

Guest column: En Route International's fromage to flight

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Tailored, sustainable packaging solutions—ranging from bulk formats to single-serve portions—maintain quality, streamline service and align with each cabin's operational needs

In this guest column, Georgina Mogridge, Head of Category Development at [En Route International](#), addresses the company's reputation for delivering a comprehensive cheese program.



Georgina Mogridge, Head of Category Development, En Route International

With more than 21 years of operation in the airline sector, En Route has carved a reputation of consistently delivering well-executed, insight-led solutions across our core areas of expertise: passenger solutions, sourcing and supply chain services.

More than ten years ago, we launched our Cheese Program—an end-to-end airline and airline caterer service that delivers best-in-class cheese across key routes, globally. The program itself is not just about getting cheese on board; it is much more than that.

Brie-lliant collaboration

A lot of our work on a dedicated cheese program often begins before a customer brief is received. Our teams continually assess products that can offer a distinctive point of difference. These may stand out through the flavor profile, origin, product format or suitability for airline service. Some are identified with particular customers in mind or based on an understanding of specific brand or cabin needs. This allows us to respond quickly and accurately when opportunities arise.

This early-stage development is supported by structured research into global food and hospitality trends. We review developments not only in aviation but also in retail and food service to understand how trends are being applied, for example in product design, pricing structures, packaging and passenger preferences. This is complemented by secondary research drawn from global industry reports, enabling us to benchmark category performance and anticipate potential constraints in supply, cost or product availability.

We also conduct primary research to capture direct consumer feedback. Passenger panels are used to evaluate both early concepts and nearly finished products. This includes gathering insight on packaging functionality, flavor balance and visual presentation. These findings are then combined with broader demographic data, helping to identify specific drivers of satisfaction for various passenger groups. Integrating this passenger insight with wider trend analysis results in a more informed and targeted approach to cheese selection and presentation.

Our sourcing is built on long-term relationships with cheesemakers and suppliers. We regularly visit

supplier sites and production facilities, and we work closely with producers on matters such as maturity specification for premium cabin cheeses or the development of custom recipes. In some cases, this results in products that are entirely bespoke.



Cheese has been central to En Route for nearly a decade, settings it program apart in the marketplace

From cut to cabin

Product selection includes extensive sampling and evaluation. Each cheese is assessed not only on taste and quality but on its alignment with the intended passenger experience, which may vary depending on cabin class. We also ensure the final selection is operationally viable, with consideration given to cut size, handling, shelf life and service practicality.

Our internal technical specialists play an important role in this process. They support supplier partners from farm level through to final packaging, ensuring that all products meet our standards for quality and consistency. This includes developing packaging solutions tailored to different service formats in a range of different packaging which, where possible, are made using recyclable materials. For example, we offer both bulk packaging for plating at the catering unit and single-serve formats for premium cabins. All solutions are designed to be practical for crew or catering teams while supporting sustainability objectives.

We also use precision cutting and packing technology that allows cheeses to be delivered pre-portioned to specific dimensions. This reduces the need for onboard or in-unit cutting, helping caterers manage yields more efficiently. The cutting process is tailored to the characteristics of each cheese to maintain structural integrity and presentation. Customers may choose a fixed selection or

opt into a rotation program that introduces seasonal variety.

Logistically, our supply chain is designed to support efficient and reliable distribution across global locations. This includes the Middle East and Asia, where we provide fully prepared products that are ready for plating and service. For customers preferring to receive whole cheeses, we also manage international sourcing and shipping, ensuring products reach caterers in a compliant and stable condition.



From Economy to First Class, En Route designs cheese offerings and pairings that enhance the passenger experience while meeting culinary and operational standards

Culture at the core

Our investment in internal capability development is ongoing, with many team members undertaking formal training through the Academy of Cheese. We also engage with the wider industry by participating in professional events, including the International Cheese and Dairy Awards. These activities help us remain informed about product innovation and maintain a high level of technical expertise, as well as touch base with our existing partners and network with new market entrants.

When designing the cheese offer itself, we consider the complete experience, not just the product in isolation. For Economy cabins, this may involve a high-quality cheese portion paired with a simple cracker. In short and long-haul services, we may propose a boxed solution containing multiple cheeses and accompaniments. In Business Class, we explore regional pairing options, such as Cinco Lanzas cheese served with smoked almonds or quince paste. In First Class, we work with artisan producers to source small-batch products that reflect exclusivity and refinement. These are paired with high-quality accompaniments developed specifically for inflight service, ensuring they meet both culinary and operational requirements.

Once a program is live, we remain engaged through regular monitoring. We conduct post-launch reviews and random product sampling, using quality attribute sheets to ensure that performance remains consistent throughout shelf life and across routes. Where relevant, we also support airline teams with training sessions and product demonstrations. These are designed to help chefs and crew understand the characteristics of the cheeses and present them with confidence.

We also offer pairing support for both inflight dining and customer events. Our pairing combinations are developed to provide balanced flavors and complementary textures, adding depth to the passenger experience and encouraging interaction with the product.

The development and execution of a cheese course may appear straightforward at first glance. In practice, it involves a complex set of considerations that must be balanced, from customer expectations and operational realities to passenger preferences. At En Route, we treat this complexity as an opportunity to add value and apply the same discipline and strategic thinking that guide all areas of our business.