

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Emirates boosts vegan offerings as demand spikes 40pc

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Having served plant-based meals since the 1990s, Emirates is adding to its 300-plus menu of vegan dishes. Image credit: Emirates

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Dubai, U.A.E-based airline **Emirates** is introducing new menu options with its diverse consumer base in mind.

Reporting that demand for plant-based meals has spiked 40 percent year-on-year, the company is embarking on a culinary journey. Emirates is adding to its "vegan vault" of more than 300 recipes, rolling out new dishes in its lounges and on flights in 2024.

Plant-based palates

Since 2014, "Veganuary," a January observance, has highlighted the perks of a plant-based diet.

Now in its tenth year, the movement has gained traction. In 2023, more than 450,000 plant-based meals were served onboard Emirates flights, up from 280,000 in 2022, according to a statement.

Passengers en route to Japan, the Philippines and China in particular marked significant increases in vegan orders last year.



A new beetroot tartare, topped with sustainably-grown greens, is added to the lounge menus. Image credit: Emirates

While demand overall has grown alongside the airline's passenger volume, in other regions, it has exceeded those figures. For example, in Africa, consumption jumped by 44 percent, while in Southeast Asia, it went up by 45 percent.

Meanwhile, in the Middle East, there is a whopping 74 percent surge in demand for specialty cuisine.

To accommodate this trend, Emirates, having served vegan meals since the 1990s, increased the vegan recipes it offers from 180 in 2022 to 300 in 2023. Customers can enjoy these recipes across 140 destinations.



A new coconut pineapple cake is being added to the 2024 vegan menus. Image credit: Emirates

Emirates plans to dish up even more options in 2024, adding to the hundreds of existing vegan recipes it serves later this year. A selection of plant-based main courses, snacks and desserts will be launched, including pastries and pizza.

In first class, clients will be able to enjoy elevated meals such as silky polenta cake with thyme mushroom ragout and sautéed spinach topped with an earthy root vegetable jus, or eggplant curry served on charred rice and turmeric potatoes, seasoned with coconut and mint chutney. Desserts like tart rhubarb dolloped with chantilly cream, and warm chocolate fondant drizzled with salted caramel sauce and finished with whipped cashew cream finish out the new savory additions.

Ingredients vary, from California's Beyond Meat to Singapore soybean-based proteins to Japan's pressed tofu. Organic chocolate from France, margarine from Germany, almond milk from Italy and curry paste from Thailand are among other building blocks of the international vegan menus.



Creamy polenta and ragout are included in the fresh first-class vegan eats. Image credit: Emirates

Upping the sustainability element, kale, lettuce and other greens grown in Bustanica, the world's largest hydroponic vertical farm, are also incorporated into the plates. Situated in Dubai, the pesticide, herbicide and chemical-free produce provider is a joint venture investment through Emirates Flight Catering, opened in the summer of 2022 following major upgrades to the in-flight culinary experience ([see story](#)).

Vegan offerings can be pre-ordered onboard and directly ordered in first class or lounges. These meals are available upon request on all Emirates flights across all classes up to 24 hours before takeoff.