

# *Ride In Style.*

Treatment by David Blumenfeld



**AMTRAK®**

*For many, traveling is a chore, a means to an end, a way to get from point A to point B by the least path of resistance. Long forgotten is the joy of the journey itself. In our busy age of the internet, telecommuting, and social media, people have forgotten the old adage that states "half the fun is getting there". In this spot, we'll remind the viewer that there's a better way to travel, be it for business, pleasure, or daily commute.*



*Harking back to a simpler time but far from forgotten, travel by rail is booming, and anyone can enjoy it in luxury aboard one of 30 lines including 17 long distance routes aboard an Amtrak train. With over 500 destinations in 46 states, Amtrak trains consume less energy than travel by car and air, are more environmentally friendly, and provide a level of service rarely seen today on other forms of travel. And now, let our trip begin!*



*Our story unfolds with an average American family on a familiar road trip vacation. Moving along at a fair but unimpressive clip on a multi-lane highway in their worn minivan, we see a teenager in back listening to music on headphones and singing obnoxiously while two younger children purposely annoy each other. Mom is wearily trying to catch a catnap in the doldrums, while Dad at the wheel rests his head in his palm as boredom passes him by at every off-ramp. In an effort to retain some level of sanity and break the monotony, he glances out the driver window. As the sounds of reality fade into the background, he spies in disbelief an eleven car consist Amtrak train barreling down the fast lane, not a track in sight. He peers with amazement into the windows of the lounge car and spots a happy father with his children having a great time, all with a relaxed and exuberant smile on their faces. Could this all be a dream?*



*Inside the economy section of a short flight jet airline, we find a middle aged businessman squeezed into his seat attempting to use his time to catch up on some emails. Wedged into the corner of the seatback and small window, his laptop dangles precariously. A plastic cup with a soda sits on his tray, and he holds a small bag of peanuts in his one hand. The passenger sitting directly in front of him decides to recline, nearly spilling our weary hero's drink. As he lunges to steady it, peanuts spill all over as a few drops splash onto the keyboard of his computer. Cramped and annoyed, he glances down the aisle, then turns to look out the window. The steady drone of the airplane and its occupants fades into an echo. To his great surprise, rising above the carpet of clouds comes an elevated bridge from nowhere, the tall concrete supports disappearing into the fog below. Clearly this fantasy can't exist, but he's drawn to the vision. Along this highway in the sky rides a majestic Acela Express train. Inside a large luxurious window, he spies a comfy business traveler, his legs up and resting as he reclines in his supple leather seat reading today's stock report while sipping coffee from a fancy mug. The man looks towards the airplane and lifts his cup as if to say cheers to our sad traveler.*





*On the top deck of an auto ferry, we find an older couple standing against the railing. Their car sits parked behind them, wedged in between six others, as they lean against the side. The woman looks a pale shade of green, feeling the motion sickness well up as the small ship bobs around in the choppy water. The husband tries to help her breathe deep as he helplessly pats her back, glancing down at his watch to see how much longer they have before reaching the other side of the bay. He hears a mysterious sound from the aft of the ship, and looks over towards the water to investigate. Much to his surprise, he finds an Amtrak Auto Train racing magically across the top of the water, cutting between the waves as if somehow hydroplaning along the surface. He looks towards his wife in disbelief at this vision, but she takes no notice of his hallucination. He looks back to find an elderly couple sitting at an upper deck table in the dining car, holding hands as they toast each other with a glass of wine. One of the lower doors is slightly open, and a conductor is hanging out over the water with a grin on his face. He sees our gentleman on the ferry and courteously lifts his cap to say hello as the train passes on into the distance.*





*We are transported to the world of Amtrak, where a montage of trains traversing beautiful scenery intercuts with sleeper car accommodations, dining car fare, families riding in the lounge car and looking out upon the majesty of our country, and friendly staff members. We see cabin stewards, conductors, engineers, dining room attendants, and warm welcoming station staff. The benefits and rewards of Amtrak train travel are explained, and we're left with a growing sense of anticipation for our next ride...in style!*





*We end our narrative inside a panoramic lounge car, where the same dreary family from the road trip scene now rides together gazing out in awe and delight at the picturesque expanse of scenery beyond the rails. They laugh and enjoy each other's company while taking in the relaxation and enjoyment that only a long distance train vacation can provide. As we rake across them, the camera magically passes through a window and backs away high into the air as the train continues its journey through the countryside. We finish by graphically pulling slices of the scene from the sky, train, and track into a swirling ribbon element which comes together to form the Amtrak logo and tagline.*



*Thank you for taking the time to explore this concept. By blending majestic scenery with impressive and sweeping camera angles, coupled with actors who portray the everyday challenges of travel and familiar situations, this spot can really connect with its audience. While the fantastic dream visions will look photoreal to each hero, the effects and sound design will convey an almost otherworldly quality to their magical locations. Of course this is just a springboard for ideas, and I look forward to the opportunity to discuss and develop this further with you.*



**THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A TRAIN THAT'S MAGIC**