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Diverted Russian Passengers Get Taste Of America On Way To Cuba

Posted By: Lynda Cohen / 821 Views / 2 Comment



More than 300 Russian passengers got a taste of America on their way to Cuba. Azur Air Flight 555 from Moscow had to land at Atlantic City International Airport just before 4 a.m., after an engine in the Boeing 767 developed a fuel leak. Four translator were sent to the airport to help communicate with the passengers. "I am very glad my knowledge of the language came in handy," said Darya Hrybava, an events and communications specialist at the William J. Hughes Center for Public Police for Public Policy at Stockton University. Hrybava is Minsk, Belarus, one of the former Soviet Socialist Republics. Russian is one of the official languages there, she explained. The airport team provided food, drinks, cots and even toys and coloring books for the children, she said. There was even a designated smoking area. But what was most exciting, Hrybava said, was being able to sample American pizza. "Most of them had only heard of it or seen it in the movies," she said. While it wasn't their intended destination, Hrybava said many of the passengers had heard of Atlantic City "and eagerly inquired about the possibility of leaving the airport and visiting the famed seaside resort." While they couldn't do that, she said they were grateful for the South Jersey hospitality. "They wrote many pages of thank you notes," Hrybava said Thursday, as she spent the day translating them. The notes will then be passed on to airport staff. "Being able to help so many people was an exhilarating and fulfilling experience," she said.

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Arissa Serein

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