

## **Etihad adds more Italy flights amid travel boom**

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Etihad Airways is experiencing strong growth in travel demand between Italy and Abu Dhabi, supporting Abu Dhabi's tourism ambitions and strengthening broader commercial and cultural ties between Italy and the UAE.

Jurriaan Stelder, SVP Network, Alliances and Industry Affairs, Etihad Airways, said: "The consistent growth we're seeing from the Italian market highlights Abu Dhabi's appeal as both a destination and global hub.

Italian travellers are responding well to our offering, with steady demand across both leisure and business segments.

This connectivity is strengthening tourism and supporting deeper ties across trade, culture and investment."

Italy has emerged as one of Etihad's fastest-growing European markets,

with travel between Italy and Abu Dhabi increasing by 76pc compared to 2023. This reflects the growing appeal of the UAE capital as a destination for Italian visitors.

This sustained demand has prompted Etihad to increase frequencies to triple-daily flights between Milan Malpensa Airport and Abu Dhabi, and double-daily flights from Rome Fiumicino Airport, providing Italian travellers with convenient options to visit Abu Dhabi.

The third daily frequency on Milan will be operated by Etihad's new Airbus A321LR, offering a premium experience that includes a dedicated First class cabin, fully lie-flat Business seats, high-speed Wi-Fi, and an enhanced onboard dining service.

This aircraft brings Etihad's signature long-haul comfort to short- and medium haul travel, further elevating the travel experience for Italian guests.

From November, Etihad will be offering more than 10,000 weekly seats between Italy and Abu Dhabi per direction, representing an 80pc capacity increase compared to November 2023.

The number of premium seats available will double to more than 1,000 per week, responding to increased demand in this segment.

The airline continues to strengthen its presence in Italy through strategic partnerships. Through our partners ITA Airways and Trenitalia, travellers can travel from 14 domestic airports and 31 railway stations across Italy to connect to Etihad's flights from Rome and Milan.

This builds on the successful codeshare partnership with ITA Airways which was established in December 2021, enabling enhanced connectivity between the UAE and Italy.

Italian travellers are embracing Etihad's Abu Dhabi Stopover programme, which offers complimentary hotel stays for up to two nights, allowing visitors to experience Abu Dhabi's cultural attractions, pristine beaches, and world-class entertainment venues. Stopover bookings from the Italian market have grown by 92pc since 2024.

As demand from the Italian market continues to grow, Etihad is positioned to accommodate increasing passenger numbers with its

current schedule.

"The solid performance of our Italy routes reflects Abu Dhabi's position as both a destination for Italian travellers and a convenient global hub," said Stelder.

"This growth supports tourism while building long-term value through deeper ties with one of our most important European markets, added stelder.

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