

Interview with Boaz Hulsman: Air France brings luxurious French experience to all cabins



Jane Hobson, Managing Editor, *PAX International* (left) with Boaz Hulsman, Vice President Commercial North America, Air France, at IFSA Global EXPO 2024 in Long Beach, California

In its ongoing pursuit of excellence, [Air France](#) brings the allure of French elegance and sophistication to the skies, ensuring passengers experience the luxury of French culture in every cabin class and at every touchpoint along the journey.

Boaz Hulsman, Vice President Commercial North America for Air France, underscores this commitment, telling *PAX International*, “Whether it’s French gastronomy or French fashion, we want to showcase the unique charm of French hospitality across all elements of our service.”

From upgraded inflight offerings to refined cabin designs and carefully curated lounges, Air France creates an environment steeped in French culture and elegance.

An enhanced flying experience for every class

Air France continues to refine its offerings in each cabin class to cater to diverse traveller needs. In

the airline's exclusive La Première cabin, already lauded for its premium service, a new upgrade is on the horizon, promising to elevate the experience further—but no more information can be given on this yet, Hulsman says.

He points to a shifting demographic of premium cabin passengers, explaining, "Historically, it was mostly business travellers, but now we're seeing more leisure passengers who are eager to indulge in a luxurious travel experience from start to finish."

The airline's Business Class also received a recent overhaul, combining enhanced privacy features with personalized service. New 777s and A350s include private suite-style seating, larger inflight entertainment screens and menus crafted by Michelin-starred chefs, creating an indulgent, immersive environment.



Air France's A350-900

"It's about privacy and exclusivity," says Hulsman, highlighting how these features align with what modern travellers seek in premium cabins.

Air France was also an early adopter of the Premium Economy concept, and as one of the pioneers, the airline now seeks to refresh this class for even greater appeal.

Announced in September, it has been rebranded as "Premium." The cabin offers plush seating and curated service, ensuring a more luxurious experience that stands apart from the main Economy cabin.

In Premium, the seat back generously reclines up to 124 degrees (depending on aircraft type) and is widened for extra comfort. There is also 94 to 97 centimetres (depending on aircraft type) of legroom and an adjustable footrest. The seat foam cushions are redesigned and the herringbone pattern fabric

adds extra softness. With the gradual renewal of its cabins, almost 80 percent of the Air France fleet will be equipped with recliner seats by the end of 2025.

Each seat is equipped with a wide 13.3-inch 4K-quality Ultra HD anti-glare touchscreen with Bluetooth connection, allowing passengers to enjoy more than 1,500 hours of on-demand entertainment, with a particular focus on French productions. Passengers can also connect personal devices directly to the screen to use as a remote control or browse the IFE catalogue.

For heightened elegance, the cabin has been redecorated, with shades of Air France's signature navy blue, and sky blue, a shade specific to this travel cabin. The company's trademark red accent adorns the seat headrests, cushions, blankets, comfort kits and meal trays.

"We were the first to introduce Premium Economy, which has been both an advantage and a challenge," Hulsman explains. "Now, we're reimagining it by refining the seats, updating the cabin design, and enhancing the onboard service—including menus crafted by our Michelin-star chef."

Since November 2023, Frédéric Simonin, holder of one Michelin star and Meilleur Ouvrier de France, has been creating two hot dishes that are regularly renewed, including a vegetarian option.

Each passenger in Premium receives a full "French-style" meal service, comprising snacks, a starter, a choice of two hot dishes, cheese and dessert, served in eco-designed tableware with stainless steel cutlery.

A celebration of French culture

Air France's other partnerships with Michelin-starred chefs ensure the service reflects France's culinary traditions in each cabin.

On departure from Paris, Chef Jérôme Banctel heads up the long-haul Business cabin. Awarded three Michelin stars in 2024, he uses produce evocative of his childhood, enhanced by his own special culinary signature; delicious sauces, without butter or cream.

Triple Michelin-starred Chef Glenn Viel will continue to sign the entire menu in the La Première cabin. Viel has created a total of 12 dishes, flying until the end of this month.



Air France showcases the charm of hospitality through gastronomy

Beyond the cuisine, passengers experience French culture through curated amenities, from fine dining tableware to attentive service that embodies the spirit of French hospitality.

Even the airline's new Wi-Fi capabilities, powered by Starlink, were approached with this same emphasis on reliability and quality.

From 2025 onwards, the airline will progressively roll out an ultra-high-speed connectivity service for a "ground-like" experience with Starlink. This new service, completely free of charge in all travel cabins, will be accessible to passengers by logging into their [Flying Blue](#) account. account, the Air France-KLM Group's loyalty program. Those who do not yet have a Flying Blue account can create one free of charge on board and in a few clicks. The service will be accessible for smartphones, digital tablets and laptops simultaneously.

Over time, this Wi-Fi service will be made available on board all the airline's aircraft, replacing the current offer.

"There's a fine line between creating excitement and delivering on promises," Hulsman notes, referencing the meticulous planning behind each new service offering.

The future of luxury in the skies

As Air France continues to invest in innovative offerings across all cabin classes, the airline is redefining what it means to travel in style.

With recent investments in the U.S., including new lounges in San Francisco ([SFO](#)) and Los Angeles ([LAX](#)), Hulsman notes that these spaces serve as gateways to an authentic French experience from

the moment travellers arrive at the airport.

“Our LAX lounge is the biggest project we’ve undertaken,” he shares, “and it sets the stage for the French journey we want our passengers to enjoy long before they board.”

With an unwavering commitment to showcasing the best of French elegance and hospitality, Air France invites passengers of every class to savor the journey. Whether in a private suite, a luxurious lounge, or a carefully crafted meal, every element is designed to make travellers feel the allure of France, reminding them that with Air France, the journey is as memorable as the destination.