



Up and Away, Down Under

By Jeerawan Duangnam


Emirates, the Dubai-based international airline recently began its long-awaited segment from Dubai to Sydney via Bangkok.

Emirates' new Dubai-Sydney service will initially operate 14 flights a week and the journey will extend to Auckland from early May. The new route is expected to help support increased demand for trade and tourism flow between the regions.

Emirates, who fly to 78 destinations in 55 countries, use Boeing 777-300 aircraft on the Dubai-Sydney route, with 18 seats in First Class, 42 in Business and 320 in Economy. The service offers convenient timing for travellers; arriving in Sydney in the morning, passengers can make the most of a full day in the Australian coastal city.

In First Class on Emirates (*pictured above, right*), expect fully flat beds and the option of Arabian music to set the mood, personal mini-bar, and an appetiser of Arabian caviar served on Middle East-style silverware. A 19-inch LCD monitor is also provided in case passengers wish to surf on the Emirates' information, communication and entertainment service.

Business Class offers comfortable 'sleeperette' seats, capable of reclining up to 60 degrees, and an adjustable winged headrest with six-way movement. Services such as Email, SMS, 500 Channels of VDO and games on demand are available to those travelling in either Business or Economy Class.

The 777-300 Extended Range Boeings, slowly being integrated into the Emirates' fleet, will be the first to emblazon their distinctive corporate logo on their underside, and, in an industry first, this will be a signature of the entire airline's fleet soon. 



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ONAIR to be a standard option for mobile passenger communications on Airbus aircraft.

Airlines ordering Airbus aircraft will soon be able to select OnAir services, such as onboard mobile telephony and Internet access, as standard options for new aircraft deliveries, it was announced recently.

Newly incorporated OnAir is a joint venture of Airbus and SITA INC, the IT solutions provider to the air transport industry.

"OnAir's goal is to provide voice and data communications for short and long-haul flights on Airbus and Boeing aircraft in a manner that facilitates passenger choice and is economically attractive to both consumers and airlines," said Francesco Violante, MD of SITA INC and Chairman of the OnAir Board.

"We estimate that the number of passengers in the addressable market for onboard GSM telephony will be over 700 million by 2009. Meeting the communications needs of these air travellers will need to become part of an airline's passenger service offer," said Violante. - BG