# 12 BEST LONG-HAUL AIRLINE SEATS IN THE SKY TO FLY IN 2016

**News / Airlines**



**Long-haul flight can be excruciating, but it doesn't need to be.**

Aeronautics engineers, aircraft manufacturers, designers, and airlines have collaborated to improve the choices available, introducing cabins which could make flying long distances bearable again.

Leaving out the extreme luxury of Etihad's The Residence (which, obviously, yes, but our travel budget has to stretch all the way to next December), here's our top 12 picks in the skies for 2016 on flights of eight hours (or longer).

First Things First

Dream with us, for a moment, of flights over the 10-hour mark when we've got a few more dollars (or miles) to spend on the flight portion of our trip. Budget allowing, we might splurge on the comfort, rest, and entertainment guaranteed at the front on a luscious suite or demi-suite. There are some true beauties flying.

We presented our pick of these suite treats earlier this year, but new reveals have added even

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more temptation to the mix.

Korean Air's new Prestige Suites are fresh enough to make us think about stretching our spend (and we're not terribly bothered whether or not the nuts are served warm.)

But it's Swiss Air's new suites, as featured in its new 777 cabins, that really had us itching to fly in style.

Getting Down to Business

Suite matters aside, we'd also be very glad to fly onboard the multi-function lay-flat seats, now available in most Business class cabins. They make what used to pass as First class seem grossly inadequate.

We shared our picks among the Best Business Class Experience, by region, early in the year. But there were also new reveals in this class that we'd be delighted to fly in 2016.

Alitalia announced its refurbished cabins, to fit its new brand image, and we'd wouldn't mind a nice long flight on those.

SAS launched its new A330 cabins this year and the airline's innovative virtual tour had us dreaming of Hastens bedding at 30,000 ft.

British Airways introduced a revolutionary First Class on its Dreamliners, and its Business Class is also top shelf.

American Airlines did not disappoint with Business Class on its Dreamliners.

And you really can't go wrong with Hawaiian Air's delectable new Premium cabin—and you get to be in Hawaii, which is always a plus.

Proper Premium Economy, Please

Moving beyond front-cabin temptations, it's more likely that we'd splurge on Premium Economy, if we splurge at all.

These seats may not be lie-flat, but they're comfortable enough to sleep in, as recliners. There's a lot more room and fewer people to share it with—thanks to a more generous lay-out and private cabin separation. With plenty of other niceties, these higher fares prove to be a good value on long-haul flights.

We shared our top picks in Premium Economy cabin this year–all verified to be a true Premium Economy upgrade, not just a repackaged Economy cabin with a few more inches and better snacks.

Other airlines have since added true Premium Economy to their cabins, which, given their routes and markets, have made it more likely we'll find a quality Premium Economy cabin experience in 2016 and beyond.

We loved Singapore Airlines Premium Economy during its reveal this year. It was designed for comfort and loaded with features which would make very long flights much better.

Virgin Australia has also introduced a high-quality Premium Economy cabin this year, designed to make flying long-haul in Asia-Pacific a pleasure. While a wholly independent airline, Virgin

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Australia honors the Virgin brand's original innovation with this cabin, with a smart twist and very modern appeal.

Finally, American rocked the skies by becoming the first U.S. airline to take a leap forward in Premium Economy. Consider that American is the largest airline in the world, with a wide range of routes and frequencies, and a comprehensive network of Oneworld Alliance partners, and it's easy to see why we're so excited about this reveal. The odds of finding a very good Premium Economy experience—wherever we're headed—just got better.

Back to Better Basics

Of course, the best way to stretch the budget to cover all the events we plan to report from in 2016 is to brave the crowded cabins at the back.

While we'll spend a lot of hours in Economy next year, we're not really bothered about the prospects. We can take our pick of the World's Best Airlines to fly among the Majors and the Boutique carriers.

But we're also AvGeek enough to understand the difference engineering makes. On like itineraries, long-haul flying on newer aircraft trumps the long-haul experience on older aircraft.

The well-being benefits, from better lighting to improved cabin environmental controls and noise reduction, are considerable. These aircraft are also structurally designed to feel less confining. As a plus, these planes have high-capacity overhead bins, so we can carry our reasonably-sized luggage onboard without a worry.

Etihad brought its new Dreamliner model to the U.S. this year, with the airlines' Reimagined new interiors, including a comfortable Economy seat with lean-to headrest.

Finnair became the third airline to bring the new A350 aircraft to its fleet, with many comforts at the back of the plane.

TAM just picked up its new A350 too, becoming the fourth airline in the world to do so and the first airline in the Americas to introduce the aircraft with long-haul improvements back-to-front.

Green Backs Vs. Backing Green

There's another important reason to reserve seats on these new airplanes for our long-haul flights: the environment. Aviation's commitment to reducing its CO2 footprint relies on the introduction of far more efficient new aircraft.

With today's reservation systems, it's easy to find out whether you're flying on newer, more fuel-efficient, planes, like the Boeing Dreamliner (787-8/9) or Airbus A350.

Or just ask the airline. If airlines get enough consumer questions about the age and fuel-efficiency of their fleet, they'll be encouraged to meet their ambitious environmental targets.

No matter where you're sitting, that's a good thing.

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