

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Etihad builds bespoke loyalty program around fashion industry's demands

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Amber Valletta boarding Etihad Airways' branded A380

By STAFF REPORTS

United Arab Emirates' Etihad Airways is furthering its outreach to the fashion community through a rewards program designed specially for the travel needs of those in the industry.

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Runway to Runway is a custom loyalty program developed alongside IMG, featuring perks such as discounted cargo rates and group travel rates, ideal for sending an entire team on location for a photo shoot. In 2016, Etihad began positioning itself as the airline choice for fashion, making this membership option a way to enhance its appeal for those in the industry.

Welcome aboard

Etihad's tiered loyalty program is open to all fashion enthusiasts.

Its lowest level, guest status, is designed for those who have an appreciation for fashion, offering perks such as the chance to attend shows and events, including global fashion weeks, and a subscription to fashion news.

Those within the industry can apply for silver status, which gives members an extra 10kg for their luggage and access to a lounge.

The top level, gold, is accessible only by invitation. Etihad will be giving individuals such as designers, fashion editors, models, photographers, stylists, bloggers and executives the chance to join.



Image courtesy of Etihad Airways

Gold status gives its members lounge access for themselves and a guest. They will also be able to bring 20kg more luggage with them and will receive priority check-in and boarding.

While in-flight, gold members will also be eligible for upgrades and WiFi.

Kicking off Runway to Runway, Etihad will host a dinner with Moda Operandi's Lauren Santo Domingo and that airline's ambassador Nicole Kidman during New York Fashion Week. All of the designers, influencers and editors in attendance will be eligible for gold status.

Etihad is also launching a partnership with Moda Operandi, which will see the airline fly designers that retail on the site to Abu Dhabi to help them grow their presence in the growing luxury market there.

Etihad linked with IMG in April and today supports 17 of its fashion events per year, including fashion weeks in New York, London and Milan.

As part of its work with fashion, Etihad collaborated with British footwear label Jimmy Choo.

To celebrate the label's 20th anniversary, the official airline of New York Fashion Week co-hosted a Jimmy Choo-themed VIP lounge at runway show venue Skylight at Moynihan Station and decked out a livery with Jimmy Choo and NYFW branding. As Etihad boosts its service to New York, having a presence among the affluent, stylish community at fashion week will help it raise awareness among the stylish set ([see story](#)).

"Etihad Airways' commitment to fashion has taken another step forward with the launch of Runway to Runway, a travel program delivering practical benefits to our friends in fashion," said Patrick Pierce, vice president of sponsorships, Etihad Airways.

"Last year, Etihad Airways became the first global airline to align with and support fashion professionals," he said. "Very few industries travel as much as the fashion industry does, spending tens of millions annually.

"Etihad Airways is an ideal brand fit for this jet-set industry that is ambitious, innovative and remarkable all characteristics exemplified by Etihad's world-renowned service and hospitality offering."

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