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Ask the Pilot: Everything You Need to Know About Air Travel

Patrick Smith

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Though we routinely take to the air, for many of us flying remains a mystery. Few of us understand the how and why of jetting from New York to London in six hours. How does a plane stay in the air? Can turbulence bring it down? What is windshear? How good are the security checks? Patrick Smith, an airline pilot and author of Salon.com's popular column, "Ask the Pilot," unravels the secrets and tells you all there is to know about the strange and fascinating world of commercial flight. He offers:

- A nuts and bolts explanation of how planes fly
- Insights into safety and security
- Straight talk about turbulence, air traffic control, windshear, and crashes
- The history, color, and controversy of the world's airlines
- The awe and oddity of being a pilot
- The poetry and drama of airplanes, airports, and traveling abroad

In a series of frank, often funny explanations and essays, Smith speaks eloquently to our fears and curiosities, incorporating anecdotes, memoir, and a life's passion for flight. He tackles our toughest concerns, debunks conspiracy theories and myths, and in a rarely heard voice dares to return a dash of romance and glamour to air travel.

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