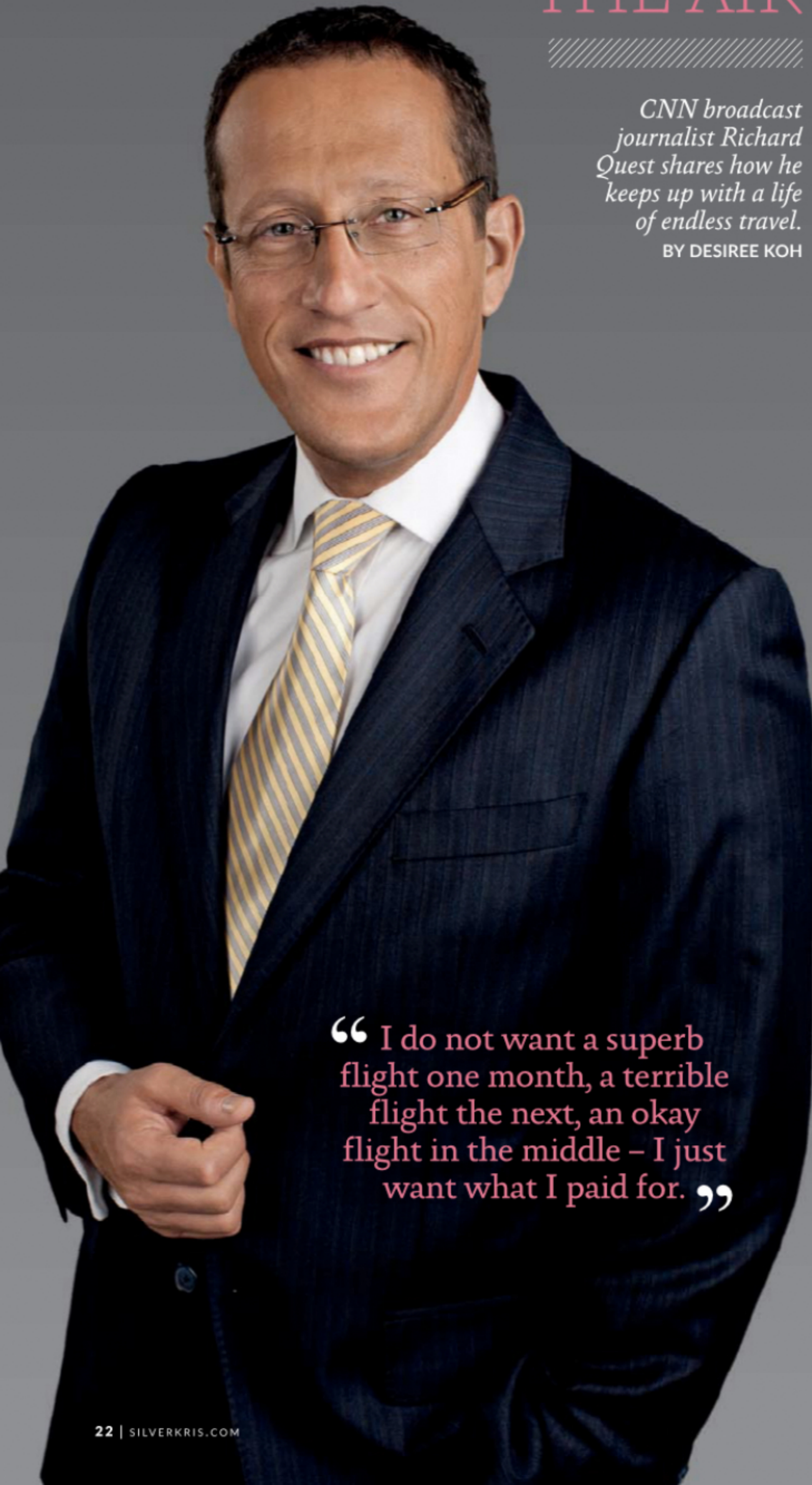


UP IN THE AIR

CNN broadcast journalist Richard Quest shares how he keeps up with a life of endless travel.

BY DESIREE KOH



“ I do not want a superb flight one month, a terrible flight the next, an okay flight in the middle – I just want what I paid for. ”

Business travel, where taking the last flight out of a city after spending 10 hours inside a boardroom or seeing the inside of an airport more than your living room, is a way of life today. And that's why 265 million households worldwide tune in to Richard Quest's monthly Business Traveller on CNN.

The affable host, himself a three-million-mile frequent flyer for the last 25 years, draws upon his own experience as a globe-trotting journalist, and those of C-Suite executives, to make work-powered whirlwind tours of the world more pleasant and productive. One of several shows he hosts, Business Traveller aims to help travellers make the most of doing business out of a suitcase.

Quest, 50, who was in Singapore recently to film special reports for the network, says, "If you're actually living on the plane, doing the trips, experiencing the food and know what it's like to have jet lag, then you're in a better position to broadcast and talk about it." He often finds himself analysing the "little quirks" of airlines and hotels, and loves "putting the industry to the test".

No matter how many trails Quest has blazed across the globe, he learns new things on every trip, pointing to "the arrogance of the frequent traveller" as one of his pitfalls. His comeuppance? He has shown up at wrong airports or checked in for a flight that has already departed – mistakes that have reduced him to tears in front of ticket agents.

What he does right is always having duplicate sets of his most important items, such as credit cards, smartphone and documents, kept in his hotel room. He also keeps important data on an online cloud service which can be accessed worldwide. "Twenty-five years of mistakes have taught me that I have to insure myself against myself," Quest, who also presents Quest Means Business and Marketplace Europe, jokes.

Getting what he expects is the game-changing factor that helps him deal with being away from the comfort zone of home.

"I do not want a superb flight one month, a terrible flight the next, an okay flight in the middle – I just want what I paid for," says Quest, who also makes sure his days on the road have some form of consistency. That means doing little things like bringing sachets of hot chocolate from home to sip before bedtime, writing his thoughts in a diary every morning, calling his mum, and keeping track of what's happening on the home front so sliding back in is seamless.

This busy bee's top tip for managing a life of constant travelling? "Recognising this is a very dysfunctional way of life that has to be managed is half the battle won. I now love my travels, where I really used to resent it," he says. ■