

Etihad eyes 18m passengers by 2025

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Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways aims to reach 18 million passengers by 2025, expanding its global network to connect key markets, according to a top official.

Group CEO Antonoaldo Neves told also known as WAM, that the airline's plan for the upcoming year also encompasses providing more choices to travelers.

Neves noted that the airline's strategy will include augmenting flights to key international markets via Etihad's global network with the objective to initiate a sustainable growth phase.

In an interview with WAM, Neves revealed that Etihad Airways is set to introduce several new destinations this year. Notably, Boston will become its fourth station in the US, operating four weekly flights starting March 31.

Furthermore, transit to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, will commence operations from May 1.

Earlier in January, the airline added two new destinations in the Indian subcontinent: Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala. This brings the total number of stations served by Etihad Airways in India to 10.

Additionally, there will be an increase in the number of flights to various destinations, including Cairo with 21 weekly flights, Colombo with seven, Islamabad with 14, and the Maldives with 14 flights.

Neves said: “In addition to launching new destinations, we are working on increasing frequencies to our daily destinations in North America, Europe, Asia, the Gulf region, and the Indian subcontinent.”

Highlighting Etihad Airways’ improved financial position compared to 2017, the CEO stated that the company witnessed a 30 percent growth in the number of passengers in 2023 compared to the previous 12 months.

He emphasized the airline has laid out a long-term plan to reach 30 million customers per year, which is three times the number processed in 2022.

Neves explained that Etihad’s network will expand to over 125 destinations, leveraging its strategic geographic location connecting Asia and Europe.

Regarding the current fleet size, the CEO said: “In 2017, our fleet peaked at 110 aircraft, and we worked on reducing the fleet size between 2019 and 2022. Today, we are witnessing the return of our large aircraft such as the Airbus A380, Boeing 787, and Boeing 777, resulting in an increase in our fleet to 86 aircraft, and we expect it to reach a total of 160 aircraft by 2030.”

Neves pointed out that the new Terminal A at Abu Dhabi International Airport is a crucial cornerstone in the company’s growth strategy, with the capacity to accommodate up to 45 million passengers annually.

The terminal offers dedicated check-in facilities for Economy class guests of Etihad, along with exclusive areas for Business and First-Class travelers.

