

# Air Europa Launches Operations in the Middle East with First Flight from Abu Dhabi in Partnership with Etihad Airways

*The Spanish airline makes its debut in the UAE and strengthens its international expansion strategy through wet lease and codeshare agreements*

WASHINGTON, WA, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Air Europa has launched its first-ever operation in the Middle East, departing from Abu Dhabi to Madrid, marking a major milestone in its alliance with Etihad Airways and further cementing its strategy for global growth and long-haul network development.

The flight, operated under a wet lease agreement using a Boeing 787-9

Dreamliner, represents a significant expansion of the long-standing partnership between the two carriers, which already includes codeshare operations and joint frequent flyer benefits. The collaboration enhances global connectivity and offers seamless travel options across four continents.

Etihad Airways now operates two daily flights to Madrid, with the new evening service, flight EY103, operated by Air Europa. The aircraft features 32 Business Class seats and 307 in Economy, ensuring an enhanced passenger experience. The agreement supports the growing travel demand between Abu Dhabi and Spain, bolstering both tourism and commercial ties between the two nations.

This partnership is more than operational; it is a reputational move that reflects a shared commitment to excellence, trust, and international cooperation in commercial aviation.

"Today marks a new chapter in our partnership with Air Europa. Together, we unlock exciting opportunities for travelers eager to explore new destinations across Europe and Latin America,"



Air Europa Launches Operations in the Middle East

said Antonoaldo Neves, CEO of Etihad Airways.

Juan José Hidalgo, President of Air Europa, emphasized the significance of this milestone for the Spanish carrier:

"Our partnership with Etihad Airways and the launch of our first Middle East route from Abu Dhabi marks a transformational moment for Air Europa. This operation positions us to serve the growing demand between Spain, Latin America, and the dynamic markets of Asia and the Middle East. Etihad's global hub is the perfect springboard for our international expansion."

The alliance also advances Etihad's mission to establish Abu Dhabi as a premier global hub for both leisure and business travel, while reinforcing its strategic ties with key European markets like Spain.

Through this expanded partnership, Air Europa and Etihad Airways now provide travelers with access to over 130 destinations through their combined networks. This collaboration aligns with Air Europa's long-term goal of strengthening its leadership between Europe and Latin America, while expanding into Asia and the Middle East.

Both airlines remain committed to deepening their joint ventures, with the wet lease operation laying the groundwork for future strategic initiatives. These include enhanced commercial activity and expanded bilateral cooperation, all aimed at delivering improved connectivity, elevated service, and sustainable growth.

#### About Air Europa

Founded in 1986, Air Europa is a Spanish airline and proud member of the SkyTeam alliance. Its fleet of 54 aircraft, including Boeing 787 Dreamliners and 737s, is among the most modern and efficient in the industry. Based at Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport, Air Europa connects over 55 destinations worldwide. The airline is widely recognized for its punctuality, operational excellence, digital innovation, and strong commitment to sustainability and decarbonization.

#### About Etihad Airways

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, was established in 2003 and has quickly become one of the world's leading carriers. Headquartered in Abu Dhabi, it serves passenger and cargo destinations across the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America. Through its network of codeshare partners, Etihad offers global access to hundreds of cities. The airline has received numerous awards for its premium service, loyalty program, and sustainability initiatives.

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