

ETIHAD AIRWAYS COMMENCES DAILY VIETNAM FLIGHTS

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), today launched daily flights to Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.

Today's inaugural flight – EY441 – has historic significance as the first ever commercial passenger service between Abu Dhabi and Vietnam's commercial capital.

Travellers between Abu Dhabi and Ho Chi Minh City can now enjoy the convenience of non-stop flights between the city pair with seamless connections to the airline's global flight network.

Etihad Airways' President and Chief Executive Officer James Hogan said the new Ho Chi Minh City flights would meet strong demand for business and leisure travel and cargo services between Vietnam and the UAE, the Middle East and Europe.

"Vietnam is not only the 13th most populous nation, it is also one of the world's fastest growing economies. Its commercial capital, Ho Chi Minh City, is a gateway for millions of Vietnamese international travellers and a busy trading hub.

"Our daily services will inject approximately 3,700 new seats a week into the route. This will intensify competition among airlines for business, leisure and VFR travel from Vietnam to Europe and help boost visitor traffic to the UAE and GCC.

"From an inbound perspective, we are now well-positioned to offer travellers from Middle East and Europe the convenience of non-stop or one-stop flights to Vietnam, which is becoming one of the world's most popular holiday travel destinations.

"We look forward to working with our stakeholders in Vietnam and abroad to bring more international visitors to Vietnam to experience its history, culture and unique character."

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Mr Hogan also highlighted the revenue potential of the new services to Vietnam for the airline's highly successful freight division, Etihad Cargo.

"The United Arab Emirates is Vietnam's seventh largest trading partner and its largest in the Gulf region.

"In 2012, exports from Vietnam to the UAE exceeded US\$2 billion for the first time – up 82 per cent on 2011 – and forecast to exceed US\$4 billion in 2013.

"The 13.1 tonne bellyhold capacity of our Airbus A330- 200 aircraft, which equates to more than 9,500 tonnes per year, gives us sufficient capacity to boost the volume and value of trade between the UAE and Vietnam and to other markets in the GCC, Europe and North America."

Mr Hogan said he hoped the new services would also help support the UAE government's investment in infrastructure, energy, construction and tourism projects in Vietnam – with a current value of more than US\$3 billion – and encourage further such ventures in the future.

The Abu Dhabi-Ho Chi Minh City flights are operated by an Airbus A330-200 aircraft with 22 seats in Pearl Business Class and 240 in Coral Economy Class.

With the launch of Etihad Airways' Vietnam flights, its codeshare partner, Vietnam Airlines, will place its VN code on the Abu Dhabi-Ho Chi Minh City sector. This extends the scope of the airlines' current codeshare agreement. Etihad Airways already has its EY code on Vietnam Airlines' flights from Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh. Vietnam Airlines has its VN code on Etihad Airways' flights from Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur to Abu Dhabi and luxury coach services from Abu Dhabi International Airport to Dubai.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Flight #	Departure city	Departure time	Arrival city	Arrives	Duration
EY440	Ho Chi Minh City	20.30	Abu Dhabi	00.45 (+1)	7.15
EY441	Abu Dhabi	08.30	Ho Chi Minh City	19.00	7.30

- Ends -

About Etihad Airways

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, began operations in 2003, and in 2012 carried 10.3 million passengers. From its hub at Abu Dhabi International Airport, Etihad Airways offers flights to 94 passenger and cargo destinations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas, with a fleet of over 80 Airbus and Boeing aircraft, and large orders for additional aircraft including 41 Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners and 10 Airbus A380s, the world's largest passenger aircraft. Etihad Airways also holds equity investments in airberlin, Air Seychelles, Virgin Australia and Aer Lingus, and subject to regulatory approval will acquire a 24 per cent stake in India's Jet Airways. Etihad Airways also will acquire 49 per cent of Air Serbia from January 2014. For more information about Etihad Airways, visit www.etihad.com