

Texas Hold 'Em

Vickie Shaw talks tech, travel and whether or not to pack your vibrator when you go abroad.
By Merryn Johns.

The former real estate agent and full time comic Vickie Shaw is on the road most weekends, traveling from her home in Houston to gigs around the country and abroad. A die-hard femme (“We got our big hair and our bright colors and glitter. Can’t have too much glitter”), Shaw was Southern Baptist-raised and mines her life for comedic gems which she delivers in her husky Southern drawl. She would never get rid of her accent (she’s been described as “white trash that won’t burn”) and revels in other people’s differences, gathering stories from the people she meets: Take the 70-year-old lesbian whose vibrator-induced orgasm coincided with a stroke. So, if you find yourself chatting to Vickie Shaw, y’all, be careful what you share otherwise you may just be her next hilarious anecdote. She’s far from politically correct (“I hate my dogs, I’m just waiting for them to die...”) but ask her about Tracy Morgan’s anti-gay outburst and she will take a stand: “Mean and angry is not funny. Offensive is not funny. I am completely aghast at what he did.”

I messaged you on Facebook but it took you a while to respond.

I get on my computer and I try and get that going but I just glass over. I got an iPad, that was lovely. I’ve got a two-year-old granddaughter and she came up and said, “I play iPad!” and I just handed it to her. She turned it on, unlocked it, found her apps...I sort of went, “Can you get grandma a plane ticket? I need help!”

What is the best thing about being on the road?

I love meeting people. I love seeing old friends from an Olivia cruise...I love knowing people’s stories: Who they are, where they came from, that’s my favorite thing. The travel part’s yuck.

Especially the pat downs.

Oh, I enjoy them. Makes me feel good. My partner and I have been together 12 years so a nice pat down is always fun.

You’re doing Olivia’s Western Caribbean cruise.

It’s fun for me because I really get a chance to meet people, I get to see my friends, other entertainers like Julie Goldman, she just makes me laugh all the time. We get the chance to giggle and be silly.

How do you entertain 1,300 lesbians?

I always like to talk about the trip and what’s gone on that week because believe me, something ridiculous has always gone on. Comedy is a live beast. Sometimes I never know what’s going to come out.

Do you pack sex toys when you travel?

Yes I do. One time I was going somewhere for a show and had packed my sex toy and I had to get my luggage at baggage claim. My suitcase was coming down the carousel and all of a sudden I could hear it. It had turned

on and the battery was running and the suitcase was shaking...I had to open it up to turn it off!

If a customs official asked you what it was would you tell them?

Yes—as long as I didn’t think they were going to take it away from me.

What is the value of exclusive lesbian travel?

We have come far, but we have a long way to go. There are a lot of women that can’t be out at home. Then they come on these trips and for the first time, and only for a week, they can hold their partner’s hand and be romantic and kiss them when they want to and have fun and be on vacation—and they can laugh about being lesbian. It’s very empowering.

(vickieshaw.com) ■



Vickie Shaw performs on the Olivia Western Caribbean cruise with Julie Goldman and Kate Clinton, Jan. 29–Feb. 5.