

# Catering kosher with Emirates Flight Catering

This is a special feature from *PAX International's* [October 2020 digital edition](#).



From left to right: Jeff Schoenfeld, Partner, Brown Brothers Harriman; Eli Epstein, Businessman; Ross Kriel, Founder, CCL Holdings; Godrume Kriel, Head of Kashrut, CCL Holdings; Eric Fingerhut, President & CEO, The Jewish Federations of North America; Saeed Mohammed, Chief Executive Officer, Emirates Flight Catering; Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Council of the Emirates; Mark Medlin, Executive Vice President Finance Resource Development - UJA Federation of New York

When the travel market recovers and Dubai returns to being the worldwide draw that it has been for decades, Emirates Flight Catering ([EKFC](#)) will have kosher food at the ready with a stand-alone purpose-built facility.

Announced this fall, Kosher Arabia will be certified by the Kashrut Division of the Orthodox Union (OU), and South African Union of Orthodox Synagogues (UOS).

The culinary team at EKFC will handle all food production, while a company called CCL Holdings will provide certification and production supervision including support for menu development and foodstuff procurement. In addition to training EKFC's existing team of chefs, the caterer plans to hire dedicated kosher-trained supervisors to ensure the food meets the firm guidelines.

"As one of the world's largest catering operations, EKFC has the unique ability to cater for all requirements across various industries," Saeed Mohammed, Chief Executive Officer EKFC tells *PAX International*. "By setting up our own capability to produce kosher food, we are confident that we can better serve our customers not only in the aviation sector, but also in the hospitality, food and

beverage, and events sector including the upcoming Expo 2020.”

Important events, and even the recent diplomatic agreement between the UAE and Israel, are only part of the reason for the new facility. Saeed Mohammed says the UAE has always had a strong demand for kosher meals, particularly by EKFC’s airline customers. Watching the global trends, the caterer expects that demand for kosher food in the UAE and region will grow quickly. Though it is largely dependent on the recovery of international travel, Saeed Mohammed says early indications show that Dubai could see more than 50,000 visitors from around the world per year that could require kosher food.

Ross Kriel, founder of CCL Holdings, and President of the Jewish Council of the Emirates (JCE) added, in a release from EKFC, "Kosher Arabia was set up to supply kosher food to meet the growing demand in the UAE, not only from the Jewish community here but also from other consumers looking for healthy and halal-compliant options.”

The UAE is home to people from nearly 200 nations, including a thriving Jewish community. In September 2019, the UAE announced the construction of an interfaith complex in Abu Dhabi, which will house a Jewish synagogue, Christian church and Islamic mosque.