

WTCE issue: Cateringpor is proudly Portuguese

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Each year, thousands of meals are prepared by Cateringpor and served to passengers travelling to destinations around the world

Passengers travelling from Lisbon, Portugal, can rest assured their cravings will be in good hands thanks to Cateringpor, an onboard caterer that has scaled up in an approachable, maintainable way that has allowed it to keep pace with the needs of the industry.

Cateringpor launched in 1994 as an onboard kitchen in Humberto Delgado Airport (Lisbon Airport) with a simple mission: to provide its airline customers the best inflight experience for passengers. In the 30 years that followed, the caterer has seen numerous milestones and celebrations, including securing the contract for the grand opening of Lisbon's Vasco da Gama Bridge, an event during which it served more than 15,000 meals to revelers.

"Our company was called to produce and serve the meals for this epic event because it was the only catering company in Portugal with the means and facilities to accommodate such a challenge," explains Nuno Batista, Cateringpor's Chief Executive Officer.



The Cateringpor Board of Directors

From there, the opportunities only grew, and in 2001 Cateringpor restructured its facilities to meet the demand, expanding to keep up with the increase in airlines flying into and out of its homebase. Today, its kitchen is 20,000 square meters in size, with ample space dedicated to both hot and cold kitchens, pastry prep and baking, tray set-up, assembly (including pick and pack, wash and pack, and laundry), service delivery and its operational offices. At peak times, such as during the summer, the company serves up to 40,000 meals each day, with its daily average hitting 25,000 last year, Batista explains.

This boost is due not only to the return to more regular travel patterns but also because of increased airline contracts. This growth led to Cateringpor servicing 170 to 210 flights each day last year. The caterer's 12 airline customers are familiar names to many globetrotters, including the country's national carrier TAP Air Portugal, Emirates, Delta Air Lines, Air Canada, American Airlines, Etihad, Turkish Airlines, FAP (Portuguese Air Force) and more.

Like many businesses in the aviation industry, Cateringpor has turned its attention to its impact on the environment.



The company specializes in meals that address many dietary restrictions, both medical and cultural

“Sustainability is a top priority at Cateringpor,” says Batista. “We are committed to innovation in the name of sustainability. With our focus on providing the best service to our customers and the future of the planet always in mind, we are implementing a process-based approach that ensures our competitiveness through social, environmental and corporate governance.”

This attitude can be seen in every aspect of the caterer’s operation, from how it approaches waste by reducing and recycling at every stage of production, to monitoring and controlling the amount of water used, to reducing its energy consumption with measures such as the installation of LED lights in its facility.

Cateringpor is far from resting on its laurels. It expanded its menu to offer halal-certified ingredients in 2012, and three years later further showcased its commitment to safety by attaining its ISO 22000 certification. It also serves meals and ingredients that meet the needs of more than 20 types of dietary restrictions, ensuring all passengers can enjoy a satisfying meal in the sky.

In 2023, Cateringpor reached and surpassed another goal: it returned to pre-pandemic sales and increased the number of meals served daily, weekly, monthly and annually. For any business in the travel industry, that landmark occasion is an important step in reassuring its customers that it is here for the long run—indicating, especially for this onboard caterer, that there is nowhere to go but up.