



# FLYDUBAI MARKS FIRST DIRECT FLIGHT BETWEEN DUBAI AND SICILY

News / Airlines, Airports / Routes



flydubai, as part of its partnership with Emirates, offers greater frequency and easier access to Catania from Dubai and more than 200 global destinations

A senior delegation from Dubai, including H.E. Liborio Stellino, the Ambassador of Italy in the UAE, Jeyhun Efendi, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations for flydubai, Thierry Aucoc, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations (Europe & Russian Federation) for Emirates, arrived at Catania International Airport (CTA) to mark the start of direct flights between Dubai and Sicily. The delegation was met on the ground by Muhannad Alnaqbi, Deputy Head of the UAE Mission to Italy, and by Nico Torrissi, Chief Executive Officer for Società Aeroporto Catania (SAC). On arrival, the flight was met with a traditional water cannon salute.

**H.E. Liborio Stellino, Italy's Ambassador to the UAE, said: "The new flydubai connection with Catania will enable, in an effective way, for the South of Italy to be directly linked to Dubai's extensive air network. It is therefore favourably perceived as part and parcel of the multifaceted and comprehensive Italy-UAE partnership. Such a positive development in connectivity is going to become immediately a very useful tool for both countries, a win-win approach, creating enhanced results and a successful impact on the tourism and trade sector."**



flydubai offers direct flights to Catania and through its partnership with Emirates this service will operate as part of its codeshare offering unmatched travel options. flydubai's route network in Europe includes 27 points in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland (from October), Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine.

Jeyhun Efendi, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations for flydubai, said: "We were the first airline in the Middle East to take delivery of the Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft. As part of today's inaugural, we have announced that Catania is one of the destinations on our growing network to be regularly served by the newest aircraft in our fleet. The convenience of direct flights from Dubai as well as onward connections opens up the world to our passengers. flydubai's professional and friendly service onboard and the comfort of our new aircraft with a flat-bed in Business Class will ensure our passengers enjoy an exceptional travel experience."

flydubai's brand-new Boeing 737 MAX 8 offers passengers more comfort and an enhanced travel experience. The new cabin offering features a flat-bed in Business Class and in addition to the extra space and privacy, passengers can sleep comfortably during their flight. Economy Class offers new RECARO seats, which are designed to optimise space and comfort so passengers can sit back, relax and enjoy their flight. flydubai also offers exceptional inflight entertainment with a full HD, 11.6-inch screen, featuring a wide selection of movies, TV shows, music and games in English, Arabic and Russian. In addition, the Boeing Sky interior with its gently-sculpted sidewalls and its smooth-flowing lines provides passengers with a more relaxing travel environment.

Emirates will codeshare on this route as part of the Emirates flydubai partnership announced in July 2017. For bookings under the codeshare, Emirates passengers will receive complimentary meals and the Emirates checked baggage allowance on flights operated by flydubai in Business and Economy classes. With the partnership, passengers from the hundreds of destinations spanning six continents in over 80 countries will have an opportunity to travel to Catania via Dubai.

Thierry Aucoc, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations (Europe & Russian Federation) for Emirates said, "Our partnership with flydubai enables travellers in Catania and the greater surrounding area to easily access destinations across Emirates network, particularly Dubai, Thailand, Australia, Egypt and China, all of which are popular for local travellers. We also expect the route to boost the number of visitors to the region, particularly from key inbound markets like Melbourne and Sydney."

Catania is the second largest city on the Island of Sicily and is known for its rich culture, arts and history. Sicily is filled with museums, monuments and the well-known Mount Etna. In addition, the island is popular for its spectacular beaches and culinary delights, including pasta, seafood and pastries.

Nico Torrisi, Chief Executive Officer for Società Aeroporto Catania (SAC), said: "The launch of new direct flight between Catania and Dubai provides easy access to Sicily from a major world aviation hub. This supports the promotion of Sicily as a unique destination with rich art and history making it popular among tourists from Dubai, Far East Asia, Australia and New Zealand. In addition, it will further stimulate trade and help to attract direct investment to Sicily."

The inaugural programme in Sicily included a press conference for local media as well as journalists from Rome and Milan and concluded with a dinner for key travel trade partners. In addition, flydubai brought a group of media and social media influencers from the UAE, GCC and India to showcase Catania and Sicily as a preferred tourist destination.



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