

Have rocket, will travel

By Amy Rosen

Using the TTC to get to YYZ takes a little longer than a limo and I have to haul my bag farther, but for \$2.50, colour me impressed

As a travel writer, I fly a lot, and this usually entails my taking a limousine to and from the airport for about \$45 each way. I've always figured it's the price of doing business. Or is it? Recently I learned that the TTC goes straight to YYZ with a bus called the Airport Rocket. door service. Too good to be true? I decide to do a test drive: I will carry a suitcase, take the bus and arrive at Terminal 3 in time for a pre-selected flight (which I will not actually board). I will then treat myself to some fries and a chocolate milkshake at Weber's, turn around and head home. The goal is to find out once and for all whether taking the TTC to YYZ really is the

better way.

I approach this task with more than a little trepidation. To start, I don't like taking public transport and have absolutely no sense of direction. (Which is why I've elected to take the bus on a day I don't have a real flight to catch.) As well, one of the wheels on my black carry-on is a little wonky, so I anticipate a tough slog. Limos have always got me to the airport on time, and I will miss the tropical air fresheners and interesting conversations. But let's see if the bus does better.

I find my route on the City of

Toronto Web site. It advises me to catch the bus to Ossington subway station then head west to Kipling, the end of the Bloor-Danforth line. There I will board the 192 Airport Rocket, which provides all-day express-bus service between Kipling and Pearson International. To return home, I suppose I just backtrack.

On a Monday afternoon I leave my house at 3:51, rolling my bag down the street to the corner of College and Ossington. Six minutes later I board the bus enroute to Ossington station. By 4:03 I'm on a subway heading west, arriving at

Kipling station at 4:20. Ten minutes later, the 192 Airport Rocket departs for Pearson.

Though I had expected a lot of airport workers on the bus, from the looks of it there is just one woman who could be a ticket agent. Apart from her, the bus is full of travellers laden with luggage. At 4:44, I'm standing with my bag in Terminal 3, with plenty of time to catch LOT Flight 042 to Warsaw (departing at 18:55). That's 53 minutes from the time I set off.

(Do note: Terminal 3 is the first stop. Those heading to Terminals 2

or I should tack on an extra 20 minutes to compensate for the slow baggage unloaders.)

The bottom line: The Airport Rocket is almost too easy, and would save me a bundle. Yes, it takes a little longer than a limo and I have to haul my bag farther but for \$2.50, colour me impressed. (In fact, the worst part of the trip is that they don't make milkshakes at Weber's any more.) The reality, though, is that I will probably continue to take a limo to the airport, even if it's 18 times the price, because, well, I'm lazy.

■ The 192 Airport Rocket stops at Kipling station, Dundas Street and East Mall Crescent and heads to Terminal 3 (Departures Level), Terminal 2 (Arrivals Level) and Terminal 1 (Ground Level). The service operates daily from approximately 5:30 a.m. to 2 a.m.

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