

Emirates Advances Its A380 Global Network

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Emirates, the award-winning airline, notches up yet another first as it begins operation of the world's first A380 commercial service from Dubai to Australia and New Zealand, as Sydney and Auckland join Emirates' rapidly-expanding A380 network.

Taking off from its new home - Emirates Terminal 3

(http://www.emirates.com/english/plan_book/dubai_international_airport/emirates_terminal_3/emirates_terminal_3.aspx), Dubai International Airport - EK 412 operated by Emirates' revolutionary A380 aircraft arrived in Sydney and flew onwards to Auckland, carrying over 400 passengers. Emirates will operate its A380, dubbed 'a premium hotel in the sky', from Dubai to Sydney and across to Auckland every Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, becoming daily from May 2009.

Advancing Emirates' environmental programme, the A380 service also heralds a new era for flights Down Under, a green best-practice demonstration flight, and the use of the world's most eco-efficient commercial airliner on the Indian Ocean for the first time.

The Emirates' A380 (http://www.emirates.com/english/flying/our_fleet/emirates_a380/emirates_a380.aspx) sets a new milestone in environmental conservation, with measures being deployed to cut fuel burn and emissions on flights to/from Australia and New Zealand as well as reduce journey time for passengers. The per seat fuel burn on the Emirates' inaugural A380 flight is expected to be 20% less than normal flights, and offering better fuel economy per passenger mile than most hybrid passenger cars.

Richard Vaughan, Emirates' Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations, East Asia and Australasia noted: "The start of A380 services on this route represents yet another initiative in Emirates' partnership with Australia and New Zealand. Emirates is not only committing to offer a revolutionary in-flight experience to travellers from these countries but is also enhancing capacity on the route - welcome news to tourism authorities of both countries as they seek to attract increasing number of visitors from the Middle East."

Despite a challenging global economic environment, visitors from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) visiting Australia are expected to grow by 8% this year and by 15% in 2010, according to a forecast by the Tourism Australia Aviation and Economics Team. Already, Emirates is carrying over 50% of all Gulf tourists visiting Australia. The airline's robust network in the Middle East and North Africa comprises 194 flights per week to 16 key gateways.

"The growth in Emirates' seat capacity by over 40 % is expected to encourage above-average growth of visitor arrivals and support both countries' marketing efforts in the region," added Vaughan.

The new service will also benefit Australians and New Zealanders travelling to their preferred cities in Europe and the Middle East, and will facilitate a seamless A380 experience on flights to Dubai (http://www.emirates.com/english/destinations_offers/discover_dubai/discover_dubai.aspx) from Auckland/Sydney and onwards to London Heathrow - an important route for travellers from both countries.

Post arrival in Sydney and Auckland, Emirates kicked off familiarisation tours aboard its superjumbo. Emirates' A380 has received glowing reviews from passengers and the travel trade with its onboard Shower Spas, another industry first, that offers a whole new dimension of luxury air travel.

Set in a three-class configuration (14 First, 76 Business and 399 Economy Class seats) the Emirates A380 offers a level of comfort and space never seen before on a commercial airliner. The whole of the upper deck is dedicated to Premium Class passengers. First Class passengers can relax in flat-bed, massage-equipped Private Suites. Business Class passengers can enjoy a new generation of intelligent seating designed to ensure all 76 flat-bed seats have aisle access. Passengers in Economy can appreciate a more spacious ambience, enhanced further by generous seats and wider aisles.

Emirates bespoke and award-winning in-flight ICE system offers over 1000 channels of entertainment - the largest selection of programming in the skies.

About Emirates Airline (<http://www.emirates.com/english/>):

Emirates, the Dubai-based international airline, is one of the world's most successful and rapidly-expanding airlines. With a focus on high quality service and industry-leading products, Emirates has received over 400 international awards and accolades for excellence since its inception in 1985. Emirates is currently the only airline to operate non-stop flights to six continents from one hub.

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