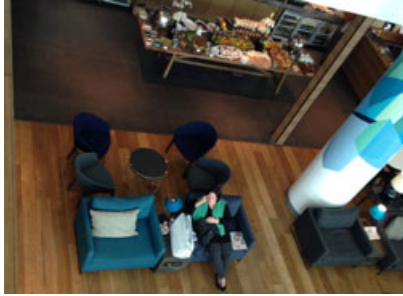


Flying? Take it SLOW...

By  Brian Berkman

12 Nov 2014

Access to airport lounges has long been the symbol of upward mobility and previously only reserved for VIPs or those who purchased premium tickets. Nowadays, however...



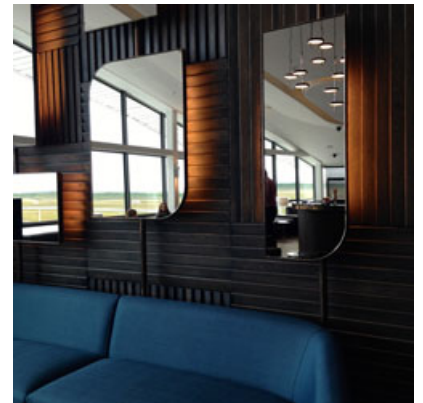
There's a very good choice of food on offer while you wait to board.

It seems the competition to reward loyal customers is hotting up with Woolworths offering Black Card holders vouchers for magazines and coffees along with 3% back on purchases. Access to airport lounges has long been the symbol of upward mobility and previously only reserved for VIPs or those who purchased premium tickets. Nowadays many loyalty programmes offer access to lounges and the BidVest Lounge, (previously known as the Premier) was one that allowed cash entries. Years before I qualified for a Diner's Club credit card, I used this lounge as a cash visitor while travelling.

Big-time lounge envy

I once used the SAA lounge but wasn't especially impressed and used BA's previous Cape Town incarnation and remained happy with the BidVest offering but, with the SLOW lounges recent Cape Town upgrade, I am having big-time lounge envy.

The most impressive thing is the double volume space. I love the smart, Scandinavian timber look that seems straight out of a Wallpaper magazine but more than that, I like the added value. Not simply offering robot-dispensed cappuccinos (perfectly acceptable, I might add) but they have a Barista who will make your Origin coffee to order.



A place to relax.



Fancy a glass of wine?

As a non-drinker, the impressive beverage offering - dispensed from oxygen-limiting temperature controlled devices so that each glass is as fresh as the one before it - is wasted on me.

Grazing options - and I mean this in the accurate sense of a movable feast changes constantly with yet more platters of interesting and delicious items being offered.

No fast food here

Hake gudgeons served canapé style in shot glasses with dipping sauce, quiches with flaky pastry so enticing I had to summon all my carb-avoiding strength to pass by were just some of the items. There were many items that perfectly suited a Banting or carb-restricted diet - olive tapenade, chicken liver pate, simple salads to mix and match among them.

There is also a range of bite-sized portions of pastries and confectioneries and a tray of fudge, so luscious and pale in its caramel hue that I felt my veins aching towards the addictive sugar rush they'd deliver.

There is a bring-one take-one library and almost more magazines than an Exclusive Books - and many of them are free to take along when you board.

As lounges go the competition better catch up or I will trade my Diner's Club card for an FNB card one in a heartbeat.

For more information go to www.SlowLounge.co.za.



Enjoy.

ABOUT BRIAN BERKMAN

Brian Berkman can be contacted on 083-441-8765 or email Brian@BrianBerkman.com.

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