



Poulet ou Poisson?

My travelling from South Africa to Reunion was my first international travel experience as well as my first time on an airplane. So the entire process at the airport along with how everything works on board was unknown to me.

After already having offered myself and my carry-on up to a very confused South African Customs Officer at Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo International Airport out of fear of being **arrested** for any reason whatsoever – I was really hoping to not have to face any more public embarrassment.

As I took my seat in the front row on board the Air Austral flight, I noticed two boys on the opposite side of the aisle. Looking like flying in Comfort Class is part of their **daily commute** to school – I decided that I would just do **whatever** they do. So we put on our seat belts and settled in for the take-off.

Just after 11:00 am, a few minutes after boarding, the air hostess came out with glasses of juice and champagne flutes filled with, of course, the real thing. I had never had champagne before and was very excited to be starting off my French experience in style. **However** – I had one question - are we allowed to drink yet?! Now, in South Africa, if someone wants to know whether it is an **appropriate** time to have a drink, we have an Afrikaans saying which translates to: "Has the Boeing flown over yet?". Not having anything to do with **actual** aircrafts – the saying sounded in my head. All I could think was "Oh please, please, please let her offer champagne to someone else first!". Already feeling out of place being, **apparently**, the only non-French speaking person on board, I did not want to top it off with frowned-upon behavior. To my great relief, the champagne was accepted by another adult before the air hostess reached my seat and so I had my first taste of **actual** champagne.

Later on, too busy **staring** out the window at my last view of the country I have never left before, I did not notice that everyone had already set up their **trays** for lunch. As the two boys were offered their **meals**, I **frantically** tried to **figure out** how to set up my tray without **appearing** completely **clueless**. With little success, when the question "Poulet ou poisson?" was posed to me - I had to say "Non, merci" out of fear of more public humiliation. Also, I had no idea what "poulet" or "poisson" was.

At least during my return flight next year I will know that I am being offered a choice between chicken and fish. The tray, however, will remain a mystery.





Vocabulary

arrested – arrêté

daily – quotidienne

commute – trajet

whatever – tout ce que

however – cependant

appropriate – approprié

actual – réels

apparently – apparemment

to stare – regarder

tray – plateau

meal – repas

frantically – frénétiquement

to figure out – comprendre

to appear – sembler

clueless – désemparés