

British Airways announces A380 services to Jozi

It used to be called the Springbok Route, so when British Airways announced it is bringing its new Airbus A380 to South Africa it fittingly decided to team up with some Springboks. The pair in question, Jean de Villiers and Bryan Habana, were joined by England captain Chris Robshaw.



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Weighing in at a joint 196kg, the two Bokke needed all the help they could get from 110kg Robshaw, as they attempted to pull the 366,000kg superjumbo down the runway at Manston Airport in Kent, where British Airways pilots are honing their skills on the airline's newest aircraft.

International model Georgia May Jagger, who fronted the launch of the airline's South African advertising campaign, was there to set them off and lend some support.

The A380 will begin flying to Johannesburg on 12 February, 2014, although the inaugural flight is likely to be earlier, and with up to 40% discount on the opening fares international rugby players and models will be able to sit back and relax with 465 other customers, rather resort to any strenuous legwork.

World Traveller fares from South Africa start at R8 380, World Traveller Plus from R15 380, Club World from R30 380 and First from R53 380.

Three A380 services a week

The airline will initially operate three A380 services a week to Joburg. This will increase from 10 March, 2014, to six flights. These flights will be part of the airline's normal schedule to South Africa's commercial capital.

Since British Airways took delivery of its first superjumbo earlier this month, Johannesburg is only the third A380 route to be confirmed, after Los Angeles and Hong Kong. Another two aircraft, from a total order of 12, are due to be delivered before the end of the year.

British Airways' A380s can accommodate 469 customers across four cabins. Customers in First will be seated in front of the main deck. The cabin offers 14 seats and is evolved from the existing First Class. Club World (Business Class) customers can choose from 44 seats on the main deck, or 53 seats on the upper deck. The upper-deck seats will be arranged in a new 2:3:2 configuration across the cabin. The 55 World Traveller Plus (Premier Economy) seats are located on the upper deck, while World Traveller (Economy) customers can choose seats on both the main and upper deck.

The aircraft's innovative design makes it much quieter during take-off and landing, and the cabin has the lowest noise level of any existing passenger aircraft. The advanced air-conditioning system, with 15 differ-

temperature control zones, contributes to reduced noise levels and customer comfort, with cabin air being changed every three minutes. In addition the A380 It offers exceptional fuel efficiency compared to the aircraft it is replacing.

Bryan Habana, who is taking up a three-year contract with French club side Toulon, said that with the A380 flying to South Africa home won't seem nearly as far away.

After a tour of the aircraft, Jean de Villiers was particularly impressed by its size: "Seventy-three metres from nose to tail; that's half the length of Newlands and big enough to carry 31 rugby teams halfway around the world."

The A380 is part of a GBP5 billion investment over five years in new aircraft, smarter cabins, elegant lounges, new technologies and onboard catering to improve the travelling experience and make it easier, more convenient and more comfortable in the air and on the ground.

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