

Emirates Flight Catering prepares to serve 300,000 meals at Dubai Airshow



EKFC prepares to cater Dubai Airshow 2025

Emirates Flight Catering ([EKFC](#)) is the official caterer for Dubai Airshow 2025 and is preparing to serve more than 300,000 meals to a diverse audience of aviation and aerospace executives, government ministers, military delegations, industry professionals, guests and visitors from more than 98 countries.

This feat requires building two complete central kitchens from scratch, deploying nearly 2,600 staff members, and catering to more than 150 chalets, country pavilions and exhibition stands with cuisine as diverse as the global aviation and aerospace community itself.

The scale is significant. More than 35,000 meals have already been pre-booked for chalets and country pavilions, 74 interns have been recruited from prestigious hospitality institutions, and the required on-site infrastructure has been built in less than two weeks.

But scale is only part of the story. By bringing all catering in-house, EKFC can ensure consistent quality and flexibility to adapt quickly to any request.

Shahreyar Nawabi, Chief Executive Officer of Emirates Flight Catering said: "At the upcoming Dubai Airshow 2025, EKFC's focus will be showcasing what's possible when you combine airline catering expertise with event-scale execution. Our diversity of culinary talent means we can authentically deliver any cuisine, from French, Middle Eastern and Indian to Russian, Chinese and Japanese dishes, among a multitude of others. Our skilled and experienced team of chefs don't just understand recipes, but also the cultural nuances and preferences of guests from nearly 100 countries.

"We have assembled a robust workforce of professionals and well-trained interns from top hospitality institutions and constructed two full-scale central kitchens on-site, supported by our Dubai World Central facility's 150,000-meal daily capacity. This combination of culinary talent, purpose-built infrastructure, and strategic investment is operational excellence ready to be tested and proven at an unprecedented scale."

Building from the ground up

EKFC has completed the construction of two major central kitchens strategically positioned between the exhibition building and the chalets to ensure optimal service delivery across the massive event site. EKFC facilities at the Dubai Airshow feature cold rooms, dishwasher areas, dedicated storage, independent power supply and specialized refrigerated zones for pastry, cold kitchen operations and central kitchen production.

EKFC has also set up staff infrastructure including canteens, check-in facilities, welfare tents, uniform distribution centres and rest areas. Everything has been built from the ground up, with construction commencing in late October and completed in approximately two weeks thanks to meticulous planning. One week before the airshow begins, the entire operation will be stress-tested with a dry run to ensure flawless execution.

The logistics between EKFC's DWC facility, located just behind the airshow site, and its Airshow site operations have been streamlined, with security scanners and airside access capabilities already in place to ensure secure and efficient operations throughout the event.

Global flavors, made to order

At the Dubai Airshow, EKFC is set to deliver authentic cuisine at scale with complete menu flexibility. EKFC chefs and culinary specialists will be matched to each pavilion's requirements. And the culinary roster reads like a world tour: braised beef cheeks in black truffle sauce, elaborate Middle Eastern mezze spreads complementing lamb kofta kebab, Emirati tandoori lobster with saffron rice, Indian chicken pistachio kormas, Chinese dishes featuring wok cooking, and the list goes on.

Exhibition halls will get on-demand service with basket orders, fresh pastries, and bespoke catering that responds to real-time needs rather than predetermined menus. This flexibility draws directly from EKFC's airline catering heritage, where understanding diverse tastes, cultural preferences, and dietary requirements forms the foundation of the airline's daily operations and unique regional menus.

EKFC has partnered with leading brands, including several UAE-based concepts, to bring seven distinctive food experiences to Dubai Airshow attendees: Origami (Japanese cuisine), Onda (premium coffee), Yann Couvreur Pastry & Barista Experience, Dibba Oyster Bar (showcasing local Fujairah producers), an in-house salmon and caviar lounge, Bustanica Salad Bar (with poke bowl-style options), and a Middle Eastern and Persian BBQ station. Emirates Leisure Retail (ELR), a subsidiary of Emirates Group, will be operating Costa Coffee and a food truck village in the airshow's SkyView area.

Building workforce capacity

EKFC has recruited 74 interns, including UAE Nationals, from renowned hospitality and tourism institutions, including GLION Switzerland, EHL Lausanne, Swiss Education Group, Bukhara State University Uzbekistan, Dubai College of Tourism, Ajman University, Les Roches Abu Dhabi, Zayed University, and NEST College UAE.

Interns have undergone a six-month program with cultural training, and they will put their training to work, not only in hospitality, but also in finance, HR, and sales and events operations.

EKFC's workforce deployment has been a coordinated effort that leverages the full strength of the organization. This includes 1,800 staff which form the core team, supplemented by 500 personnel from DWTC, 280 team members from Emirates' kitchens and lounges, and support from across all EKFC departments.

EKFC staff will wear a custom cobalt blue uniform designed exclusively for the Dubai Airshow, breaking from the company's red and black color palette.

Waste reduction initiatives

With a focus on waste reduction and using resources more consciously, EKFC has eliminated plastic bottles across its operations at the Dubai Airshow, using glass instead with recycling systems in place.

Each day, leftover food will either be composted or donated to a food bank through Dubai Municipality, with EKFC committed to ensuring minimal waste throughout the event. EKFC also sources locally where possible, partnering with suppliers like Dibba oysters and Mai Dubai to support local businesses.

The Dubai Airshow will take place from November 17 to 21 at Dubai World Central (DWC).

