

## *Flying and Dining in LA*

Didn't think I'd be saying this anytime soon, but I want to thank the airlines, Delta in particular. I've had some rough rides recently (metaphorically speaking), including being stuck in Madrid on my way to Italy due to the "volcanic cloud," having a flight from Boston to Florida cancelled 2 hours before takeoff because there were too few passengers to make it "economically viable." But the latest flying faux pas on a flight out of Los Angeles turned out, in an odd way, to be somewhat fortuitous.

An hour into our flight, high over the Sierra's, the captain discovered a "cabin pressurization problem," and turned the plane around. Normally a return to the gate announcement brings a chorus of groans, but the three hundred plus flyers here gripped their armrest just a little tighter. Cabin pressure failure is not something to treat lightly for all the obvious reasons.

I take back what I said earlier. There was little to thank Delta for. It was now just 11 am west coast time, and the next earliest available flight out was the red-eye through Minneapolis, which meant at best, I would be home in Florida by noon the next day.

Thirteen hours to kill in LA on a Sunday afternoon. What to do? If there are two things I really like about Los Angeles, it's the great dining scene and the Getty Museum. So off we went on a 40 minute cab ride up the Pacific Coast Highway to J. Paul Getty's incredible mansion and museum on a cliff high above the ocean and Santa Monica. Not a bad way to kill a few hours before dinner.



My default LA restaurant, *The Ivy*, in West Hollywood, thankfully hasn't changed in years. Are there better - gastronomically speaking, places in this city of fabulous restaurants to dine? Sure. But, the *Ivy* menu is straightforward, the food always topnotch, service friendly, prices *reasonable* (remember this is LA), and the wine list offers value and variety.

Sure it's trendy. There's always a star or two in the dining room, and tourists and paparazzi often line the sidewalk on the other side of the white picket fence, jousting for a glamour shot. But I've always found the *Ivy* to be as much about the food and atmosphere (especially on the patio), as it is celebrity sightings.

In a break from form, I ordered a perfectly *Grilled Wild Salmon* entrée. In the dozen or so visits to the *Ivy*, except one rare occasion when I opted a steak, my go-to dish is always the *Swordfish* with a side of “*Ivy Fries*.” Maybe its dining al fresco in the cool LA breeze, or the chic-rustic atmosphere, but I’ve rarely had better swordfish. Being the creature of habit that I am, I opted for *Oysters* as a starter – always an excuse to order bubbly to wash it down with. Like I ever need an excuse to order Champagne! Six mollusks, two each of Kumamoto’s, Prince Edward Island, and Malpeque’s, were plump, chilled and fresh.

So, should you ever get delayed, bumped, or otherwise abused by the *friendly skies* while in LA, check out the *Ivy* in West Hollywood, around the corner from Cedars Sinai Hospital.

The Ivy  
113 North Robertson Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90048-3101  
(310)274-8303  
[www.theivyla.com](http://www.theivyla.com)

*Cheers,  
Eat, drink and be merry!*

*Bruce*