

# Comfort and connectivity onboard Etihad

This is a special feature from *PAX Tech's* [April 2024 Seating & IFEC issue](#), on [page 13](#)



Etihad's upgraded Dreamliner fleet features free inflight Wi-Fi for all cabin classes and upgraded entertainment systems

[Etihad Airways](#) had a tremendous year of design updates and passenger experience upgrades in 2023. As its new fleet of 787-9 Dreamliners takes off in 2024, Etihad is introducing more privacy for passengers, complimentary inflight connectivity and an IFE experience like the airline has never had before.

## Keeping passengers connected

In 2023, Etihad signed an agreement with [Viasat](#) for high-speed inflight connectivity and live TV streaming solutions for its new 787-9 Dreamliner fleet. Eduardo Matos, Director of Customer Care, Etihad Airways, tells *PAX Tech* that while the fleet has only just entered service, the airline is confident in how the elevated experience available to passengers will be received.

The first aircraft of the updated fleet touched down in Abu Dhabi in February, marking the beginning of this exciting era for Etihad. The two-class aircraft features Economy and Business Class seating, with 32 Business Suites and 271 seats in Economy.



Eduardo Matos, Director of Customer Care, Etihad Airways

“We were thrilled to take delivery of three new 787 Dreamliners which offer our newest cabin interiors and the latest inflight entertainment,” Matos says. “These aircraft have only just started flying but we’re sure our guests are going to love the ability to stream content to their own devices when they purchase a Wi-Fi package.”

The inflight Wi-Fi offerings are available to all passengers travelling on Etihad’s 787 Dreamliner fleet, free of charge.

“Regardless of cabin, all our guests have access to our Wi-Fly Chat and Surf packages. Everyone receives complimentary ‘Chat’ messaging throughout their entire flight by signing in with their Etihad Guest membership,” Matos explains.

He adds that even new members will benefit immediately. This strategic move to increase customer loyalty is one being adopted by many airlines in the current climate, due to the changing demands from passengers. Travellers no longer need to fly with an airline for years and thousands of miles to benefit from the perks of their membership—they can enjoy the same benefits as other passengers straight away, simply by registering for the Etihad Guest Membership and signing in.

## Seating and IFEC



Etihad's upgraded 787 Business Class cabin offers spacious seating for maximized comfort and living space



Etihad and Viasat are also bringing passengers an entertainment experience akin to what they are used to in the comfort of their own homes. In addition to free inflight Wi-Fi connectivity on their PEDs, passengers travelling on Etihad's new 787-9 fleet will have access to live TV channels from 30,000 feet.

“Etihad offers a huge range of programming on E-BOX, including live TV channels such as Sports 24 which has proven very popular,” Matos says. “We’re able to broadcast live coverage of some of the world’s biggest leagues and competitions to passengers inflight, so they don’t miss a minute of the action.”

Etihad’s incoming fleet of 787-9 Dreamliners is also set to elevate the passenger experience with increased living space and comfort. In the 787-9 Economy Class, the seats have a lighter, slimmer profile. They are outfitted with IFE technology from Safran, featuring RAVE Ultra 13.3-inch 4K touch-screen monitors. Passengers will have the option to pair their personal phones and tablets wirelessly to the screen, using the PEDs as a remote.

Passengers travelling in the new Business cabin will enjoy suites featuring a customized version of the Elements seat manufactured by [Collins Aerospace](#). The suites offer fully lie-flat beds with a 17.3-inch 4K screen in each. The IFE system pairs with Bluetooth headphones, offers wireless charging and has plenty of storage space.

Matos explains, “The cabin experience we’ve designed gives our guests a wonderful feeling of space and comfort while also adding to their privacy, something which we recognize is important to our guests in premium cabins.”