

SWISS Airbus A340 fleet servicing Joburg up for extensive upgrade

The Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS) A340 fleet servicing the Johannesburg route will undergo extensive remodeling to all three seating classes and will be provided a new in-flight entertainment system as well as internet connectivity to all passengers on board. By the end of 2018, the entire SWISS long-haul fleet will be equipped with wireless internet facilities in all three cabin classes.



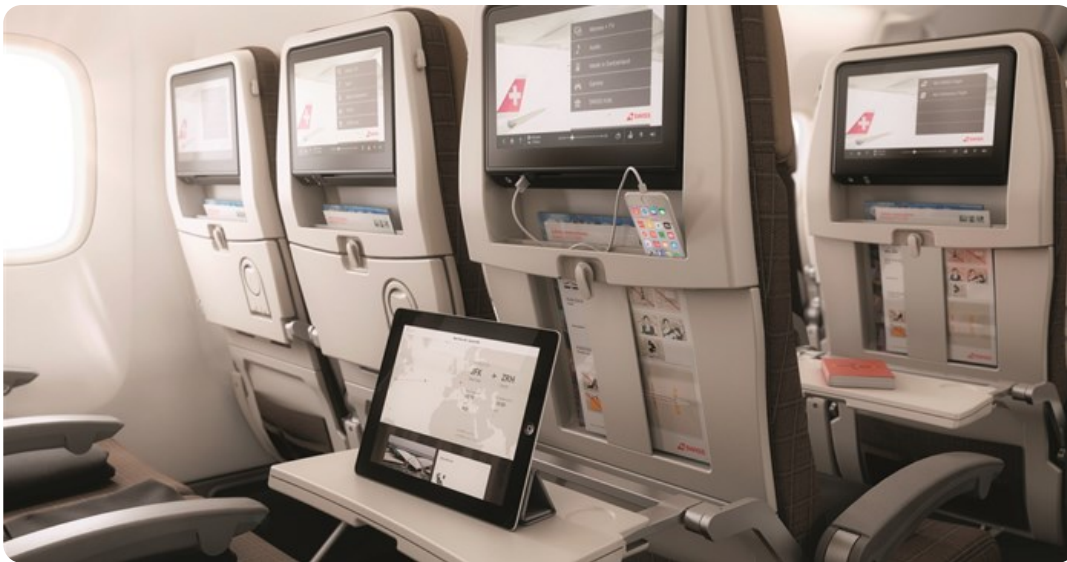
Head of SWISS South Africa, Danica Helfrich, states that the investment into the fleet's refurbishment signifies the airline's dedication to providing in and outbound South African travellers with an unparalleled quality of service. "The popularity of this route between our Zurich hub and Johannesburg has increased significantly over the last 18 months. This increased popularity further supported our decision to significantly upgrade the product on these routes to bring it in line with the global standard offered by SWISS."

SWISS transported 12,495,404 passengers globally in the first nine months of 2016, some 0.2% more than in the same period last year. The airline operated 111,116 flights globally in the period, 1.0% more than a year ago. Total system-wide capacity was increased 6.2% in available seat kilometer (ASK) terms, while total traffic volume, measured in revenue passenger kilometers (RPKs), was raised 3.0%.

Travellers comfort

SWISS will also be equipping its five remaining Airbus A340-300s with a new cabin product in all three seating classes. After the refurbishment, the A340s will seat 223 passengers: eight in First Class, 47 in Business, and 168 in Economy. "The comfort of our travellers is of the utmost importance to us, and we have therefore decided to remodel the interior cabin in line with that of the SWISS Boeing 777-300ER product, providing our passengers with the in-flight experience that has made SWISS famous," says Helfrich.

The new First Class cabin will be closely modeled on that of the Boeing 777-300ER. The Business Class seats will be the Triple Seven model, while Economy Class will be given a new type of seat. The new inflight entertainment system will also be as used on the Boeing 777-300ER.



In-flight internet on all long-haul aircraft

Following its introduction on the new Boeing 777-300ER fleet, SWISS is also now extending its 'SWISS Connect' internet connectivity facility to its Airbus A330-300s and A340-300s. The fourteen A330s will be equipped with the Panasonic technology – eXConnect for the internet and eXPhone for telephony – between now and next spring.

The five remaining A340s will be so equipped in 2018, as part of their cabin refurbishment. "In-flight connectivity has become a standard expectation from passengers globally, and we recognise that our passengers want to stay connected," says Helfrich. "We are very happy to announce that the A340 fleet servicing the South Africa routes will soon be fitted with the technology that will allow first, business, and economy class fast and reliable internet and telephony connectivity throughout the journey."

In addition to its nine Boeing 777-300ERs which have already been delivered or are currently on order, SWISS is to receive the tenth aircraft in 2018 to replace one Airbus A340-300, representing a total investment of USD 330 million.

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