

Emirates lands in Tel Aviv

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Emirates touched down in Tel Aviv on its first ever service into Israel, operated with its latest Boeing 777 'game-changer' aircraft.

Reflecting the importance of this new air transport link, the high-profile delegation onboard the inaugural flight included: His Excellency Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy; His Excellency Mohamed Al Khaja, UAE Ambassador to Israel; His Excellency Amir Hayek, Israeli Ambassador to UAE; Mr Waleed Al Naqbi, Senior Administrator – Coordination & Follow up, UAE Ministry of Economy; Mr Richard Mintz, Advisor to the UAE Ambassador in the United States; Mr Ahmad AlMarri, Dubai Economy and Tourism, Head of Region – GCC & Mena International Operations; Mr Abdulhamied Seddiqi, Vice Chairman at Seddiqi Holding; and Mr Ross Kriel, Director at Kosher Arabia.

Emirates executives onboard included: Mr Adel Al Redha, Chief Operating Officer; Dr Abdulla Al Hashimi, Divisional Senior Vice President, Group Security; Mr Adil Al Ghaith, Senior Vice President, Commercial Gulf, Middle East & Central Asia; Mr David Broz, Vice President Aeropolitical and Industry Affairs; and Mr Jeffrey Van Haeften, Vice President Global Cargo Global Sales and Commercial.

Emirates flight EK931 was welcomed by Ben Gurion Airport with a water cannon salute, drawing an audience of travellers, aviation fans and guests from across the industry to watch the arrival of the airline's first service. On touchdown, the VIP delegation was welcomed by Ms Merav Michaeli, Israel's Minister of Transport and Road Safety.

After the welcome ceremony, Emirates showcased the interiors of its latest Boeing 777' game-changer's aircraft to government officials and guests. The aircraft features the world's first fully-enclosed First Class suites with virtual windows and room service, offering the ultimate in luxury and privacy, plus many more thoughtful touches to ensure customer comfort across all cabin classes. Emirates will subsequently operate its three-class Boeing 777-300ER on the Dubai-Tel Aviv route, offering eight private suites in First Class, 42 lie flat seats in Business Class and 304 spacious seats in Economy Class for the daily service.

Israel's Minister of Transport and Road Safety MK Merav Michaeli said: "The ties between Israel and the UAE are strategic economic ties and are critical to strengthening our position in face of the changing threats in the Middle East. On my last visit to the UAE, I signed agreements that will facilitate the trade and mobility between us, mobility as a tool to empower the citizens and economies of both countries.

"The step we are marking today is far beyond aviation, it is an important political step that blurs the physical boundaries between us and strengthens our mutual commitment."

Adel Al Redha, Emirates Chief Operating Officer said: "We are excited about the launch of Tel Aviv service which adds to our growing network. From the time we first announced plans to include \Tel Aviv in our global reservation systems, we received strong demand from travellers - not only in Israel, but also from many of our destinations including to and from the UAE. Some of the high demand also came from Australia, Indonesia, Brazil, the United States, and the Philippines. This reflects the strength of our product offering, the reach of our global network and the efficiency of our hub Dubai for worldwide connections. Our new service will provide tourism, trade and business opportunities.

"We look forward to welcoming our customers to experience Emirates' product on ground and on board, as well as enjoy a unique experience across all classes. We take this opportunity to thank our friends and partners for supporting the launch of the service."

Emirates' flight schedules to and from Tel Aviv have been timed to provide convenient access to Dubai, and connections to popular destinations like Australia, the Philippines, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

In addition, Emirates' codeshare partnership with flydubai offers travellers even more choices when they connect in Dubai, unlocking access to the combined network of both carriers which span 210 destinations in 100 countries.

Travellers looking for well-curated, premium travel packages to Dubai and other popular Emirates destinations at great value can also book their vacation with Emirates Holidays to enjoy a one-stop personalized travel solution.

The strong bilateral relations between the UAE and Israel are evident in the rise of the number of businesses that have been set up after the signing of the historic Abraham Accords. Currently, over 500 Israeli companies operate in the UAE, and trade between the UAE and Israel is expected to reach USD \$2 billion by the end of this year.*

The new Emirates service will help nurture further business and tourism links. By providing vital connectivity with its extensive global network, the new Dubai-Tel Aviv route will support both countries in advancing their economic cooperation across a number of fields, including technology, health, education, investment,

among others.

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