

Korean air enhances menus, lounges, and logo post-merger

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Seoul: Korean Air has unveiled a new corporate logo and aircraft livery as part of a comprehensive brand refresh following its acquisition of Asiana Airlines, creating Asia's second-largest airline group.

At a press event in Seoul on Tuesday (March 11), the South Korean carrier showcased a Boeing 787-10 featuring its new logo with a blue taegeuk symbol, marking the airline's first design update since 1984. Additionally, the carrier is revamping its in-flight menus for the first time in 15 years, introducing fine-dining options and a wider selection of dishes.

Korean Air's design shakeup comes after the country's largest carrier cleared all of the regulatory hurdles for its \$1.3 billion takeover of Asiana. The deal, completed in December, has catapulted Korean Air into the world's Top 10 largest airlines by capacity.

“We will continue to grow in terms of revenue and also in size,” Korean Air Chairman Walter Cho said at the briefing, without giving numbers. “My most important measurement of growth is service quality.”

Cho said Korean Air is considering adding a premium economy category with at least 20 seats per Boeing 777-300ER aircraft. The company is also in the process of retrofitting its Boeing 777 models, but the shortage of aircraft globally is delaying the plan, he added.

At its first press event since the merger, Korean Air showcased a variety of fine-dining options to be served to first-class passengers, including crab and lemon bites and Moroccan-style lamb chops. It is also expanding its offering of Korean dishes in response to the rising popularity of local cuisine, according to chef Seakyeong Kim, who helped Korean Air create its new menus.

The updates extend to other parts of the passenger experience. Korean Air is renovating its lounges at its home hub of Incheon and in Los Angeles and building a new one at the new terminal in New York’s JFK airport, said David Pacey, executive vice president for in-flight service and lounges. The company hopes the works will be completed by the end of next year.

While the changes will initially only apply to Korean Air services, talks are ongoing with Asiana Airlines executives on how to effectively merge the culture and management of the two companies over, for example, how to combine lounges, Pacey added. While Korean Air operates out of Terminal 2 in Incheon and Asiana is located at Terminal 1, the latter will eventually have to move to Terminal 2, Pacey added.

Asiana “will operate in tandem with us and then through a step-by-step process, go through integration,” Pacey said.

Improving the customer experience through dining and lounges is also a move to contribute to South Korea’s Incheon International Airport, Pacey said. The Incheon International Airport’s Terminal 2 has been renovated since December to give the airport a capacity of 106 million travelers, making it the world’s third-largest aviation hub by capacity behind Hong Kong and Dubai.

“Having those experiences are differentiation makers to have the passengers choose Korean Air and choose Incheon,” he said.

