

## EXECUTIVE CLASS

### » GAIL LORD, LORD CULTURAL RESOURCES



**Gail Dexter Lord is founder and co-president of Toronto-based Lord Cultural Resources, which plans cultural projects including museums, galleries, science centres and expositions.**

**You must spend a lot of time in the air.**

I'm out of the office 70 per cent of the time, and I fly about 200,000 miles a year. I go to our offices in Paris, New York and Beijing.

Lately we have projects in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. And, actually, I have been flying a lot to Winnipeg because we are working on the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

**With all that long-distance flying, how do you stay comfortable?**

Well, first of all, for comfort I bring moisturizer. I also like to get an aisle seat. Of course it's great to have a window seat when there are staggeringly beautiful views flying over places like Iran or Turkey.

**How do you keep yourself busy on 14-hour flights?**

I listen to the airline music channels, and I generally watch about three movies. On a long-haul flight, there's time to relax. I don't get new e-mails, and I can't get phone calls. It's great. I read two newspapers. You know, it's a luxury to have time to read a whole newspaper. Having all that time to myself to read, listen to music and watch movies is how I discover new things.

**You must have packing down to a science.**

I do. And by the way, there's no such thing as perfect luggage, only a perfect packer. I travel with just a carry-on, whether I'm going for three days, three weeks, or three months. The essence of packing carry-on is that you have to be willing to give up freedom of choice. The clothing you take should be pre-planned. I rehearse every minute of every trip before I go, and the packing follows. Every trip has a colour scheme.

**Obviously you are in a lot of airports. What's your favourite?**

The new terminal in Dubai. In airports like Dubai's, there are just tens of thousands of people coming from and going to places you might never have studied in geography, cities we know nothing about. It's a humbling experience for a Westerner to see that. Dubai isn't just an airport. It's a cross-roads. Munich is a distant second, and Toronto is third.

**How about airlines?**

The UAE's airline, Etihad, now has flights with showers. And they have excellent food. U.S. airlines have the worst food.

I usually fly Air Canada. They have great flights from Toronto to Beijing – it's efficient and it's a thrill because they fly over the poles.

**With all your coming and going across time zones, how do you adjust?**

I live in the time zone that I'm going to, even if it's the opposite to mine. When it's time to go to sleep, I go to sleep. That's my job. The ability to go to sleep is important if you have a meeting the next morning, so you have to be good at it.

» *Judith Ritter*