

Etihad Airways flies record 10.29 million passengers during 2012

Etihad Airways has surpassed its target of carrying 10 million passengers in 2012 and is set to achieve a 22% increase on the total of 8.41 million passengers for 2011.



The increase in passenger numbers - up to a total of 10.29 million - represents an extra 1.88 million passengers travelling on the carrier's global network that now covers 87 of its own passenger and cargo destinations, and 245 codeshare destinations.

The passenger growth for Etihad Airways is mirrored by its equity partners. By the end of 2012, airberlin is expected to have carried 33.4 million passengers, Virgin Australia 19.5 million passengers*, Aer Lingus nearly 11 million passengers, and Air Seychelles 241,000 passengers.

Etihad Airways and its equity partners will have collectively carried more than 74 million passengers in 2012, with cooperation between the five airlines greatly contributing to passenger growth.

An example of the success of this cooperation is the 300,000 passengers airberlin and Etihad Airways have delivered onto each other's networks during the last 12 months.

Significant expansion in 2012

James Hogan, Etihad Airways' president and chief executive officer, said: "Etihad Airways has achieved significant expansion in 2012 and therefore it's very satisfying to pass our target of flying more than 10 million passengers during a year for the first time.

"We have launched flights to six new destinations during the last year - Tripoli, Shanghai, Nairobi, Basra, Lagos, and Ahmedabad - which have all contributed to the 22% increase in passenger numbers."

Overall in 2012 Etihad Cargo carried a record 365,000 tons, 18% more than in 2011.

Etihad Airways' busiest route was Bangkok with the airline carrying nearly 691,000 passengers to the Thai capital during the year, a 38% increase on 2011.

This was closely followed by Manila, Heathrow and Jeddah. Sydney, Paris, Frankfurt, Manchester, Doha and Dublin complete the list of the 10 most popular routes.

During 2012 Etihad Airways beat its previous record for the number of passengers carried in a single day with 33,766 passengers flying on Saturday 14 July. The airline took delivery of seven new aircraft in 2012, three Airbus A320s and four Boeing B777s.

Etihad Airways will take delivery of 14 new aircraft in 2013, four A320 passenger aircraft, one A321 passenger aircraft, and one A330 freighter from Airbus; two B777 freighters, and six B777-300ER passenger aircraft from Boeing.

The airline has announced it will start flights to at least three new destinations in 2013, Washington DC in March, Sao Paulo in June, and Ho Chi Minh City in October.

Top 10 passengers by route in 2012:

ROUTE	
1.	Bangkok
2.	Manila
3.	London Heathrow
4.	Jeddah
5.	Sydney
6.	Paris
7.	Frankfurt
8.	Manchester
9.	Doha
10.	Dublin

**The Virgin Australia figure for passengers carried in 2012 is an estimate based on its disclosed FY12 passenger numbers of 19.5 million.*

For more information, please visit: www.etihad.com.

Etihad Airways launches Google+ Page

The airline of the United Arab Emirates, has launched a [Google+ page](#) for its guests around the world.

The airline's new social media channel will complement its existing presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Each of these channels has seen a considerable growth in the number of followers in the past year; Facebook 'likes' have increased from 56,600 to 316,500, followers on Twitter from 6,900 to 29,300, and views on YouTube from 373,600 to over six million.

Social media enables Etihad Airways to listen and engage directly with its guests. Valuable feedback is obtained so the airline can provide high quality experiences and services to guests. In return, guests receive exclusive access to deals and competitions on its social media channels.

Google+ has become increasingly popular with more than 400 million registered users worldwide. The airline will establish a

presence and keep its guests informed and involved on the new page. The launch of the Google+ page will also give the airline an increased presence on Google.

Peter Baumgartner, Etihad Airways' chief commercial officer, said: "We are excited to launch a new social media channel for Etihad Airways. Our Google+ page will provide our guests with the latest brand, product and sponsorship news, exclusive competitions and offers, as well as updates on key initiatives."

Etihad Airways recently launched its Arabic Facebook page, one of only a few in the world created by an airline. The launch of the Etihad Airways Google+ page marks another social media milestone for the airline.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>