

On location: Iberia redefines transatlantic travel with A321XLR



Juan Cierco, Corporate Director, Iberia, at the Iberia route launch event in Toronto, Canada

[Iberia](#) celebrated the launch of its direct service between Toronto Pearson ([YYZ](#)) and Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport ([MAD](#)) last week with a Spanish-inspired brunch at Ricarda's restaurant in Toronto, Canada. Iberia welcomed both Spanish and Canadian media at the stylish brunch event where attendees were served 0.0 percent vermouth, tapas and enjoyed a live jamón carving station.

The route officially began operating on June 13 and will see five weekly flights between the two international hubs, adding more than 37,000 seats during the summer season. The route is designed to strengthen connectivity between Canada and Spain while supporting demand, with nearly 70,000 passengers already traveling annually between YYZ and MAD.



The Iberia and Madrid Tourism teams in Toronto to mark the launch of the YYZ-MAD route in June

The route connects two major international markets that serve a mix of leisure and business travelers. As Juan Cierco, Corporate Director, Iberia, tells *PAX Tech*, “This route is much more than a connection between Toronto and Madrid. It reflects Iberia’s commitment to delivering a premium customer experience while strengthening connectivity between Europe and the Americas through our Madrid hub. It is also an important step in delivering Flight Plan 2030, our roadmap for the coming years.”

Flight Plan 2030 is Iberia’s strategic roadmap for the coming years. Backed by a €6 billion investment program, it includes the expansion of the airline’s long-haul fleet from 51 to 70 aircraft, alongside the digitalization of services, enhancements to the customer experience and the launch of new international destinations.

Curated cabin interiors



Iberia Airlines A321XLR Business Class cabin

Iberia became the launch operator of the Airbus A321XLR in November 2024, when it introduced the aircraft on its Madrid-Boston route. Since then, the A321XLR has become a key element of the airline's long-haul strategy, operating routes such as Toronto, Boston, Washington and Recife. Its combination of range, efficiency and operational flexibility has enabled Iberia to open new markets while offering customers the same premium standards found across its long-haul fleet.

The A321XLR also features the new Airspace cabin with 182 seats; 14 of which are [Thompson's](#) VantageSOLO lie-flat Business Class seats in a 1-1 staggered herringbone configuration. VantageSOLO provides direct-aisle access at every seat and is designed specifically for single-aisle aircraft. The Airspace cabin interior also delivers large overhead bins, LED lighting and a renewed sense of space for passengers.

The aircraft delivers up to 40 percent fuel savings compared to wide-body models, enabling Iberia to expand its long-haul network more efficiently by opening new markets and adapting capacity to demand, while maintaining the same comfort standards as its long-haul fleet.

Cierco says the aircraft has delivered exactly the results Iberia expected, both operationally and from a customer perspective.

"The A321XLR has proven to be a great success for us," he says. "It combines efficiency with the premium experience our customers expect from Iberia's long-haul product. Passenger feedback has been very positive, with good NPS results, and we are very pleased with both the onboard experience and the overall customer response."

Connected across continents



Iberia is offering free Wi-Fi to passengers in all classes via Starlink connectivity

Iberia is progressively rolling out Starlink's high-speed WiFi across its fleet, becoming the first Spanish airline to offer the technology. As deployment continues over the next two years, customers travelling on the Toronto-Madrid route will benefit from free, gate-to-gate connectivity across all cabins.

The new service is designed to deliver a home-like connectivity experience, allowing passengers to stream content, browse, work remotely and stay connected throughout the journey. The rollout forms part of Flight Plan 2030, Iberia's long-term strategy to enhance the customer experience through innovation and digitalization.

"Reliable connectivity has become an essential part of the travel experience," Cierco tells *PAX Tech*. "Whether customers are travelling for business or leisure, they increasingly expect to stay connected throughout the journey. With Starlink, our goal is to offer the same high-speed experience they enjoy on the ground while continuing to raise the standard of our onboard product."

Consistently premium



Iberia is the first-ever recipient of the PAX Verified Award, presented at the PAX Readership Awards in Hamburg, Germany in April 2026

In April, Iberia became the first ever airline to receive the PAX Verified Award - Europe, presented at the 2026 PAX Readership Awards in Hamburg, Germany. The award, exclusively for airlines, is selected by the Publisher and PAX's team of experienced aviation journalists. It recognizes exceptional quality in the passenger experience, by region.

For Cierco, the award is an important recognition of Iberia's commitment to delivering a consistent, high-quality customer experience.

We are always striving to do our best," he says. "Recognition like this is important because it validates the experience we are working so hard to deliver to our customers."

Cierco points to Iberia's motto, "Every day is the first day" as an explanation of its commitment to delivering a quality experience to passengers on every flight.

"Our philosophy is that every day is the first day," he explains. "Passengers judge us every time they fly with us. It is not enough to deliver an outstanding experience once—we have to deliver the same quality, service and attention on every flight. That consistency is what defines the Iberia experience."