

Etihad, Emirates ranked among world's safest airlines

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 13 January, 2026



Dhaka: Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways has been named the world's safest full-service airline for 2026 by AirlineRatings, placing the UAE carrier at the top of a global list of 320 airlines assessed for safety, operations, and product standards, reports Gulf News on January 13.

Dubai's flagship carrier, Emirates, ranked fifth on AirlineRatings' list, with Dubai-based flydubai also featuring in the Top 25 in its category, highlighting the UAE's growing influence in global aviation safety and operations. Regional heavyweight Qatar Airways also featured on the list.

The annual rankings are seen as a key benchmark for airline safety worldwide. The AirlineRatings methodology looks at a range of factors, including incident rates adjusted for total flights, fleet age, serious incidents, pilot training, and international safety audits.

For 2026, greater emphasis was placed on turbulence prevention, which remains the leading cause of in-flight injuries. Airlines' participation in the IATA Turbulence Aware program and onboard safety audits also played a key role.

AirlineRatings said this is the first time a Gulf airline has ranked in the number one position in its full-service airline safety rankings.

Etihad was ranked ahead of major global carriers, including Cathay Pacific, Qantas, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Virgin Atlantic, ANA, and British Airways.

According to AirlineRatings, Etihad achieved the top position due to its young fleet, strong cockpit safety systems, excellent turbulence management, crash-free history, and the lowest incident rate per flight among all airlines on the list.

The airline also took part in an independent onboard safety audit and demonstrated strong adherence to cabin safety and turbulence procedures.

Top Low-Cost Airlines

The top 25 Safest Low-Cost Airlines for 2026 include Jetstar, Scoot, easyJet, Wizz Air Group, Ryanair, AirAsia, and Southwest.

AirlineRatings said airlines operating fewer than 25 aircraft were excluded from the assessment to ensure consistency while evaluating high-frequency operators.

"Notable changes this year include the inclusion of Spring Airlines China, the first Chinese airline to appear on any of our rankings, and AirBaltic, which has made a significant jump into the top 10," said AirlineRatings chief executive Sharon Petersen.

"HK Express claimed the top accolade for a second time, driven by a modern fleet, an exceptionally low incident rate, and an almost flawless onboard safety audit," said Petersen.

K