
PAX reveals 2020 Readership Awards winners

By **PAX International** on March, 30 2020 | Events



To download WINNER logos, click [here](#).

The votes are in! Airline caterers and suppliers from around the world have been honored as the readers of *PAX International* recognize the industry-wide efforts of the past year.

Normally held during Passenger Experience Week in Hamburg, this year's award winners are being announced and recognized in the digital space as a result of the postponement of the [Aircraft Interiors Expo](#) and [World Travel Catering and Onboard Services Expo](#).

PAX International has been covering the cabin services industry since 1997 with print issues, electronic newsletters and a regularly updated website. The publication first hosted the Readership Awards in Bahrain in 2005.

This year, more than 40 airlines, caterers and suppliers are being honored by PAX' readers in several regions, for Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier, Airline Caterer of the Year, Best Inflight Duty Free Program, Best Cabin Interior Experience and Best Lounge. This year, readers also recognize suppliers of airline amenity kits in several categories.

"With the unexpected circumstances during this time, our Readership Awards 2020 are a fantastic success worth celebrating," says Aijaz Khan, Publisher of *PAX International* and *PAX Tech*. "While it's certainly an adjustment to be unable to congratulate all the winners in person, we are looking very forward to connecting at the next big industry event - and of course to celebrating the

accomplishments that are sure to come within the next year.”

“We’re thrilled to be honoring so much of the hard work that unfolded in the last year,” adds Editor-in-Chief Rick Lundstrom. “We extend our biggest thank you to the industry at large for its continued support, and to our valued readership who casted their ballots once again. Congratulations to all.”

2020 PAX Readership Awards Winners

NORTH AMERICA

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNERS: Air Canada and Aeromexico

The first winner, [Air Canada](#) is featured heavily in recent issues of *PAX International* and *PAX Tech*. In addition to being the North American launch customer for the A220-300, Air Canada has opened a new premium lounge at Toronto Pearson International Airport.

Air Canada’s Business Class food product is called Signature Service. It offers a delectable menu with a flair for international cuisine, and the wine selection is curated by award-winning Canadian sommelier Véronique Rivest.

The second winner in North America Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier is [Aeromexico](#). In June of last year, Aeromexico’s Clase Premier service out of Mexico City was revamped by Gate Gourmet featuring culinary masters Christian Hallowell, Gottfried Menge and Dennis Purchet.

Upgrades of Clase Premier include:

- A fourth meal choice served on long-haul flights to Buenos Aires, Santiago, and Sao Paulo
- A sweet option for breakfast
- Artisan handmade pasta and stone oven baked bread to the United States, Canada and Latin America
- Meat, fish and poultry cooked sous-vide to bring food to a perfect temperature, infusing extra flavor with just the right texture

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: Flying Food Group

In North America readers have chosen [Flying Food Group](#) as the Airline Caterer of the Year.

Chicago-based Flying Food Group completed the busiest year of construction and improvements in its long history. In 2019, Flying Food Group spent more than US\$100 million to retrofit and upgrade operations at units from the East Coast to Honolulu, all while prepping for the opening of its new unit in San Francisco later this year.

SOUTH AMERICA

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: LATAM

The Winner for Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier in South America is [LATAM](#). Last spring LATAM Peru’s Boeing 767 – the first of over 200 aircraft – was fitted with new interior and updated inflight experience. The airline has sought to revamp its experience with a redesigned dining concept aimed

to promote rest; new service protocols for cabin crew with fewer interruptions; and, premium bedding and mattresses for every flat-bed seat

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: Gate Gourmet

In South America, this year's Airline Caterer of the year is [Gate Gourmet](#).

Gate Gourmet operates 14 units in nine countries in South America and Central America. Its most recently built is São Paulo's Guarulhos Airport (GRU), Brazil. The facility enables Gate Gourmet to back projected growth following the airport's privatization and expansion through an on-airport facility equipped with state-of-the-art technology and an optimal layout and process flows designed based on gategroup's global best practices.

ASIA

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNERS: Thai Airways and Philippine Airlines

The first Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier winner is [Thai Airways](#).

Thai Airways consistently marks important world holidays and observances with special meal promotions, as well as its continued efforts to deliver what it is very well-known for: authentic Thai cuisine.

THAI's team of chefs accomplish this by using locally sourced ingredients and traditional recipes, resulting in a "wow" factor that consistently impresses passengers. This is especially seen in its dessert selection, which includes several time-honored dishes that are beloved in the airline's home country.

The second winner of Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier for Asia is [Philippine Airlines](#).

Philippine Airlines offers a selection of Western, Filipino and Japanese dishes prepared to the exacting standards. Well-known culinary personalities are regularly invited as guest chefs on board for the airline's Food Festivals in the Sky.

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: SATS Ltd.

It has been a year of acquisition and growth for the Singapore based company. In July, it announced that it has completed its acquisition of 45 percent of the shares of Nanjing Weizhou Airline Food Corp. (TargetCo) through its wholly owned subsidiary SATS China Co Ltd.

Its most recent buy came this year when it acquired Monty's Bakehouse. By combining the culinary expertise of SATS with Monty's' product and packaging innovation, **SATS** intends to enhance its food solutions for aviation customers and support growth of global customer segments.

[SATS Ltd.](#) and [DHL Supply Chain](#) have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to create turnkey solutions that enable airlines to optimize their supply chain for catering, merchandise and supplies across flight networks.

Best Inflight Duty Free Program

WINNER: Korean Air

Asia still has an active industry in inflight duty free sales. And the perpetual leader in the category has

been [Korean Air](#) with its Skyshop catalog and onboard stores on some aircraft. Through Skyshop, Korean Air offers a wide range of duty-free products on all international flights, including cosmetics, perfumes, liquor, fashion goods, pearls, dietary supplements, chocolates, watches, electronics, pens and more. In some cases, the airline changes products on a monthly basis.

Late last year, estimates showed that Korean Air's duty free sales could be as high as US\$135 million, making it the world's most successful inflight retailer.

Best Airport Lounge

WINNER: SASCO's Le Saigonnais Business Lounge at SGN

Featured in the WTCE issue of *PAX International* are the 10 [SASCO Business Lounges](#) by Southern Airports Services Joint Stock Company (SASCO). They are located at Tan Son Nhat (SGN) and Cam Ranh International Airport (CXR).

The SASCO Business Lounges offer a buffet of Asian and European dishes, beverages and seasonal fruits, entertainment, reading material, office facilities, free high-speed Wi-Fi, a quiet break room and a flight notification screen system, among other features. Secluded from the busyness of the airport, the lounges offer a comfortable, private space for stopover travelers.

This year, readers of *PAX International* have voted for Le Saigonnais Lounge at Tan Son Nhat International Departure Terminal, HCMC - Vietnam as the Best Business/First Class Lounge in Asia.

Located on the third floor of Tan Son Nhat International Airport, the Lounge has a classic and refined style, in harmony with the image of old Saigon's architecture and modern touch of decoration.

The service at Le Saigonnais is dedicated for passengers of 15 airline carriers, including: Cathay Pacific, Japan Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Qatar Airways, Finnair, Air China, All Nippon Airways, Asiana Airlines, Eva Air, Singapore Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Thai Airways, Emirates Airlines, Uni Air, Korean Air.

EUROPE

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: TAP Air Portugal

Three winners from Europe were picked by PAX International Readers: one for Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier, One for Airline Caterer of the year and another for Best Lounge

National traditions are front and center in the food and beverage offerings at [TAP Air Portugal](#), picked as this year's winner in Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier.

The carrier has a partnership with renowned Michelin-starred Portuguese chefs who help design the premium meals in Business Class for long- and medium-haul flights. Henrique Sá Pessoa, Ricardo Costa, Rui Paula, Tiago Bonito and TAP's own chef Victor Sobral are ambassadors of the national cuisine served onboard. Menus are changed monthly, and one chef is featured per month, offering a starter, main course and dessert. The wine list exclusively features Portuguese wines, including the famous local port.

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: LSG Sky Chefs

The year 2019 saw the final year of its European operations. However, [LSG Sky Chefs](#) unit in Brussels won a QSAI Award and the company secured extended contracts from airlines on the

continent. LSG Group will continue a presence in the region with its online sales operation Retail inMotion and a partnership with Italian pasta maker Barilla. The LSG Group closed the 2019 financial year with consolidated revenues of €3.4 billion (US\$3.63 billion) and an EBITA profit of €128 million (US\$136.5), an increase of 11 percent over 2018

Best Airport Lounge

WINNER: KLM Heineken Bar non-Schengen Crown Lounge at Amsterdam International Airport

Winner of this year's Best Lounge for Europe is the [KLM Heineken Bar non-Schengen Crown Lounge at Amsterdam International Airport](#). The lounge opened as the airline celebrated its 100th anniversary

A stunning expression of local design and a fantastic customer experience, the bar and lounge also express a genuine local spirit and a unique sense of place, making it more than simply another airport lounge experience.

The lounge opened in November of last year. It is 6,800 square meters with approximately 1,000 full-free-service seats. What's more, there are about 200 exclusive seats in the Blue Bar and Restaurant with equally exclusive levels of service. Customers can pay with their Flying Blue miles there. By doubling the capacity, KLM is taking its expected growth in visitor numbers into account.

SOUTH ASIA

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: SriLankan Airlines

In South Asia there is one winner for Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier. For the past two years, [SriLankan Airlines](#) has been working to improve service and product with some important successes. It's Business Class cabin has seen an increase in load factor by six percent.

Food service has also been improved by bringing aboard specially curated meals by well-known chefs. Now, passengers in Business Class can also access the airline's Sky Cuisine program allowing them to pre-order from a menu of 26 complimentary meals. For a cost, a similar menu is also available for Economy Class.

SriLankan Airlines has its own caterer out of Colombo. Sri Lankan Airlines Catering produces an average of 22,000 meals per day out of the airport.

AUSTRALASIA

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: Qantas Airways

Australasia has produced two winners: Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier and Airline Caterer of the Year.

For more than 20 years [Qantas Airways](#) has been working with the Rockpool Group and its well-known chef Neil Perry. It is the longest partnership of its kind in the industry and is responsible for forging a brand association like none other. Five years ago, Perry brought his Rockpool sommeliers and mixologists onboard too, who are now responsible for the airline's inflight wines and lounge cocktail programs.

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: dnata

The Airline Caterer of the Year for Australasia has been busy establishing its operations throughout Australia. In addition to taking on the units formerly owned by Alpha Flight services, dnata purchased the operations of Q Catering, owned by Qantas in 2018.

Recently [dnata](#) has opened its US\$50 million catering unit in Melbourne and continues vigorous operations at the 11 catering units that were part of its acquisition of Alpha Flight Services. All are now trading under the dnata catering brand. With a total of 15 units now in the country, dnata serves 45 airlines at nine airports with more than 3,000 employees.

AFRICA

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: Ethiopian Airlines

[Ethiopian Airlines](#) has a steady partner in its catering unit in Addis Ababa. The modern and high-tech Ethiopian catering unit has a team of highly trained local and international chefs who curate Ethiopian national dishes for a selection of world cuisines: Chinese, Indian, Ottoman, Italian, halal and many more European dishes. The unit produces breads, cakes, desserts and celebratory cakes. It has the capacity for up to 100,000 meals per day with the existing kitchen capacity.

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: Addis International Catering

Another company based in Addis Ababa is the winner of Airline Caterer of the Year for Africa. [Addis International Catering](#) (AIC) has come a long way since it locked down KLM Royal Dutch Airlines as its first customer in October 2008. Now, it provides service to many airlines touching down at Ethiopia's Addis Adaba Bole International Airport, including Lufthansa, Kenya Airways and Qatar Airways, which has twice granted the unit its top award for service within Africa. AIC has also earned the reputation of being the go-to caterer for VIP services in the region.

MIDDLE EAST

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: Qatar Airways

[Qatar Airways](#) has built a reputation as one of the region's five-star airlines. It operates its own catering operation out of its hub in Doha - which has been recognized for outstanding food safety and has recently launched a program to cut food waste. Qatar Aircraft Catering Company announced it is collaborating with local Qatari charity, Hifz Al Naema, to redistribute surplus food and beverages to good causes in Qatar. The initiative expects to redistribute 200 to 300 kilograms of food and beverage every day, including fruit, cereal, soft drinks, yogurt and chocolate.

Airline Caterer of the Year

WINNER: Emirates Flight Catering

The Airline Caterer of the Year will soon be pioneering a popular cooking method in its home country that will benefit all its customers. [Emirates Flight Catering](#) announced this fall a partnership with Sterling, Washington-DC-based Cuisine Solutions, to form Emirates Cuisine Solutions, giving the caterer the distinction of being the exclusive sous vide supplier in the MENA region. The caterer has also been active in sustainability projects and will supply visitors to Expo 2020 with fresh products

from its nearby vertical gardens.

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

Outstanding Food Service by a Carrier

WINNER: Air Astana

Air Astana boasts a very experienced catering management team, permanently based in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Together with its international catering service providers,, it plans menus according to the specific routes and destinations. This approach helps ensure that the varied ethnic or religious requirements of its passengers are provided for, both to and from every location. Kazakh-style dishes feature mainly on its domestic route menus, and local items, including specialty chocolates, natural fruit bars, cheeses, honey and other fresh fruits and vegetables are used on all flights.

A domestic flight meal is composed of a bakery selection including warm garlic bread, followed by a salad course with rocket lettuce, beetroot, feta and orange; a main course selection of herbed chicken galantine with rosemary-garlic sauce, paprika-spiced baked potato and steamed zucchini; or traditional Kazakh beef and lamb manti with a fresh tomato and herb sauce, steamed greens and baked pumpkin; and for dessert, honey layer cake.

Best Cabin Interior Experience

WINNER: Qatar Airways

PAX International has added an award for Best Cabin Interior Experience. In addition to its Q Suite which has won accolades around the world, the experience on **Qatar Airways** has been enhanced by its new association with Gogo. Qatar Airways will be enhancing the experience on its young fleet and six-continent service this year by taking the first steps to fill out the cabins to 160 worldwide destinations daily with 2Ku high-speed inflight connectivity by Gogo.

The airline is also the launch customer for Gulfstream's recently introduced flagship, the Gulfstream G700TM for its charter service, Qatar Executive. The new aircraft brings an unprecedented combination of performance, technology and cabin size to Qatar Executive's fleet.

2020 Amenity Kit Award winners

AMERICAS

First Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: WESSCO International for American Airlines

The classic style pouch is made of plush vegan leather and comes in a series of colors - black, blue, brown, or beige. They feature a This Is Ground (TIG) logo and are secured shut by a zipper or snap closure.

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: FORMIA for Aeromexico

Two unique kits in collaboration with luxury brand **ETRO** - a spacious, colorful cosmetics bag and an elegant, navy blue pouch - one style each for outbound and inbound flights. The bags feature ETRO's chic signature Paisley pattern fabric lining.

Premium Economy/Economy Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: WESSCO International for Hawaiian Airlines

The lightweight slender PET-felt pouch is comfortable to the touch. It features a bamboo tag with a coral print on the side and information about the design concept by local brand [Kealopiko](#) on the reverse.

Children's Amenity Kit

WINNER: [Kaelis](#) for [Air Canada](#)

Air Canada is offering two different Kids' kits for young passengers. Both kits are fun and have lots of activities to engage children during their flights. All the products are personalized with PAX, Air Canada's fun character, who will be a faithful friend opening the doors to a world of imagination on all flights.

CENTRAL AMERICAS

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [WESCO International](#) for [Copa Airlines](#)

The new comfy and spacious Copa Airlines amenity kit features a fresh and striking Americas motif.

MIDDLE EAST

First Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [Buzz Products](#) for [Etihad Airways](#)

Extending its successful partnership, Etihad launched updated kits featuring iconic Italian brand [Acqua Di Parma](#) for customers travelling in the airline's flagship First Class. The redesigned bag features a stylish new shaped kit in black.

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [Albea Travel Designer](#) for [Middle East Airlines](#)

The sleek design and simple, yet stylish look of the kit mirrors the elegant simplicity of Lebanese style. It is adorned with simple touches - the MEA logo and the Lebanese cedar tree, adding a sense of loyalty and patriotism.

Premium economy / Economy Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [Bayart Innovations](#) for [Turkish Airlines](#)

The new Turkish Airlines long-haul Economy Class amenity kits, immerse the passenger in traditional Turkish art. Available in a range of six patterns, the designs were directly inspired by ornamental motifs. They promote and respect the spirit of classical Turkish decorative arts. The kits include traditional comfort items such as eyeshade, slippers, earplugs, socks, [Human+Kind](#) lip balm, dental kit with [White Glo toothpaste](#), plus an information card reviewing the origins of the motifs.

ASIA

First Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [FORMIA](#) for [Thai Airways](#)

Thai Airways has teamed up with [Porsche Design](#) to create an amenity kit that lives up to the brand's elite status. The kits are made in high quality hardcase material and come in three colors; white, blue and black. Durable, sleek and covetable.

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: FORMIA for [Philippine Airlines](#)

The inner lining pattern is created exclusively to match the Philippine Airlines brand, with an elegantly branded Furla zip. This luxurious navy-blue bag is the perfect travel companion for the Business Class passenger looking to fly with style.

Premium Economy / Economy Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [Clip](#) for [EVA Air](#)

The kit features the brand's iconic crinkled fabric and monkey mascot and will be introduced in multiple collectible colors and styles. Made possible with [Kipling](#), the kits are curated to look and feel valuable, fun and reflect the airlines and the brand's DNA.

AUSTRALASIA

First Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: SPIRIANT for Qantas

[SPIRIANT](#) and renowned Australian fashion designer, Martin Grant, redesigned [Qantas'](#) First Class amenity kits. The luxurious kits and eyeshades are made of a chambray material. The male kit is in a navy cotton. The female Bordeaux kit has an extended zipper-puller in the form of a wristlet to add a subtle feminine touch to the bag design.

Premium and Economy Amenity Kit

WINNER: [GlobalC](#) for [Jetstar Airways](#)

Designed with environmental responsibility in mind, Jetstar's comfort pack includes all travel essentials. Contents are packed in a non-branded reusable cotton tote bag, to increase longevity post-flight, secured neatly with a sustainable paper band.

EUROPE

First Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [skysupply](#) for [Lufthansa German Airlines](#)

The [Van Laack](#) bag with its clear, yet luxurious design, comes in three different shapes and four colors: blue and brown for men, beige and silver for women. The exclusive material and its pleasant touch underlines the elegance of the collection.

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [Kaelis](#) for [Air Europa](#)

This new sophisticated amenity kit is designed in a classy style, made with the highest quality soft-touch velvet leather material in a neutral grey tone, ideal for a unisex bag. The bag is perfect for traveling and can also be reused after the flight.

WINNER: [AK-Service](#) for [Rossiya Airline](#)

The tablet case, which successfully combines practicality, convenience and style, is made in the corporate colors of the airline and contains everything needed for a convenient flight of any duration.

Premium Economy Class

WINNER: [Galileo Watermark](#) for [Iberia](#)

The kits feature a rotation of vibrant linings and are made of a melange polo body but have a PU base to stop them getting wet when in use in washrooms. They include a dental kit with toothpaste from 9

Spanish brand Foramen, ear plugs in a reusable case, eye mask and socks. The final pack off for the kits is done at a social enterprise company in Madrid that work with adults with learning difficulties.

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: AK-Service for [Uzbekistan Airways](#)

This year, the laconic cosmetic bags, in elegant black for men and bright red for women, are designed with high attention to details, and contain everything passengers need during a flight.

Business Class Amenity Kit

WINNER: [FORMIA](#) for [Air Astana](#)

This delightful new range features a variety of beautifully designed colors and forms for men and women which reflect the elegant style associated with the two brands, [Bric's](#) and [Radley](#).