

You are here: [Main](#) » [Travel Ideas and Interests](#) » [Turbulent Baby Bowels at 37,000 Feet](#) - AOL Travel News

Bambino on Board

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Turbulent Baby Bowels at 37,000 Feet

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Posted Jun 13th 2011 05:00 PM

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that our rental company said "might or might not be available tomorrow, we'll have to see" – for our stay in Chianti.

Stuff happens. Thank goodness for Feldschlossen beer.

We're staying at an airport hotel, and the staff at the [Radisson](#) has been great and especially sympathetic to our troubles. They found us a room and set Max up in a cozy, Swiss crib (though he has deferred to his stroller, in which he is now sleeping). Ahhh, rest. Finally. It's been a while ...

Getting it Together Pre-Departure

Our Chicago departure was frenzied. Jana's a teacher and her last day of school was Friday, which left her zero time to pack during the days leading up to our trip. She began packing her clothes yesterday (Saturday morning) at 10:37 A.M – pretty impressive considering our ride to the airport was scheduled for noon. She made it with minutes to spare (and time to dust a ceiling fan, to boot.)

For his part, Max gave us a pretty good pre-flight scare. We were standing in the security line, and he was flirting with a couple standing next to us (telling them about the time he was stuck laying next to the really drooly kid in play group) when he started choking and coughing up brown mucus.

Over the next 30 minutes as we made our way through security and to our gate, Max experienced two similar episodes. So, we phoned his pediatrician who instructed us to give Max only small amounts of fluids for the next 24 hours. We asked him whether we should postpone our trip, but he reassured us Max should be fine in a day or so. Meanwhile, two paramedics arrived at our gate to give Max a once over, and they both gave him the OK to travel.

Daddy "Dooty" Calls On Board

On board our SAS flight, were given a bulkhead row – a spacious bonus that allowed Max to rest from a hanging bassinet. The row shared a common wall with the toilets, which took a bit of getting used to for Jana and me, though the ongoing flushes served as a capable fill-in as a white noise machine for Max.

Speaking of toilets, when I was changing a diaper at 37,000 feet, I felt like the guy you see spinning plates on sticks, constantly tending to one crisis only to have another one quickly develop. On the plus side, I can attest that caring for a baby in an airplane restroom will cure the most neurotic germaphobe. Touching the wastepaper bin with my fingers or the bathroom door lock with my cheek would normally send me scurrying for a Purell bath. But you don't think twice when your baby is sliding off a changing pad. (I made the save on both occasions.)

As for in-flight excitement, a doctor was summoned to attend to a passenger on our flight, though it was thankfully not for Max. Rather, a man fainted a row in front of us, smashing his nose and causing a dramatic stir among passengers. Max slept through the episode soundly, but when he awoke, he looked over at the guy (lying on the floor with his legs raised) and said, "Pffffffttt."

Waiting It Out in Switzerland

The descents for both of our flights were brutal on Max, and he cried harder than Ashley on *The Bachelorette*. We tried giving him a bottle, having heard the sucking action helps alleviate pressure on a baby's ears, but it was only mildly successful. In any event, he made it through like a champ and was all smiles again, even during a 2-hour visit to Zurich Airport's lost and found.

So we're bunking down in Zurich for the night. I'll know in the morning whether our bags have arrived. If not, because one of the bags includes Max's car seat and formula for two weeks of our trip (a special formula for his highly sensitive stomach), we'll need to wait it out before our drive to Italy.

Stay tuned.

Keep up with Jerry and the bambino on [Twitter](#).

SUNDAY, JUNE 12 – Were it not for death stares from fellow passengers, ear-piercing cries during descent, and diaper changes punctuated by turbulence (the most daring Mile High Club, to be sure), flying overseas with a baby would be completely stress-free.

A few hiccups have forced us on a Zurich detour. It seems we beat some of our bags to Switzerland and because of the time we spent at lost and found filing a claim, our car rental firm gave away our car.

And so it is that Jana, Max, and I are waiting for our luggage to arrive so that we can drive to Italy – in a car



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