

Passenger Service Emirates Airline

Emirates

When Emirates Airline was launched in 1985, the government of the United Arab Emirates elected to pursue a policy of open skies that set the benchmark for the carrier's survival: It simply had to be among the best. Over the years it has lived up to that standard, earning a reputation that extends far beyond its Dubai base.

In 1992 Emirates became the first airline to install personal video systems in all seats in all classes throughout its fleet. This was followed by inflight phones in 1993 and fax machines in 1994. In 1996 it introduced the 777, offering 17 audiovisual channels and 22 audio channels of entertainment to passengers. With the introduction of the A330-200 in 1999 it went a step further, equipping its business- and first-class seats with individual video players and an onboard film library.

Seats also receive close attention, and although Emirates has adopted a high-density cross-section in economy, this is offset with 2 in. more legroom than at its competitors. The economy meal is a five-course affair, including aperitifs before dinner and after-dinner liqueurs. Economy passengers also have fax facilities, telephones, laptop computer recharging capability and up to nine multilingual and exceedingly gracious cabin staff.

Further forward the airline produces what is considered one of the best medium-haul business-class products in the industry, with the only missing element, lie-flat

seatbeds, entering the fleet this year on its new A340-500s.

Business-class passengers get a six-course meal served on Royal Doulton bone china with a choice of six award-winning wines and champagne. They can enjoy movies on high-definition 10.4-in. individual screens, picking from a library of 50 films. Complimentary chauffeur pickup and dropoff

are offered at selected airports, as are free domestic flights to UK departure airports and free mobile phones for 21 days at London Gatwick and Heathrow.

In first class the pampering just gets better. Champagne, fresh fruit juices, Arabic coffee and dates are served prior to departure. Hot canapes or mixed nuts accompany aperitifs prior to the main meal, which is eight courses of indulgence selected from leather-bound menus.

On the ground, Emirates' new first and business class lounges at Sheikh Rashid Terminal in Dubai feature showers, bedrooms, TV rooms, marble and polished wood floors, leather seats, massage chairs and an extensive selection of hot and cold food, beverages plus free Internet access.

This is the second time *ATW* has recognized Emirates for its outstanding passenger service. With the launch of flights to North America with its A340-500s coming in the near future, US passengers will have an opportunity to learn what *ATW* readers long have known: This is one world-class airline.

