

LOS ANGELES DAILY NEWS

Burbank-Disneyland, California

23-27 November 2016

PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES



Emily boards our
JetSuiteX flight to
Burbank to visit Gordon
for Thanksgiving.

PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

Emily and I have traveled most Thanksgivings.

Sometimes it was just a few minutes up the road to our friends, the Claudinos, in Palo Alto for turkey. Sometimes to relatives in Tulare for lamb. Once we even went to Aspen, Colorado on a "business" trip when I was a sports writer. Recently the trips have been to LA to visit Gordon and ensure that he had a Thanksgiving feast.

But Thanksgiving travel can be a hassle because so many people do it.

It can take two hours or more by car to get out of the Bay Area – usually a one-hour jaunt – because of jammed highways over the Pacheco or Altamont passes.

The normal five-hour drive to Los Angeles can be a seven-hour nightmare on four-lane I-5 or U.S. 101 because of bumper-to-bumper traffic that's like drafting in the Daytona 500 – a split-second of distraction and you're in the middle of a 40-car pile-up.

The security lines at the airport are an hour or more. It's a nine-year (minimum) wait for the two-hour high-speed train to LA.

This year we tried some new things and had a very pleasant trip.

– *Continued on next page*

Bumper-to-bumper traffic crawls through the dark Hollywood hills on the 405 – LA speak for Interstate 405 – as our flight turns to a long left base leg on approach to runway 33 at Burbank's Bob Hope Airport. The top of the photo is to the southwest. The dark area up there is the Pacific Ocean.

PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

– Continued from previous page

In my job at the *Silicon Valley Business Journal*, I've written about a new airline that flies 30-seat jets, from San Jose to Burbank with an advance purchase fare of \$129 one way.

JetSuiteX doesn't use the airline terminal at SJC but a corporate jet hangar on the other side of the airport, the side with no traffic. Get there 15 minutes before departure – which was after work Wednesday evening – show your

– Continued on next page

Janiece, Gordon's date, who is a retired Storybook Land boat captain at Disneyland, Gordon and Emily at the Blue Bayou Restaurant in the Pirates of the Caribbean ride at New Orleans Square, Disneyland. We celebrated Gordon's 27th birthday and Thanksgiving on this trip.

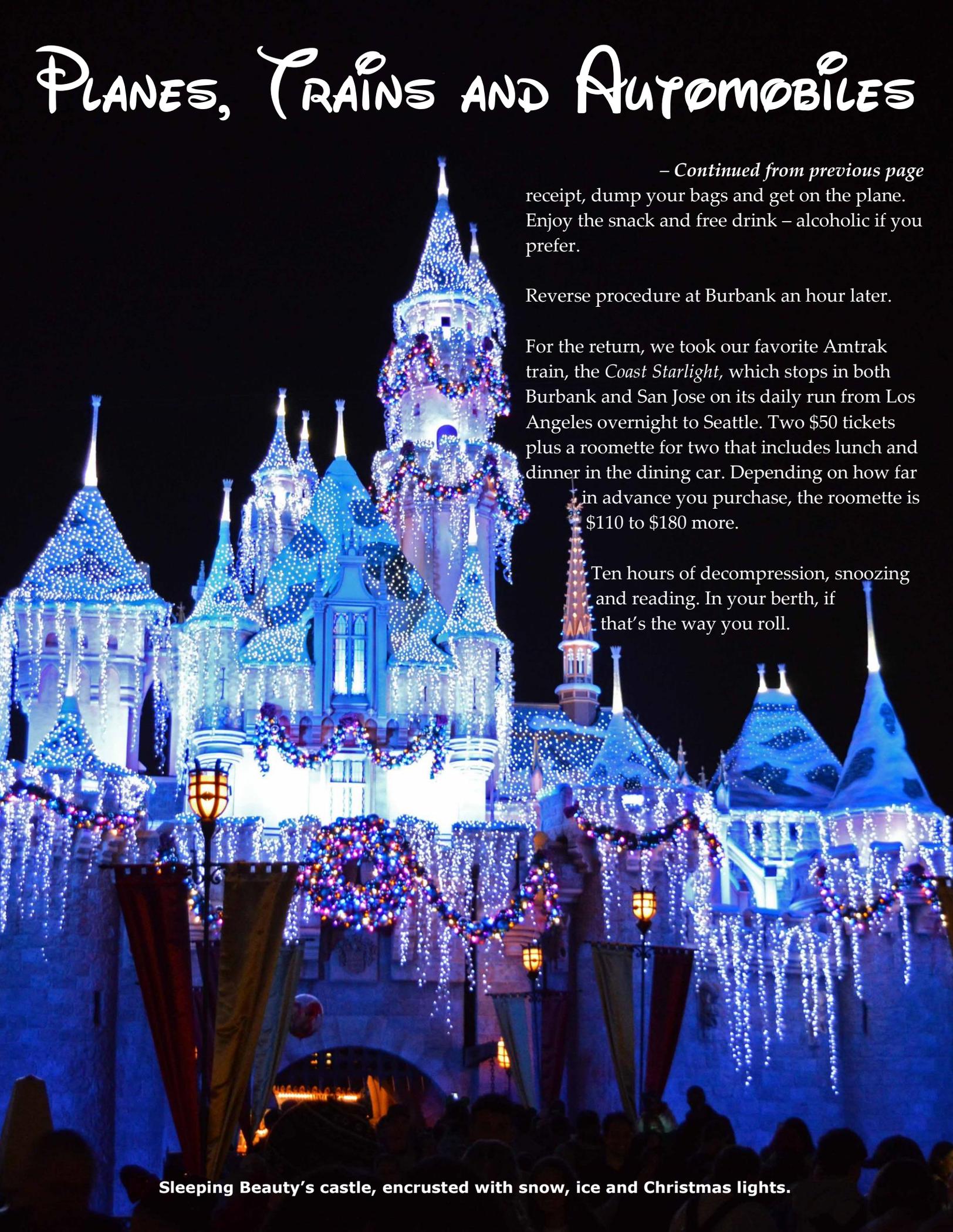
PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

– Continued from previous page
receipt, dump your bags and get on the plane.
Enjoy the snack and free drink – alcoholic if you
prefer.

Reverse procedure at Burbank an hour later.

For the return, we took our favorite Amtrak
train, the *Coast Starlight*, which stops in both
Burbank and San Jose on its daily run from Los
Angeles overnight to Seattle. Two \$50 tickets
plus a roomette for two that includes lunch and
dinner in the dining car. Depending on how far
in advance you purchase, the roomette is
\$110 to \$180 more.

Ten hours of decompression, snoozing
and reading. In your berth, if
that's the way you roll.



Sleeping Beauty's castle, encrusted with snow, ice and Christmas lights.

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Christmas tree in the lobby of the Grand Californian Hotel at Disneyland.

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Our train home, the *Coast Starlight*, pauses in Santa Barbara.

I also made a video of this portion of our trip, which is on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Lj4pmDcXN2A> and also on my website at www.jodymeacham.com. The drone videos of this train traveling along the coast and mountains near San Luis Obispo are at:

<https://youtu.be/QcXexrJachU>

<https://youtu.be/HVyS2JTItN8>

<https://youtu.be/aSK1fJKWKEM>