

ETIHAD AIRWAYS FIRST CLASS APARTMENT DESIGN WINS TOP SBID AWARD

The game-changing design of Etihad Airways' new Airbus A380 First Class product, called First Apartments, has been recognised at the annual Society of British and International Design (SBID) Awards 2014, held at the Dorchester Hotel in London last week.

London based Acumen Design Associates, which forms part of the airline-led 'Etihad Design Consortium' (EDC), a collection of leading brand and design agencies tasked with creating the airline's new interiors, picked up the SBID's top award for designing the industry-leading new cabin.

The patent-pending design for Etihad Airways' new A380 First Class cabins was entered under the category of Best Entertainment Space but took home the most coveted award of the evening, Overall Design Award 2014.

The event is considered to be one of the most prestigious on the international design calendar and recognises design excellence across a broad range of 15 different categories. The SBID Awards are voted for by leading industry experts and business leaders and are judged for both technical content and aesthetic creativity using two tiers of judging.

Ian Dryburgh, CEO and Founder of Acumen Design Associates, said: "Etihad Airways' First Apartment is the largest, most luxurious and highly customised First Class cabin in the sky, achieved via a revolutionary patent pending cabin layout designed exclusively for Etihad by Acumen Design Associates.

"We were briefed to design a First Class cabin based on Etihad's successful 'Inspired Service' and the extensive qualitative consumer research undertaken by Etihad - to bring the individuality and exclusivity of a luxury boutique hotel experience which also embraces Arabian modernism."

Peter Baumgartner, Chief Commercial Officer of Etihad Airways, commented: "I am thrilled that the work undertaken by Acumen for our stunning First Apartments has been recognised

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by the SBID. This accolade is testament to their world class service, from the initial concept designs based on our extensive international customer co-creation workshops, The Etihad Big Talks, to the final delivery of this elegant cabin."

Etihad Airways is installing nine First Apartments on each of the 10 Airbus A380s it has ordered, the first of which will enter service between Abu Dhabi and London Heathrow on 27 December.

For the first time on a wide-body aircraft cabin, a single aisle configuration has been used in the upper deck First Class section, allowing the airline to install 'walk-in' living areas which include a Poltrona Frau armchair and separate 80.5 inch long bed, storage, a full length wardrobe, chilled mini-bar and a vanity unit. At 39 sqft, the First Apartment is 74 per cent larger in area than Etihad Airways' current industry leading First Class suites.

Founded in 1981, Acumen is a multidisciplinary design consultancy providing fresh insight and commercial advantage through innovation and enjoys an enviable reputation for delivering ground-breaking, highly innovative products to a customer base spanning multiple industries such as aviation, marine, life sciences and domestic and commercial product design.

Other finalists for the awards included a selection of the world's leading hotels, interior design projects, residential spaces, restaurants and bars, and public spaces among others.

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About Etihad Airways

Etihad Airways began operations in 2003, and in 2013 carried 11.5 million passengers. From its Abu Dhabi base Etihad Airways flies to 111 existing or announced passenger and cargo destinations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas. The airline has a fleet of 105 Airbus and Boeing aircraft, and more than 200 aircraft on firm order, including 71 Boeing 787s, 25 Boeing 777-X, 62 Airbus A350s and 10 Airbus A380s. Etihad Airways holds equity investments in airberlin, Air Seychelles, Virgin Australia, Aer Lingus, Air Serbia and Jet Airways, and is in the process of formalising equity investments in Alitalia and Swiss-based Etihad Regional*. For more information, please visit: www.etihad.com

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