

## Media Release



### **ETIHAD AIRWAYS TAKES HOME 'WORLD'S LEADING AIRLINE' AWARD FOR SIXTH STRAIGHT YEAR**

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has been awarded the highly coveted title of 'World's Leading Airline' for the sixth straight year at this year's World Travel Awards (WTA).

In addition to winning 'World's Leading Airline', Etihad Airways scooped up a further two awards 'World's Leading First Class' and 'World's Leading Cabin Crew'.

World Travel Awards was established in 1993 to acknowledge excellence across the tourism industry and is widely recognised as a hallmark of ultimate quality. The awards are decided through a global vote by more than 500,000 travel professionals and high-end tourism consumers from 171 countries, with the ceremony held this year on the paradise island of Anguilla in the Caribbean.

James Hogan, President and Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Airways, said: "Winning three of the industry's highest accolades is a demonstration of our commitment to be best in class in every market in which we operate.

"Etihad Airways strives for continuous innovation and improvement in product and service, because we know that is how we will maintain our industry leadership and create the best possible travel experience for our guests."

Etihad Airways' success at the 2014 World Travel Awards reflects the achievements of a remarkable year for the airline.

In 2014 the airline unveiled its new Airbus A380 and Boeing 787 Dreamliner product and service offering, including The Residence by Etihad™, the world's first three-room suite.

This was followed by the unveiling of the 'Facets of Abu Dhabi' aircraft livery design and the airline rolling out its first Airbus A380 in Hamburg Germany and Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner in

# Media Release



Seattle, USA. During 2014, Etihad Airways launched 10 new routes and also signed a transaction implementation agreement to acquire 49 per cent shareholding in Alitalia.

Graham E. Cooke, World Travel Awards Founder and President, said: “For over 20 years, the World Travel Awards has been rewarding brands which push the boundaries of industry excellence. Etihad Airways has now taken home the World’s Leading Airline award for six years in a row - a tremendous achievement. The airline’s strategy of organic growth, codeshare partnerships and minority equity stakes coupled with exceptional customer service, has delivered outstanding results and rising passenger growth.”

## **Additional Etihad Airways 2014 highlights:**

- Launched new passenger flights to: Medina, Jaipur, Los Angeles, Zurich, Yerevan, Rome, Perth, Phuket, San Francisco and Dallas.
- Increased frequencies to 23 destinations, including Dublin, Athens, Chennai, New York, Munich, Colombo and Chengdu.
- Opened new Premium Lounge at Abu Dhabi airport - the airline’s biggest ever.
- Opened new Arrivals Lounge at Abu Dhabi airport including innovative new offerings, such as the ‘SHAVE by Etihad Airways’ concept and a clothes steaming service.
- Opened new First and Business Class Lounge at Kingsford Smith International Airport in Sydney – the airline’s first in Australia.
- Unveiled The Residence, First Apartment, First Suite, Business Studio, and Economy Smart Seat.
- Major re-design of the onboard guest experience with the introduction of innovative new inflight products and enhancements to its long-haul and ultra-longhaul cabins.
- Unveiled new Etihad Aviation Group structure that includes Etihad Airways, the newly formed Hala Group, Etihad Airport Services, and Group support functions.
- Signed a major strategic partnership with Philippine Airlines (PAL).
- Signed new codeshares with airlines such as SAS, Alitalia, GOL and JetBlue.
- Launched sleep program and limited edition amenity kits on long-haul flights.
- Became Official Airline Partner of Major League Soccer in the United States.

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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](http://www.etihad.com)

\*Operated by Darwin Airline