

Emirates recycles and reuses 88,000 kilograms of plastic from inflight dining



Emirates is highlighting its environmental efforts in celebration of World Environment Day this month

In celebration of World Environment Day on June 5, [Emirates](#) is highlighting the significant impact of its closed-loop recycling program, [first launched in June 2023](#). Over the past year, the airline has repurposed more than 88,000 kilograms of plastic from Economy Class inflight meal service items, transforming them into new products for use onboard.

As part of its commitment to environmental stewardship, Emirates has invested more than AED 50 million (US\$13.6 million) in transitioning to a closed-loop manufacturing model for inflight dining serviceware. Damaged and unserviceable Economy Class trays, casseroles, snack dishes and bowls are collected after flights, cleaned, inspected and processed at a specialist facility in Dubai, where they are transformed into new meal service items containing up to 25 percent recycled material. These products are then returned to [Emirates Flight Catering](#) and reintroduced into service onboard thousands of flights. With millions of trays, bowls and dishes used every year across Emirates' global network, the program supports circular economy principles, significantly reducing plastic waste sent to landfill while lowering transport emissions through local recycling and manufacturing.

The program is delivered in partnership with [deSter FZE UAE](#), an aviation serviceware provider and expert in closed-loop manufacturing. deSter is a member of the CE100 network, which includes some of the world's leading circular economy organizations, and has been awarded the "Gold" Sustainability rating from Ecovadis – a globally recognized certification for sustainable practices. The facility also

incorporates sustainable design principles, including solar power, efficient water management and waste minimisation practices.

Environmental efforts across the Emirates inflight experience

Emirates is highlighting its environmental impact through its inflight offerings, from inflight entertainment content with a sustainable focus to circular onboard products.

- **100 Episodes of David Attenborough on *ice*:** Marking Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday and a century of extraordinary achievements in bringing the natural world to audiences around the globe, Emirates *ice* is hosting 100 episodes from the Attenborough Collection throughout June and July. The acclaimed BBC Earth titles, all narrated by Sir David, invite customers on remarkable journeys across some of the planet's most spectacular landscapes and ecosystems.
- **Emirates children's toys and bags:** The latest [Emirates children's collection](#) includes bags and plush toys made with a minimum of 50 percent recycled content, incorporating recycled post-consumer polyester. Children's magazines and product tags are produced using paper sourced from responsibly managed forests where feasible. Emirates has also removed unnecessary plastic wrapping from children's bags and blankets, helping reduce single-use plastic onboard.
- **First Class bedding bags:** Plastic packaging has been removed from the wrapping of First Class mattress toppers, duvets and blankets and replaced with premium reusable bags made from recycled polyester material.
- **Headset packaging:** Headset packaging used across Business Class, Premium Economy, Economy Class and Emirates' children's headphones is now made from 100 percent recycled low-density polyethylene (LDPE).
- **First and Business Class amenity kit bags:** Emirates continues to incorporate more responsible materials across its luxury cabin amenity kits. First Class kit bags and Business Class kit bags feature fabrics containing recycled content. Foldaway combs and brushes, case covers of mirrors in the women's Business Class kits and selected kit accessories have also been redesigned using materials with recycled content, while dental kit packaging is made from kraft paper.
- **Premium Economy and Economy Class amenity kit bags:** The [reusable amenity kits offered in Premium Economy and Economy Class](#) were launched in partnership with [United for Wildlife](#), to highlight the most endangered species on the planet; incorporate bio-based materials, including cactus-based alternatives, helping reduce reliance on fossil-based plastics. Kit contents including socks and eyeshades are made from 100 percent recycled post-consumer polyester (rPET). Outer designs are printed using non-toxic soy-based inks, and accompanying story cards are made from kraft paper sourced from responsibly managed forests.
- **Premium Economy and Economy Class fleece blankets:** Premium Economy and Economy Class fleece blankets are made from recycled polyester fleece, with each blanket incorporating material equivalent to approximately 28 recycled plastic bottles.
- **First and Business Class loungewear, slippers and eye masks:** The loungewear, slippers and eye masks offered in First and Business Class are designed using lightweight, breathable modal fabric sourced from certified botanic fibres.
- **VOYA wellbeing products:** The [VOYA skincare range](#) featured in First and Business Class harnesses the nourishing properties of organic seaweed sustainably harvested by hand from the west coast of Ireland.
- **Paper straws:** Plastic straws have been phased out across the onboard experience and replaced with certified paper alternatives.

- **Less onboard plastic and packaging:** Emirates works closely with suppliers to introduce alternative packaging solutions wherever possible. Plastic carrier bags used for inflight duty-free purchases have been replaced with paper bags, while packaging used for shower spa amenities incorporates stone paper.
- **Onboard recycling:** Existing onboard initiatives include the segregation of glass and plastic bottles on flights arriving into Dubai, where operationally feasible, supporting more effective sorting and recycling through Emirates Flight Catering and local waste management partners.
- **First Class menus:** Emirates' First Class menus are printed on paper sourced from responsibly managed forests, reinforcing the airline's commitment to sustainable sourcing. Business Class, Premium Economy and Economy Class menus also transitioned to the same responsibly sourced paper.