



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

[Change Banner Image](#)**154,963**  
SparkPoints

Info



Photos



Feed



Blogs



Awards

More



## AMTRAK, SparkPeople and Me

Friday, October 10, 2014

Although we've ridden trains in Europe and spent much of our youth on the NYC subway system, a journey on AMTRAK was a new experience for DH and me.

However, our plan to visit #1 grandson at college in Rhode Island required a day's travel from southern Virginia no matter how we chose to do it.

We could drive straight through in about 10 hours if all went well, but our past experiences on I 95 reminded us that wasn't likely. We figured at least 12 hours on the road.

We could fly to Providence, but from our local airport that would be close to 10 hours as well with security check-in, connecting flights and car rental to drive 1 hour to the university town. Another concern was that our last flight to NYC in August was cancelled leaving us scrambling for alternatives, very few at a small airport.

So we decided to ride the rails. The Northeast Regional begins in Lynchburg, VA – perfect! We left at 7 am. I was surprised by how many people chose this mode of transportation. As we wound our way up the east coast, the train was completely full. We arrived in Kingston (URI campus) at 7 pm.

As for the journey itself, I tried to plan ahead for as healthy a day as possible.

The train had WiFi so I was logged into Sparkpeople most of the trip.  
Very good motivation to keep on track. (Hey, an unintended pun!)

The seats were comfortable and a lot larger than on a plane. Instead of having to keep alert for traffic, we just relaxed & enjoyed the scenery. Every hour or so I would get up and stroll through the cars. I wouldn't call it "exercise" since at speeds over 100 mph I had to be careful not to land in someone's lap. Still, at least I was standing up and moving more than I could have done in a car or a plane.

Food was another matter. I knew there was a café car, but no clue as to what would be available.

We ate breakfast at home and packed some snacks and bottled water, figuring one late lunch would see us through to our destination.

I was like a spark sleuth visiting the café car to see the menu and what people were ordering. I was observing one man eating his chicken panini who must have thought I was trying to pick him up since he asked me if I wanted to join him. Uh, no, but could I see the nutrition label on your sandwich?

After my reconnaissance, I sent DH to buy us Turkey & Gouda wraps. Not bad calorie wise (610).  
Nutrition values: Carbs 51g, Fats 25 g (12 saturated), Protein 47g – More fat than I ever have at one meal, but still my best choice.

Then there was the sodium – 2300 mg - yikes! That's 100% of daily recommendation. Oh well, it was only

[Add a Blog Entry](#)

See Today's Featured Member Blog Posts

### More Blogs by BROOKLYN\_BORN

[Now I can add one more event to my "Anniversary Dates" to forget - 6/7/2021](#)

[Avoiding Our Wedding Anniversary - 6/4/2021](#)

[Multitasking for Safety – Plus Remembrance and Reflection - 6/1/2021](#)

[Taps Across America – The National Moment of Remembrance - Monday 5/31/21 3PM - 5/30/2021](#)

[View All >](#)

for 1 day. I didn't intend to make a habit of this. It was very filling and with the snacks I packed, we were fine until dinner with our grandson.

Our return trip on Monday followed the same pattern and by Wednesday the 1.5 pound weight gain (probably water weight) had disappeared.

So we would do it again. It was less than half the cost of flying and considering gasoline, tolls and the stress of driving, a good alternative to that also.

[Edit Blog Entry](#) | [Delete Blog Entry](#)

Share This Post With Others

[Report Inappropriate Blog](#)

## Member Comments About This Blog Post





**LACY77**

It sounds like you had a lot of fun! I'm glad it was enjoyable and that you were able to stay successfully on track! :) :)  
2435 days ago

V



**KOHINOOR2**

Sounds like fun.  Well Done!  Thanks for sharing. Have a great weekend.  
2436 days ago

V



**DOVESEYES**

Glad you had a great journey.  
2436 days ago

V



**WATERMELLEN**

Great method of travel and pre-planning around the nutrition and some strolling!!  
2436 days ago

V



**CD4114015**

WOW you did GREAT! I had to LOL at the guy wanting you to "join him"!!!! You got the STUFF!

Glad it all turned out so well and you even got to eat! It is so funny how we all check out things the way we do....when "normal" people have no idea what it's all about. So glad you had wi-fi all the time!

Have a great weekend now!  
2436 days ago

V



**MARYJEANSL**


There are some good things about Amtrak, notably the ambiance, but, being run by the government, it is run poorly. Or at least that is what I have heard. I used to really enjoy taking the train in my younger days. It was a lot more pleasant than Greyhound buses. If I ever take it again, I'll know to pack healthy food for the trip.  
2436 days ago

V



**BLAZINGSWORD**

You did extremely well under the circumstances. Next time you go, now you know! Take one of those small coolers with you and do your own bagged lunch and bottled water. Unless, of course you want to eat the same thing again.

But you have done well! 

2436 days ago

V



**BOOKAPHILE**

It was interesting to read about your travel times. You did a good job sleuthing the nutrition on the available foods. It sounds like an enjoyable experience.  
2436 days ago

V

**TERI-RIFIC**

Sounds like fun. I hate the long drive to Lynchburg. I would take the train but we take our dogs.  
2436 days ago

V

**LINDAKAY228**[v](#)

I have always wanted to ride a train like that somewhere. I love seeing the scenery as I go. I liked driving to. But I always thought a train would allow me to see things I couldn't see otherwise since I was usually driving (often alone) or talking to someone and looking at the driver. If I was with someone I could point out the window and not have my attention divided ha ha. And if traveling by myself definitely want a window seat! I did take a train one time that was not a destination train like that but went on a scenic ride from a town in Colorado which I know well but am blanking on right now near Farmington, NM that in the summer route went up to Silverton Co. I was there the weekend before they started the summer route and so went on the winter one. That one cost half as much because it only went halfway into a forest where they had a turnaround and a partially opened building like thing with room in the middle to make a big fire. They also had a car they sold snacks on. That entire ride in the winter was 6 hours. I loved it. We had a rare snowstorm (1st weekend of May I think) and for winter rides they didn't take reservations for the gondola cars that had roofs and seats but no window and was open where windows would be. Once they got our tickets we were free to move around and I went to a gondola where I stayed most of the time. Sometimes others were there too. I had my camera and took tons of pictures there. I had run a half marathon in Shiprock the day before, and that's why I was there that particular weekend. Shiprock had no motels and we had to stay in Farmington. It was only about 45 minutes from my hotel to the place I caught the train. I enjoyed it so much and want to ride one of those type trains again too for fun, as well as one that I'm actually going someplace on. Glad you had such a wonderful experience!

2436 days ago

**CD14815535**[v](#)

Oh gosh, my husband would take the Capitol Limited (Amtrak) from time to time to go hiking in the east—it runs from Toledo to Lynchburg and various other parts. Easy way to pack his gear and able to catch a few zzz's before hitting the trail. Glad you found it enjoyable. ;-).

2436 days ago

**DR1939**[v](#)

I love trains and we use them whenever it is reasonable. We once took an overnight from Quebec to Halifax. It was a wonderful trip. However, we've never taken AMTRAK. We are considering taking it this winter to go from Minneapolis to FL. My husband no longer is comfortable driving in large cities and there is no way to avoid them. The thing I like most about a train, or a road trip for that matter, is being able to see the countryside.

2436 days ago

**GINIEMIE**[v](#)

Guess I should look into this alternative for my next trip to NE Ohio. I know I can go from Gainesville, GA to Washington DC—which is something I'd like to do with and for Erik. Sounds like your travel was a pleasant experience. I hate that lunch meats have sooooo much salt. Right now I'm making a low sodium veggie soup and a low sodium meat loaf. Since Erik will be gone for a night + I'll have healthy options that he doesn't care for and I like. Thanks for sharing the idea...



2436 days ago

**IFDEEVARUNS2**[v](#)

It's been years since I've ridden a train. Always loved them.

2436 days ago

**FORZACHANDMATT**[v](#)

Nice - hope you had a great visit!

Loved your unintended pun

2436 days ago

**MILLEDGE2**[v](#)

Whenever I ride trains in other countries (clean, comfortable, low-stress), I wish we had more access here. Many years ago, I had an experience similar to yours in getting from my town to New Orleans in a very comfortable and timely way, not to mention costing much less. Wish there were more viable destinations, though!

2436 days ago

**CD13354694**[v](#)

2436 days ago

[v](#)



**DDOORN**

It sounds like a lovely way to travel. It'd be even better having my bike with me on the other end for tooling around...! :-)

DW recently bought a store-cooked turkey breast and I had a taste and couldn't help but to be unpleasantly surprised over the saltiness of the meat. I'm sure it was a sodium bomb, ugh!

Don

2436 days ago



**MISCHAKEO**

I like train travel also..but had problems with amtrak not being on time. It is a great way to travel. I am glad you enjoyed your trip and you made the healthiest choices possible.



2436 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**

If you happen to live in the right place, yes, absolutely a great alternative! And well planned for successful Sparking!

2436 days ago



**SWEDE\_SU**

sounds like a lovely trip - and you did a great job of staying on track (love the pun:-). trains were very much a part of my life growing up in new york, and college in phillie - we rode amtrak all the time back then in the late 60s, early 70s. and then there was the eurailpass of the early 70s - first class for 3 weeks, anywhere we wanted to go. wow! we take the train in sweden fairly often, with the price of gas and the stress of driving it is definitely a better alternative. i wish trains were more commonly available here in the US! i'd make that choice if i could...

2436 days ago

## Add Your Comment to the Blog Post

Leave encouragement, a question, or anything else relevant to this post. All blog comments must abide by SparkPeople's [Community Guidelines](#).

☐ Subscribe to this blog

ADD AN EMOTICON

SPELL CHECK

Post Comment

Disclaimer: Weight loss results will vary from person to person. No individual result should be seen as a typical result of following the SparkPeople program.