



EMIRATES CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF FLYING TO AOTEAROA

News / Airlines, Airports / Routes



20 years of Emirates flying to New Zealand, as the airline celebrates amid its strongest presence in the market to date. On 2 August 2003, Emirates launched its first service from New Zealand, marked by two inaugural flights - the first via Sydney on a Boeing 777-300ER and the second on an A330 from Melbourne. Onboard one flight was Emirates' Chairman and Chief Executive, HH Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum.

Over the past two decades Emirates has flown over 16 million passengers between Dubai and New Zealand across 49,000 flights to Auckland and Christchurch. Emirates is currently flying 14 weekly flights to New Zealand from Dubai, with direct daily services to Auckland, and to Christchurch via Sydney, offering passengers the only opportunity to travel across the Trans-Tasman on an A380. Emirates' Dubai to Auckland service remains the longest route on the

airline's network, taking passengers on a 14,000km journey to their destination. Christchurch remains the smallest city on the network to be serviced by the flagship A380.

In March 2023, New Zealand notably became the first country to exclusively operate Emirates' new four-class A380 on all its services. The aircraft are equipped with 56 Premium Economy seats, with the new cabin class introduced by Emirates as part of the airline's multi-billion dollar aircraft retrofit programme – the first project of its kind in terms of scale and size and one of the largest investments ever made in the industry.



The airline's cargo arm, Emirates SkyCargo, has been a critical contributor to the local economy, exporting meat, fruits, seafood and medical equipment out of New Zealand. As many other international airlines suspended services to New Zealand during the COVID-19 pandemic, Emirates continued its services with a Boeing 777-300ER aircraft flying Auckland to Dubai via Kuala Lumpur. Emirates carried almost 17,700 tonnes of vaccines and essential medical equipment into New Zealand during the pandemic.

Barry Brown, Divisional Vice President for Australasia at Emirates, commented: "During the last 20 years, New Zealand has continued to be an important market for Emirates, and this is clear today as the country sits firmly at the forefront of our latest onboard product. By offering Premium Economy seats on all our A380 services to New Zealand, we're able to offer travellers our best product yet, providing greater choice and flexibility. We're immensely proud of the work we've done in New Zealand during this time, exporting the country's vast bounty of home-grown produce to the rest of the world and, critically, keeping New Zealand globally connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. As demand continues to grow, we look forward to continuing and growing our services to New Zealand, offering those travelling to the country a chance to experience our world-class product, and delivering substantial benefits to the economy through travel connections, cargo and inbound seats."

The Emirates A380 experience remains highly sought after by travellers, with customers travelling to New Zealand able to enjoy its spacious and comfortable cabins, and award-winning inflight entertainment system that includes more than 6,500 channels of on-demand entertainment.

Emirates is also committed to sourcing and serving local New Zealand ingredients and wines onboard. Currently, Emirates is serving Craggy Range Te Muna Road Sauvignon Blanc 2022

across Business Class and First Class services to New Zealand. Passengers can also look forward to a number of fine New Zealand wines being added onboard later this year, including the Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2022 Marlborough, Framingham Sauvignon Blanc 2022 Wairau Valley and Escarpment Pinot Noir 2020 Martinborough.

More details about Emirates ongoing commitment to New Zealand and its 20 year anniversary are included in the timeline below.

Emirates in Aotearoa – a brief history:

1. **2 August 2003: Emirates inaugural to Auckland**
The first day included two inaugural flights, - the first via Sydney on a Boeing 777-300ER and the second on a A330 from Melbourne.
2. **October 2003: Emirates begins Auckland-Brisbane-Dubai service**
3. **July 2004: Emirates begins Christchurch-Melbourne-Dubai service**
4. **2004: Emirates becomes naming sponsor of Emirates Team New Zealand**
5. **October 2008: Emirates becomes first worldwide partner to sign for Rugby World Cup 2011**
As airline sponsor, Emirates delivered the trophy to New Zealand prior to the event as well as the teams.
6. **February 2009: Emirates' A380 first scheduled flight arrives in Auckland**
7. **March 2016: Emirates launches milestone Auckland to Dubai non-stop route**
This service launched on a Boeing 777-200LR, before moving to an A380 six months later due to high demand on the route.
8. **November 2016: Emirates launches Christchurch A380**
Thousands arrived by the tarmac to see the first Emirates A380 arrive. Christchurch became, and still is, the smallest city on the airline's A380 network.
9. **March 2021: Emirates Team New Zealand wins in Auckland**
People from all around the world watched on from lockdown TV sets as Emirates Team New Zealand took the 26th America's Cup in front of a home crowd in Auckland.
10. **2020-2022: Pandemic dedication to New Zealand**
As many other international airlines suspended services throughout the pandemic to New Zealand, Emirates continued to serve New Zealanders and maintain its connection with the world. The services continued with a 777 aircraft flying via Kuala Lumpur. SkyCargo played an imperative role in moving goods in and out of NZ, including vaccines.
11. **December 2022: Restarting Auckland to Dubai non-stop A380 route**
In December of 2022, Emirates redeployed its A380 non-stop flight to Dubai, drawing widespread media coverage.
12. **March 2023: Restarting Christchurch to Dubai route, via Sydney. First country to exclusively operate the four-class A380**
In March this year Emirates reinstated its daily Christchurch to Dubai A380 route, via Sydney. The launch made New Zealand the first country on Emirates' A380 network to exclusively operate the four-cabin refurbished A380.

06 AUGUST 2023

ARTICLE LINK:

<https://virginia.50skyshades.com/news/airlines/emirates-celebrates-20-years-of-flying-to-aotearoa>