



National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce
الغرفة التجارية العربية الأمريكية الوطنية

ETIHAD AIRWAYS LAUNCHES NEW NON-STOP SERVICE BETWEEN ABU DHABI AND WASHINGTON, DC

In Serving the Nation's Capital, Etihad Opens the Door to the 2nd Largest U.S. Market Flying to the Middle East

U.S.-Arab Chamber Participates in Gala Launch Event at the Andrew Mellon Auditorium in Washington, DC

Etihad Airways, based in the United Arab Emirates, has just launched its latest non-stop route to the United States: from Abu Dhabi to Dulles International Airport seven days a week. Washington DC joins Chicago and New York as Etihad's third destination in the United States.



Etihad's launch of its third non-stop flight to the U.S. was announced by James Hogan, Etihad President and CEO (center); H.E. Yousef Al Otaiba, UAE ambassador to the U.S. (right), and John E. Potter, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority President and CEO.

The inaugural flight took place on March 31, and touched down to a traditional water cannon salute at the Dulles International Airport. Senior representatives of Etihad Airways, the U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi, and the UAE Embassy in Washington took part in the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Dulles, including Hon. Michael Corbin, U.S. Ambassador to the UAE, H.E. Omar Al Shamsi, Deputy Chief of Mission at the UAE Embassy, and James Hogan, Etihad Airways' President and Chief Executive Officer.

As part of the launch celebrations, a dinner was held on April 2 at the Andrew Mellon Auditorium in Washington DC. Hosted by H.E. Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE's Ambassador to the United States, and James Hogan, President & CEO of Etihad Airways, the dinner attracted more than 400 VIPs from America's public and private sector – including the National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC), which was represented by Mr. Amin Salam, NUSACC's Vice President for Business Development.

Ambassador Al Otaiba noted, "Etihad's direct route between Abu Dhabi and Washington DC is not just a travel route or a direct flight; it is a link for commerce, trade, culture and tourism, connecting the UAE with the United States. The objective is facilitating connections between our two nations to better serve our mutual interests and to strengthen cooperation."



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“The Washington DC area is privileged to welcome Etihad Airways, and this new route will help to build a direct air bridge to Abu Dhabi, an increasingly important destination for U.S. companies looking to do business in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region,” said David Hamod, President & CEO of the National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce. “Etihad was named ‘World’s Leading Airline’ by World Travel Awards for four years in a row, and we look forward to adding Etihad to the growing list of airlines that are serving this important market.” Etihad Airways joins Delta Airlines, Emirates Airline, Qatar Airways, Saudi Arabian Airlines, and United Airlines in providing nonstop flights from Washington Dulles to the Arab world.

James Hogan, Etihad Airways’ President and Chief Executive Officer, noted, “Government and corporate customers in both markets have given us strong indication that the Abu Dhabi – Washington route can support a daily service from day one.” The Washington metropolitan area represents the second largest U.S. market for international travel to the Middle East, and this new route will be a welcome addition for business and leisure travelers to the region. Daniel Barranger, Etihad Airways’ Vice President for Global Sales, announced, “This route is vital to supporting our ongoing growth in the U.S. and the increasing ties between the U.S. and the United Arab Emirates.”

NUSACC’s Amin Salam added, “We are proud to celebrate Etihad's direct route between Abu Dhabi and Washington DC, and our Chamber is committed to supporting the efforts of Etihad Airways in Washington DC and the broader United States. Our offices in California, New York, Texas, Utah, and Washington DC will be working closely with the Etihad team to assist them in numerous U.S. markets to make their mission a success.”

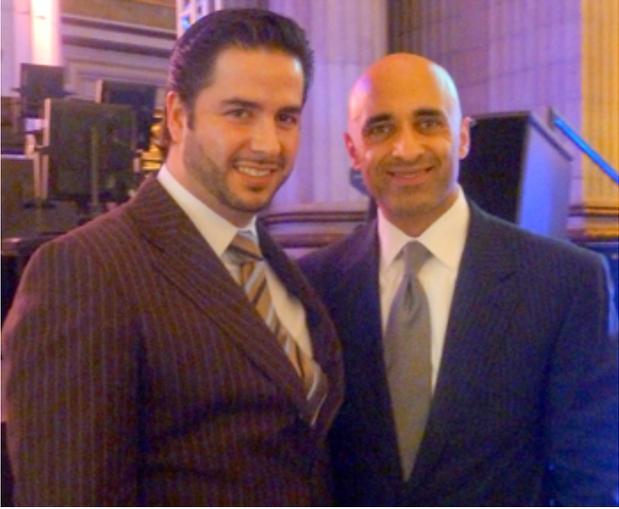
Etihad Airways, created in 2003, is the national carrier of the United Arab Emirates. The UAE — with 33 passenger and cargo airlines — has one of the largest and best run air transport industries in the world. The United Arab Emirates is already home to some of the busiest airports in the MENA region, and the new Al Maktoum International Airport between Dubai and Abu Dhabi is intended to handle passenger capacity of up to 160 million people per year and an annual cargo capacity of 12 million tons.



Officials taking part in the Etihad Airways ribbon-cutting ceremony at Dulles Int'l Airport included: (left to right) Geert Boven, Etihad Airways SVP, Americas; Shaeb Al Najjar, Etihad Airways Airport Mgr; Jack Potter, CEO, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority; James Hogan, Etihad Airways President & CEO; H.E. Omar Al Shamsi, Deputy Chief of Mission, UAE Embassy in Washington; The Honorable Michael Corbin, U.S. Ambassador to the UAE; Peter Baumgartner, Etihad Airways CCO; and Haitham Al Subaihi, Etihad Airways VP Sales, Mid Atlantic.



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His Excellency Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba, UAE Ambassador to the United States (right) and Amin Salam, VP for Business Development, NUSACC (left) at the Inauguration Gala of Etihad Airways' - Abu Dhabi - Washington, DC direct flight.

The UAE's "open skies" policy and that nation's commitment to serve as a hub for the world helps to ensure continued expansion. In 2012, the UAE alone accounted for 7 percent of total U.S. civilian aircraft exports, and aerospace products are expected to be the leading U.S. export for years to come. According to Danny Sebright, President of the U.S.-UAE Business Council, "Commercial aviation has emerged as a sector ripe for domestic capacity-building and is viewed by Abu Dhabi and the UAE more broadly as a key to much-desired diversification away from an oil-centric economy." He added, "The airline is transparently executing its growth strategy through the tactical cultivation of international strategic partnerships. These accords are fueling the airline's rapid expansion by providing the company with access to world-class aircraft, parts, and a growing international customer base. Increasingly, these partnerships cover all sectors of the commercial aviation industry."

In 2008, the UAE created the National Council for Tourism and Antiquities to boost that nation's attractiveness as a tourism destination and to serve to align each emirate's tourism strategy. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi is helping to drive this process with its Vision 2030 strategic plan and tens of billions of dollars in new projects. Abu Dhabi's plan to build a \$621 million branch of the world-renowned Louvre museum will break ground in 2013, as will a branch of New York's Guggenheim Museum. These museums and New York University will be among the first institutions constructed on Saadiyat Island, a \$27 billion culture and arts development that features a world-class golf course and luxury housing.

The United Arab Emirates has been the Arab world's leading importer of U.S. goods and services since 2005, and that ranking is not likely to change anytime soon. According to research conducted by the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, U.S. exports of goods



James Hogan, Etihad President and CEO, announces the launch of Etihad's third U.S. - Abu Dhabi non-stop flight to Washington Dulles International Airport.



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and services are on track to grow to \$53.9 billion by 2015, a reflection of the UAE's continuing commitment to serve as a trading hub for the world. As a geographical meeting point of three continents — and a key freight connection point for the U.S., Europe, Asia and Africa — the UAE positions itself as a “plug and play” trade solution for the world.

In 2012, according to U.S. Government statistics, the United Arab Emirates imported \$22.57 billion in goods from the United States, a 41.9 percent increase over 2011. The top three import sectors were Transportation Equipment (\$10.51 billion), Computer & Electronic Products (\$2.58 billion), and Non-Electrical Machinery (\$1.86 billion).

In the past year, the United Arab Emirates – led by Abu Dhabi and Dubai – has sent a number of delegations to the United States to conduct “road shows” that highlight business opportunities in the UAE. In a recent five-city trade mission around the United States organized by the U.S. Consulate in Dubai and supported by NUSACC, for example, Under Secretary of Commerce Francisco Sánchez provided remarks underlining the viability and strength of the U.S.–UAE economic relationship. “The partnership between the United States and the United Arab Emirates is defined by progress and potential,” he said. “Every day, American businesses export products and services that are helping to fuel economic growth in the UAE, benefiting the people and economies of both countries.”

Concluding that visit, NUSACC's David Hamod noted, “It is important -- now more than ever -- for America and our partner countries in the Arab world to highlight the strength and vast potential of bilateral economic relationships underpinning U.S.–Arab relations. It is evident that the UAE is getting its message across exceptionally well, setting a high standard for the rest of the region.”

According to Etihad Airways, travelers are in for a treat with that airline's newest non-stop flight. “Our offering today is the result of tireless and constant innovation and significant investment,” said Aubrey Tiedt, Etihad Airways' Vice President for Guest Services. “In creating our guest experience, we look outside the regular parameters of the airline industry, benchmarking instead against the leading hotels and restaurants of the world. This means we have a completely different approach to onboard service. Our staff are trained to be hospitality experts; but more than this, they understand that caring for each individual is fundamental to differentiating our guest experience, on the ground and in the air.”



Etihad Airways' inaugural flight EY131 touched down at Dulles International Airport with a traditional water cannon salute.