

ITA airways to join Star alliance by 2026

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Italy's national carrier, ITA Airways, has officially received approval to join the world's largest airline network, Star Alliance, following a decision by the aviation partnership's Chief Executive Board.

The approval from the CEOs of the Alliance's 25 member airlines comes after ITA's induction into the Lufthansa Group earlier in 2025.

Hailing its newest arrival, the Star Alliance Chief Executive Officer, Theo Panagiotoulis, said ITA should be a full member by early 2026 and that the decision "underscores the strong confidence our members have in ITA Airways.

As a gateway for Italy, its addition strengthens our global network, offering seamless and connected journeys to more travellers worldwide."

Joerg Eberhart, CEO and General Manager of ITA Airways, said: "We

are excited to join the Star Alliance network and to bring the excellence of Made in Italy into the alliance, further enhancing its global reach. This is a significant milestone in ITA Airways' growth, and we look forward to offering our customers the future privileges of the world's largest airline network."

The Alliance network will grow by 360 daily flights thanks to the arrival of ITA, expanding the Alliance's European footprint. ITA's home cities, such as Rome and Milan, will present the biggest increases.

Lufthansa Group acquired a 41% stake in ITA back in January 2025, with the rest of the stock retained by Italy's Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). Lufthansa achieved the takeover having promised the former-Alitalia would be able to retain its own identity, and after the European Commission accepted mitigations put forward to bring the deal into line with competition laws.

That saw the Italian firm slide in alongside Austrian Airlines, Brussels Airlines, Eurowings, Lufthansa and Swiss and made Italy the group's second most important international market after the USA.

The German-headquartered group is set to "mentor" its hub airline through the Star Alliance initiation at "full throttle" ITA has said.

The group's Chief Commercial Officer, Dieter Vranckx, has promised that "ITA Airways' future membership will provide Star Alliance customers with many new opportunities for personalised travel planning." From summer 2025, all ITA Airways flights at Frankfurt and Munich airports will be managed from Lufthansa terminals, the group has confirmed.

With ITA joining the fold, the Star Alliance network will embrace 26 member carriers, of which five are Lufthansa hub airlines. The Alliance will then offer would-be air passengers more than 18,000 daily flights across 192 countries worldwide.

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