A fresh start for rest: John Horsfall’s bedding collaboration with Riyadh Air

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Refreshing an airline’s cabin textiles comes with a familiar starting point: an existing collection to rethink, refine or reimagine. Creating a bedding program for an airline just beginning its story opens a different set of possibilities.

That was the opportunity for John Horsfall in its partnership with Riyadh Air. In a recent conversation with *PAX International*, Design Manager Alex Allen describes how joining the process early gave the supplier a hand in shaping the experience from the beginning.

“Compared to a more traditional later-stage engagement, this ensured a more thoughtful, brand-led outcome rather than a purely functional solution,” she explains. “The result is a collection that delivers on a premium, design-led experience while remaining highly functional, efficient and operationally practical.”

Comfort, cabin by cabin

Unveiled ahead of WTCE and the airline’s commercial launch, the bespoke onboard bedding collection earned two PAX Readership Awards in 2026.

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The collection spans every cabin. Materials, construction and comfort features evolve through the service levels, while shared colors and detailing keep the range within the same visual and tactile family.

In Economy, soft pillows and blankets offer immediate, lasting comfort, with Re-Thread® recycled fillings incorporated into the range. Premium Economy introduces a change in texture and scale through light-catching silky pillows and contrasting duvets.



The collection features Re-Thread® products, containing at least 50 percent certified recycled or reclaimed fibers while maintaining premium comfort, durability and thermal performance

Business Class passengers have mattress pads, duvets and dual-sided pillows with cooling and warming options. In Business Elite, the highest cabin tier, the wool-blend throw and sculptural bolster cushions add another layer of softness and luxury.

Lavender, deep indigo and peach tones lend the collection a serene feel. The signature quilted “canopy twist” design echoes the seat upholstery, while lavender-scented hand towels in Business Class offer a nod to the flower Riyadh is known for growing.

“Every passenger, regardless of cabin, feels connected to Riyadh Air’s identity, with meaningful differentiation that reflects each service level,” Allen says.

The work before the rest

Before choosing fabrics or refining finishes, the team considered a more fundamental question: how do passengers rest onboard?

The answer varies with cabin environment, flight duration and personal preference. Temperature regulation was an early priority, with the dual-sided pillow giving passengers cooling and warming

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options within a single product.

At the same time, John Horsfall reviewed Riyadh Air’s brand guidelines and researched Riyadh and Saudi Arabian culture, drawing on both to inform the collection.

“By interpreting cultural cues, color palettes and material direction in a considered way, we created a bedding collection that feels connected to Riyadh Air’s visual language and passenger experience,” Allen explains.

Early involvement also gave the team access to the seat designs, allowing it to develop bedding around the seat’s complex dimensions and movement.

“For example, a mattress with quilt paneling to coincide with seat folds, to enable the product to lie flush with the seat through every level of recline,” Allen highlights.



John Horsfall put passenger rest at the heart of the collection, guiding its fabric choices and finishes

Material development, prototyping and rigorous testing brought those ideas into practical form, refining each product for comfort, durability and performance in cabin conditions. The wool-blend throw for Business Elite drew on John Horsfall’s heritage in aviation textiles, introducing natural fibers into a product that must also meet demanding care requirements.

“This is a unique offering, something rarely seen in the sector while still fully suitable for onboard use and industrial laundry processes,” Allen shares.

The collection also includes Re-Thread® products, which contain a minimum of 50 percent certified recycled or reclaimed fibers while meeting the same premium standards for comfort, durability and thermal performance.

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A place for every piece
The attention to fit extends beyond the seat itself. In Business Class, a dedicated bedding bag tucks neatly beneath the suite's ottoman, giving the collection a convenient home between uses.

The bag supports presentation and makes the bedding easier for crew to handle. It also eliminates the need for single-use plastic packaging for onboard bedding, supporting Riyadh Air's broader sustainability ambitions.

Smaller details help behind the scenes, too. Different colored binding on the mattress options allows crew and laundry teams to identify the correct product for each aircraft and cabin class.



John Horsfall's early partnership with Riyadh Air gave the supplier an opportunity to help shape the airline's onboard bedding experience from the outset

The next chapter in comfort
For Allen, the collection reflects a wider shift in how airlines approach onboard textiles. Temperature regulation, breathability and more responsible material choices are becoming increasingly important to passenger wellness, alongside sleep quality and restorative rest. Long- and ultra-long-haul travel brings those considerations into sharper focus, challenging suppliers to develop products that remain comfortable over more hours in the air.

"We see our role as translating these priorities into products. By combining technical expertise with design-led thinking, we aim to develop textile solutions that enhance comfort, support well-being and perform reliably within the operational realities of the cabin environment, whilst still beautifully depicting each brand's own identity," she concludes.

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