ETIHAD AIRWAYS WINS ULTRATRAVEL AWARD FOR BEST FIRST CLASS

News / Events / Festivals



Etihad Airways has received the coveted award for Best First Class at the annual Ultratravel Middle East Awards (ULTRAs) ceremony, which was held last night at the iconic Burj Al Arab Jumeirah hotel in Dubai.

The award is another major accolade for the UAE national airline's First Class experience, which has repeatedly been voted best in the world.

The ULTRAs are voted for by the readers of Ultratravel Middle East, the regional edition of the United Kingdom's exclusive Ultratravel magazine, a high-end luxury travel publication which was launched in the UK in 2004 in partnership with the Daily Telegraph. Ultratravel Middle East is distributed in English and Arabic within The National and Al Ittihad newspapers.

Peter Baumgartner, Etihad Airways' Chief Commercial Officer, said: "This award further validates and recognises the tremendous efforts which have gone in to creating the most innovative, stylish and luxurious First Class service in the air. We are incredibly proud to receive it."

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"This year has been a momentous one for Etihad Airways. The revolutionary cabin concepts we launched in 2014 are now a reality, already flying on our new fleet of Airbus A380 and Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft. The Etihad Airways brand has been catapulted into the global consciousness as the world-leading provider of remarkable travel experiences in all classes of service."

Etihad Airways introduced ground-breaking First Class cabins with the introduction of its fleet of A380s and B787-9 aircraft, with five of each type delivered to date.

Nick Perry, Chairman of Ultratravel, said: "With the introduction of revolutionary inflight innovations such as The Residence, with its three rooms, and the airline's new First Apartments and First Suites, Etihad Airways is redefining what world-class hospitality and First Class travel can be for its guests."

The A380 First Class cabin boasts nine First Apartments, unique living spaces which at 39 square feet in area, are 74 percent larger than the airline's current award-winning First Class suites, and feature a Poltrona Frau leather armchair and a separate ottoman which converts into a full-length 80.5 inch long bed. A dedicated shower room is available for exclusive use by First Class guests.

The B787s are equipped with eight private First Suites in a unique curved aisle setting, an airline industry first, with a 10 percent increase in personal space. The forward and aft facing suites feature a large Poltrona Frau leather armchair which converts into an 80.5 inch fully-flat bed. The suites feature 24 inch TV monitors, large dining tables for dual dining, personal wardrobes and privacy doors.

Etihad Airways' remaining three-class configured longhaul fleet of Boeing 777s and Airbus A330/A340 family aircraft is configured with a private First Class suite product.

The World's Best First Class Experience

Inspired by the best hotels and restaurants in the world, Etihad Airways' First Class service includes a personalised welcome letter from the Cabin Manager and an elegant reception with a drink of choice and Arabic coffee service, fragrant hot towel, and traditional Arabian dates, served on a silver platter.

First Class dining features a contemporary menu with an enhanced selection of canapés, a palate cleanser served between appetiser and entrée, a pre-dessert course served by the Chef, coffee and tea from the "Café Gourmand" brand accompanied by mini biscuits, cakes and pastries.

Guests can choose from an extensive haute cuisine a la Carte menu, or can select fine steaks and sides from The Grill menu, complemented by a choice of side dishes and sauces, and can also choose delicious meals and snacks throughout the flight from the All Day Dine menu. The onboard Chefs, many of who hail from fine dining establishments around the world, including some Michelin Star restaurants, are provided with an onboard pantry of fresh ingredients including proteins and vegetables. These talented crew members can discuss made to order requests with the guest and can prepare a bespoke dining experience tailored to their palette. A Chef is available in First Class on every Etihad Airways flight.

Meals are served on sophisticated new crockery from the famous Japanese manufacturer Nikko, and new "Royal Oak" cutlery has been designed by the quintessentially British brand, Studio William. Fine wines from the Etihad Airways onboard cellar are now served in crystal glasses for

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both red and white wines separately, created for Etihad Airways by Lucaris. A special XO Cognac service is provided featuring signature glasses designed by Norman of Copenhagen.

First Class bedding includes a luxurious all-natural mattress pad, duvet and pillow set, produced exclusively for Etihad Airways by COCO-MAT, widely regarded as the providers of the world's best bedding. The First Class turndown service is accompanied by a 'sweet dreams' card, pillow mist, and aromatic pulse-point oil for the wrists.

Elegant loungewear is provided for comfort and relaxation and guests are offered limited edition Sougha amenity kits, inspired by the culture and colours of Abu Dhabi, and containing a selection of exclusive products by luxury New York-based brand, Le Labo.

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