

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Luxury airlines look to bring high-end suites to the skies

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Emirates takes inspiration from Mercedes for its in-flight suites. Image credit: Emirates

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Suites, a staple in the luxury hotel industry, are now becoming a selling point in the air as well as the ground with luxury airlines adopting their own versions.

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Emirates and Singapore Airlines are a few of the travel brands who are bringing the luxury suite to the air, as this trend starts to rise. With affluent consumers continually looking to customer service, privacy, convenience and comfort, luxury suites in the air are likely to catch on.

"The in-flight experience is the heart of our brand and service proposition," said Sir Tim Clark, president of Emirates Airline.

Privacy in the air

Dubai-based luxury airline Emirates announced that it will debut its first class suites in December on its 777-300ER jets.

The airline's president explained in a statement that the airline's redesigned jets will focus further on its brand and service proposition. Emirates originally had first class suites, but with only a small wall separating each suite.

However, Emirates' new first class suites will be completely separate from other passengers, offering an extremely personal and private flight experience. There will be six private suites on each of Emirates' jets, each of which is 84 inches long and 81 inches tall, measuring about 40 square feet.

While most suites will have windows, some will not. Emirates has invented a virtual window to compensate.

Each suite's reclining chair can turn into a 78-inch-long, 30-inch-wide bed and the space also includes a 32-inch LCD television, fully stocked mini bar, temperature control and Bowers & Wilkins noise-canceling headphones.

Guests can video chat with crewmembers to order cabin service.

The suites were modeled after Mercedes-Benz's S-Class. As part of a new partnership, Mercedes will provide ground transportation for luxury suite passengers on Emirates' flight.

Singapore strategy

Singapore Airlines introduced a similar concept with its first class suites, described as hotel rooms in the sky. Each suite includes a twin-sized bed, but two adjoining rooms can create a double bed.



Suite on Singapore Airlines' A380. Image courtesy of Singapore Airlines

The suites are also lined with leather and fitted with special storage units along with sliding doors and blinds.

Creating a private travel experience in the sky, Singapore Airlines will roll out the suites in its Airbus A380 fleet.

The new cabin design, launching next month, features six suites with a fully flat bed and a leather chair, with other amenities that mimic the experience of a hotel ([see more](#)).

French lifestyle brand Lalique also brought its crystal wares to new heights through an alliance with Singapore Airlines.

Through the partnership, the airline sees retail co-branded in-flight products such as toiletries and glassware in its suites and first class cabins. For Lalique, this represents an opportunity to introduce its brand range to a captive audience of affluent travelers ([see more](#)).

"The new 777 interiors that we are unveiling today is part of Emirates' ongoing investment to continually raise the bar and exceed our customers' expectations," Sir Tim said.