

December 12, 2012

### **ETIHAD AIRWAYS NAMED WORLD'S LEADING AIRLINE FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR**

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, has brought home top honours at the World Travel Awards, taking the World's Leading Airline title for the fourth year in a row.

The awards were announced last night at a black-tie gala event at the Oberoi Gurgaon in New Delhi, India.

Etihad Airways also received recognition for its Diamond First Class product, named the World's Leading First Class.

The World Travel Awards were established in 1993 to seek out and reward the very best travel organisations in the world, acknowledging the elite organisations in their respective fields through a global industry vote. In 2012, nearly 650,000 votes were cast by travel professionals from 191 countries. The World Travel Awards have achieved top industry status and been named by the Wall Street Journal as the "Oscars of the Travel Industry".

James Hogan, Etihad Airways President and Chief Executive Officer, said: "I am delighted that Etihad Airways has again been named the World's Leading Airline. Particularly in our region, the competition is strong, so this is a fantastic way to round out what has been an exceptional year for us.

"We have received this award for four consecutive years and every year we have sought to raise our standards even higher. We are consistently good, but we are always considering ways to enhance our guest offering even further and provide the best experience in the skies.

"Our Diamond First Class, for example, brings consistent accolades as we continue to develop the product. In December 2011, we introduced our First Class Chefs and a new menu design with unparalleled levels of choice. This year, we built on that program by entering into a

## Press Release



partnership with Abu Dhabi Organic Farms, bringing fresh organic produce, eggs and honey to our menus. This is why the World Travel Awards have confirmed Etihad Airways again as the World's Leading First Class.

"Further, our first aircraft equipped with the Panasonic Avionics Global Communications Suite took flight last week, offering high-speed broadband Internet connectivity as well as data and mobile phone services for our guests. By the end of 2014, every single Etihad Airways aircraft will be equipped for inflight connectivity.

"To receive the top industry award of World's Leading Airline four years running indicates that we are consistently delivering to higher standards. We will continue to do so."

Graham E. Cooke, World Travel Awards Founder & President, said: "The World Travel Awards reward the best travel and tourism organisations in the world. Etihad Airways has now taken home the top airline award for the past four years, a huge and well-deserved achievement. As the fastest growing airline in the history of commercial aviation, Etihad Airways has expanded rapidly as a global business yet at the same time has consistently elevated the customer experience. Congratulations to Etihad Airways on their continued success."

At the 2012 World Travel Awards Middle East, held in May in Dubai, Etihad Airways received four top awards for the region. The accolades included: Middle East's Leading Airline; Middle East's Leading Airline First Class; Middle East's Leading Airline Inflight Entertainment; and Middle East's Leading Cabin Staff.

### **Etihad Airways 2012 highlights:**

- In addition to 29.21 per cent ownership of airberlin acquired in December 2011, new equity partnerships for 2012: 40 percent stake in Air Seychelles; 10 percent stake in Virgin Australia; and 2.987 per cent stake in Aer Lingus
- 12 new code share partners, for a total 41 partnerships, bringing Etihad Airways' route network to 329 destinations, more than any other Middle East airline

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- New routes announced: Basra, Iraq (April 2012); Lagos, Nigeria (July 2012); Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Ahmedabad, India (November 2012); Washington, D.C. (March 2013); Sao Paulo, Brazil (June 2013); and Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam (October 2013)
- New international call center opened in Manchester, UK

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### **About Etihad Airways**

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, began operations in 2003, and in 2011 carried 8.3 million passengers. From its hub at Abu Dhabi International Airport, Etihad Airways serves 86 passenger and cargo destinations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas, with a fleet of 68 Airbus and Boeing aircraft, and over 90 aircraft on firm order, including 10 Airbus A380s, the world's largest passenger aircraft. Etihad Airways also holds equity investments in airberlin, Air Seychelles, Virgin Australia and Aer Lingus. For more information, please visit: [www.etihad.com](http://www.etihad.com).

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