minutes. Capable of turning out 42 meals in a few minutes the jet oven is a far cry from the steam table of early Clipper days.

Because of the time limit, dinner is served shortly after takeoff on Pan Am's transatlantic flights.

A typical First Class meal may consist of: cocktails; hors d'oeuvre, including caviar; salad; soup; Maine Lobster Cardinal; a choice of entrees including roast filet of beef and pheasant with Armagnac sauce; a selection of imported cheeses; dessert such as cherries Jubilee; fresh fruit. Fine imported wines and liqueurs are also served.

Equally palate-pleasing is the fare in the Economy section. A sampling might include: salad, soup, Rock Cornish hen or steak in red wine sauce, vegetables and desserts. Wines and liqueurs are also available.

Menus change periodically on all flights to provide variety. For Pan Am, international fare also means catering to the dietary requirements of peoples of many religions and nationalities.

To John Salmini, who today is Field Service Supervisor for Pan Am in Rome, "it was a grand thrill," to be a member of the flight crew which made aviation history in the Dixie Clipper. "Not many people," says John, "can boast of having their names recorded in the archives of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. Ours, Bruno Candotti's and mine and those of the operating crew are there."

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