

SriLankan Airlines celebrates industry recognition and passenger-focused approach

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Richard Nuttall, CEO, SriLankan Airlines

Flying for 45 years, [SriLankan Airlines](#) has become more than a carrier—it is a symbol of Sri Lanka's spirit and forward-thinking innovation. Marking this milestone anniversary last year, the airline is not just celebrating its past but also its recent PAX Readership Award win. The airline received the award for Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier South Asia at last month's award ceremony.

Dimuthu Tennakoon, Head of Commercial at SriLankan Airlines, shared his thoughts on the win, saying, "A big thank you to everyone who voted for us. We take great care to ensure our onboard

menus are a sensory treat, as food plays a crucial role in shaping the overall flying experience – whether you are a first-time traveller or frequent flyer. We continuously review passenger feedback across different sectors to craft our menus, while guaranteeing that meals are prepped with the freshest ingredients, cater to diverse preferences and dietary needs and feature regular updates. This recognition reaffirms that we have got the recipe right for our onboard food service.”



Aijaz Khan, Publisher of *PAX International* and *PAX Tech* (left), presents the award to Sharadha Senevirathne, Manager Germany of SriLankan Airlines at the PAX Readership Awards ceremony

The SriLankan Airlines inflight menu offers an international flair, with a perfect blend of local cuisine from each market the airline operates in. In its South Asian service, SriLankan presents a choice of meals inspired by the localities within its widespread network spanning India, the Maldives, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. The airline’s passengers from this region can look forward to the familiar tastes of home; from an assortment of biriyani and masala; to Idli, upma, samosas, paratha, chapathi; and traditional curries such as palak paneer, aloo gobi, gobi masala and butter chicken makhani.

A mainstay on every SriLankan Airlines’ flight is the Sri Lankan meal option, featured under its award-winning ‘SriLankan Flavours’ menu. Using heritage recipes and authentic, local ingredients, SriLankan Airlines serves classics such as egg roti with paraw fish curry and crumb fried prawns; dhunthel rice with traditional curries; kuruluthuda heirloom rice with chicken pepper curry and local vegetables; and lamprais.

Charting an exciting course for the future

To commemorate its 45th birthday in 2024, the airline wanted to celebrate right alongside its passengers. On the anniversary date, passengers flying with SriLankan Airlines who were also celebrating their birthdays were treated to delightful surprises on board—and the festivities did not stop there.

"We also gave customers an opportunity to participate in a raffle draw to win an exciting tour of the airline's facilities, including the hangar," SriLankan Airlines CEO Richard Nuttall told *PAX International* this spring.



Aloe vera and pineapple drink for SriLankan Airlines

While anniversary celebrations were a highlight, SriLankan Airlines is also receiving attention for its commitment to sustainability, including its innovative Mathaka upcycling initiative. The project upcycles retired airline items into a unique range of lifestyle products. Through this initiative, the airline has found creative ways to breathe new life into materials that would otherwise be discarded.

"We recently premiered our latest range of Mathaka products, which includes travel bags, tote bags, peg dolls, table runners and mats, and many more exciting items, all beautifully transformed from unusable aircraft seat covers, blankets, curtains, uniforms, wooden air cargo pallets and other items," says Nuttall.

What makes these products truly special is the quality. Despite being upcycled, the materials boast a luxurious feel.

"Although the items we upcycle are no longer usable in our service, the materials themselves retain their premium quality. Cabin textiles, in particular, are selected through stringent quality control processes and often carry original equipment manufacturer approval, giving a luxurious feel even in their second life," says Nuttall.

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Beyond Mathaka, SriLankan Airlines is working on a variety of other sustainability projects too. These efforts include improving energy efficiency at its bases and partnering with Sri Lankan authorities to help restore the country's biodiversity. The airline has also switched to eco-friendly, lightweight carpets and recycled fabric pillow covers and antimacassars onboard.

But the airline recognizes that its responsibility does not end at taking care of the planet—it wants to support its community too.

“Through SriLankan Cares, our CSR arm, we focus on improving the welfare of Sri Lanka’s youth through initiatives in healthcare, education, leadership and skill development,” says Nuttall.

“Additionally, we support economically disadvantaged women and youth with projects like Mathaka and Eco Trailers, which provides training to become eco guides.”



Known for its hospitality, SriLankan Airlines passengers are treated to authentic Sri Lankan cuisine, while the cabin atmosphere is designed to reflect the island's vibrant flora and fauna, offering a sensory experience that brings the spirit of Sri Lanka to the skies

