

*A member of the Gulf Air cabin crew offers a selection of 'Flying Chef' canapes at the recent launch of The Flying Chefs recipe book in Bahrain.*

## 100 Chefs at 30,000 Feet

Review by Ben Gillingham

Everything about Gulf Air's catering is a celebration of food, and by upping the standards to such a degree, the airline has succeeded in changing the face of in-flight dining once and for all.

How important is in-flight cuisine on an airline? Gulf Air can answer that: their unique Flying Chefs have increased passenger levels in First and Business class by more than 50 percent over the last two years.

"There were many sceptics when we first introduced the on-board chefs," explained Michael Kent, Gulf Air's Head of In-flight Services. "Now two years on - and with more than 100 chefs operating throughout the network - Gulf Air has changed the face of in-flight dining."

Since September 2003, Gulf Air has been recruiting top chefs from leading five-star and Michelin-rated restaurants and hotels around the world for its in-flight dining service. Reflecting the multi-cultural nature of the airline, the team of more than 100 chefs, who hail from 23 different countries, bring diverse culinary expertise and art to the menu - which, according to Kent, "is just a guide. A customer and the chef may create a completely new version of the menu on board!"

When on board, the airline aims to give their First-class passengers an experience mirroring the world's most exclusive restaurants. Guests are welcomed by the maitre d' and chef, and are subsequently shown to the seat of their choice; they can dine alone - or with a fellow passenger.

Traditional dining and dine-on-demand are complemented by a stand-up on-board buffet which offers a full range of drinks and snacks. Dinner is complemented by a selection of hand-picked, fine vintage wines and other beverages.

Effectively recreating the golden age of travel (thanks to a USD 10 million refurbishment of the First and Business Class cabins), Gulf Air's Economy passengers don't miss out either, and are plied with snacks, meals and movie treats throughout the flight.

The airline industry is suitably impressed; in the latest World Airline Catering Awards (2005), Gulf Air clinched top position for both First and Business Class onboard catering on long-haul intercontinental flights.



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There has even been a book of recipes specially created by the in-flight chefs. *The Flying Chefs* is published in Arabic and English, and includes recipes for amuse bouches, starters, entrées and delectable desserts, along with profiles of the contributing chefs. Gastronomic styles from around the world feature prominently and often are combined with traditional Arabic elements, in a new take on fusion cuisine. 🌐



Gulf Air, owned by the Kingdom of Bahrain, Oman and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi covers a network stretching from Europe to Asia and covers 44 cities in 30 countries. Their fleet is one of the most modern in the Middle East and comprises 34 aircraft.

### Gulf Air Reservations

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