ETIHAD TO DEPLOY TWO-CLASS 787-9 TO PERTH FROM JUNE 2016

News / Airports / Routes



Perth is among five cities set to receive **Etihad Airways' first batch of two-class Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners** due for delivery from May 2016.

While the initial deliveries of 787-9s to Etihad featured eight first, 28 business and 199 economy seats for a total of 235, the Abu Dhabi-based carrier is introducing in 2016 five two-class versions of the Dreamliner configured with 299 seats comprising 28 in business and 271 in economy.

Dusseldorf will be the first to receive Etihad's these new 787-9s configured without first class from May 1, with Perth to follow in June. Shanghai and Istanbul are slated switch over to the 299-seat Dreamliner in August, while Johannesburg gets its turn at the start of November.

Currently, the Virgin Australia major shareholder and alliance partner flies daily to Perth with two-class Airbus A330-200s configured with 262 seats. The switch to the 299-seat 787-9 represented a 14 per cent increase in seat capacity on the route, Etihad said in a statement on Thursday.

Etihad chief executive James Hogan said the introduction of the 787 in February had been well received by its passengers.

"The decision to offer this same industry-leading experience on the Perth route reflects the success of the Western Australian market and our enduring commitment to serve Australia with

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the pride of our fleet," Hogan said in a statement.

"We're confident Western Australians will enjoy the cutting-edge design, comfort and personal space of our Dreamliners complemented by the warmth of our onboard hospitality and superior food and beverage offering."

Etihad began flying its three-class 787-9 on its daily flight to Brisbane in June. It also offers double daily flights to Melbourne and 11 flights a week to Sydney. Alliance partner Virgin – Australia's competition watchdog recently gave the green light for the pair to continue their global alliance for a further five years – also operates three flights a week to Abu Dhabi.

The airline has taken delivery of five 787-9s and has 66 more Dreamliners – comprising 30 787-10s and 36 – on firm order, according to the Boeing website.

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